

A

COMMUNITY

ALLIANCE

THE VOICE OF THE PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT SINCE 1996



EN ESPAÑOL

PÁGINAS 24-28

It Has Happened Here: Hit the Streets!

BY BOB MCCLOSKEY

In the 1935 dystopian novel about fascism titled *It Can't Happen Here* by Sinclair Lewis, Lewis states that “when fascism comes to America, it will be wrapped in a flag and carrying a cross.” It seems his words are prophetic as Trump and the authors of Project 2025 attempt to implement a draconian form of Christian nationalism against the wishes of the vast majority of Americans. (Trump received 31% of eligible voter support.) Yet, it appears that the people are not accepting a fascist form of governance forced upon them by a self-proclaimed dictator and his collaborators in Congress.

On April 5, hundreds of thousands of people in cities across the United States rallied and marched in opposition to the authoritarian rule of President Trump, Elon Musk and their devastating policies in the largest protests of the year to date.

More and even larger protests are expected as the mass murder and genocide in Gaza continues, as blatantly racist policies are implemented, as innocents are deported and tortured, as the stock market crashes and trillions are lost in retirement accounts and as endless executive orders get implemented that establish an authoritarian/fascist state to end democracy forever.



On April 5, more than 2,000 people marched in Fresno in opposition to the authoritarian rule of President Trump. Photo by Peter Maiden

At least 1,300 rallies and marches were held in all 50 states and U.S. territories, according to organizers, who said attendance far exceeded expectations. Local organizers issued a press statement saying “the demonstrations were organized by 50501 (50 Protests, 50 States, 1 Movement),

a national grassroots movement launched to protest the policies and actions of the second Trump administration.

“Since February, 50501 has led three mass mobilizations, drawing thousands to state capitals and city halls across

*Continues on page 2*

Fighting Oligarchy Tour Inspires Bakersfield

BY VIC BEDOIAN

The coast-to-coast “Fighting Oligarchy Tour,” featuring Senator Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) and Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.), hit the Central Valley town of Bakersfield, where oil and agriculture dominate the economy. Enthusiastic San Joaquin Valley residents came to welcome the two national figures at the forefront of resistance to the Trump administration’s unlawful actions and attacks on the Constitution.

Some 5,000 people crammed in and around the Dignity Health convention center for Sanders and AOC. It’s the hottest political act in the country right now. The diverse,



Alexandria Ocasio Cortez speaks to a capacity crowd of 5,000 in Bakersfield on April 15 as part of the Fighting Oligarchy Tour. Photo by Peter Maiden

working-class crowd was primed for information and inspiration. And they got plenty of both in the program.

Nicole Moore is president of Rideshare Drivers United. She told about the reality of working in the tech world that is not all that it seems on the surface. “As drivers, we work in the belly of the beast at the crossroads of corporate greed and algorithmic management, which is robots managing you.

“We are the future of work, and we can tell you as it is now, it is not freedom. It’s a trap. But make no mistake, this isn’t just about drivers. This is a new playbook. They’re coming for nurses, for teachers, for everyone because everyone can be managed and deployed by an app. And if so, maybe they can get rid of your rights too.”

Theresa Romero is president of the United Farm Workers (UFW). She spoke of the climate of fear caused by the Trump administration’s deportation actions. “We are suing the Trump administration over the unconstitutional ‘show me your papers’ registry, and we’re going to fight like hell if they come for farmworkers’ wages and worker protections.

“Let’s be clear about one thing. Donald Trump and his billionaire friends want us to be afraid, because the bosses know that when workers are afraid of federal agents, they’re also less likely to report wage theft or unsafe working conditions, or to organize.”

UFW organizer Carolina addressed the crowd in Spanish. The mother of seven has labored in agriculture for 30 years and led a successful organizing effort at a farm where she worked. She advised people not to be afraid of the rich, the bosses and the politicians.

Next, AOC got a rousing reception as she articulated the theme that has brought so many people together, in Bakersfield and all over the nation. “We share in the frustration and heartache that comes from watching those in power actively tear down, or refuse to fight for, everyday working Americans like us.

“And we are also here together because an extreme concentration of power, greed and corruption is taking over this country like never before, and there’s a word for it. It is oligarchy.”

AOC focused on the Republican’s Project 2025 agenda, pointing at a regional GOP lawmaker. “Just look at what Republicans have been quietly doing in Congress, including your congressman out here, Rep. David Valadao [R-Hanford].

“They’ve been voting to advance cuts on hundreds of billions of dollars from Medicaid and veterans benefits so that they can take that money and give it to billionaires in the form of tax cuts and sweetheart government contracts to their companies like Space X and Blue Origin.

“And again, Bakersfield, you know who voted for that? Congressman David Valadao. He knows that’s not what you want. He knows it is deeply unpopular, and he knows that

*Continues on page 2*



# It Has Happened

Continued from page 1

America. This movement is powered by regular people—not politicians. From small towns to big cities, we’re organizing, marching and building a future rooted in justice, equity and collective power.

“We are your neighbors—parents, workers, students and community members—coming together to build a better Fresno. We’re passionate volunteers advocating for progress, equity and hope. This movement belongs to all of us.”

Locally, more than 2,000 demonstrators hit the streets of Fresno, gathering at Cary Park and then marching to Fashion Fair Mall. Peace Fresno, Raza Against War, the Brown Berets, San Joaquin Valley Resistance (SJVR) 50501 and several Indivisible chapters were among the many organizations participating.

Amanda Gann, from SJVR 50501, rallied the demonstrators saying, “If we stay silent, we cannot enact change. Trump is an authoritarian leader. We need to get together like we are here for that change. We need to protect our democracy and our rights. We are here to defend democracy and we won’t back down.”

Dan Yaseen, president of Peace Fresno, addressed the large crowd saying, “We are living in extremely dark times but the people in the Middle East are living in extremely dangerous times.

“Trump has been bombing civilians in Yemen and supplying bombs and intelligence to Netanyahu to slaughter innocent civilians in Gaza, the West Bank and Lebanon with our tax dollars.” (Note: To date, more than 48,000 Gazans have been killed, with many more thousands still under the rubble.)

Speaking of mass deportations, Yaseen continued, “First they came for undocumented immigrants, then they came for university students speaking against genocide in Gaza, then they came for us.”

Teresa Castillo, from WILPF Fresno, said, “Join with your neighbor and join every single action. We have to come together; if we do not come together as a nation, then the few that have wealth beyond belief are going to push us further down. That’s not okay with the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, and I hope that’s not okay with you.”

Paul, from Central Valley Indivisible, spoke of the group’s recent growth noting that “meetings have grown from 20 or 30 [people] to almost 200 last week. Over 900 people signed up for today. We meet every month, we share news, we share rage, we talk about how to build the community and inspire action.

“When we succeed, and we will, it will be because we see each other. Because we connect as humans in all our crazy and beautiful differences. It will be because we purposely join hands together.”

Chance, a community member, said, “Look around everyone, there are people here from all different walks of life, many different groups here. Our history of civil rights and labor rights starts with us working together, collaborating together.

“We are doing what is right to get what we want, by clawing back power. We are challenging power today.

“This government has been abusing us, stripping away our rights, our entitlements that we pay into. We have to stand with the elderly, the poor, the marginalized and those most impacted by [Trump’s policies].”

Although the recent turnout for the demonstrations and marches is encouraging, many say simply marching and demonstrating will not defeat authoritarianism and fascism. Some might even believe that Trump is not a fascist.

Jason Stanley is a philosophy professor at Yale University. In 2018, he authored *How Fascism Works: The Politics of Us and Them*, a nonfiction book that examines the rhetoric and propaganda of fascism.

He describes how fascism promotes the “politics of hierarchy, a belief in a biologically determined superiority whereby fascists strive to create a mythic and glorious past by excluding those they believe to be inferior because of their ethnicity, religion and/or race.”

Think “make America great again” and the aggressive elimination of all “diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI)” hires and programs.

In the past, many tactics and strategies have been used by movements to effectively confront authoritarian rule:

- Sit-ins and strikes to disrupt operations or make a statement.
- Boycotts and refusing to buy, use or support products, services or institutions to exert pressure.
- Blockades and physically obstructing roads, buildings or facilities to prevent access or operations.
- Non-cooperation and refusing to cooperate with government or institutions, such as refusing to pay taxes or obey laws.
- Occupations and taking control of a space or building to draw attention to a cause, often in a nonviolent way.
- Refusing to perform tasks or duties that are perceived as unjust or unethical.
- Hunger strikes and refusing to eat as a form of protest.

Other nonviolent tactics have been used by people’s movements in the past. There are many historical examples of successful movements that used nonviolent civil disobedience.

In *A Force More Powerful: A Century of Nonviolent Conflict* by Peter Ackerman and John Duvall, the authors document 15 successful nonviolent movements around the world in the 20th century. Here are some of those movements:

*India.* In the 1930s, after Gandhi had returned from South Africa, he and his followers adopted a strategy of refusing to cooperate with British rule. Through civil disobedience and boycotts, they successfully loosened their oppressors’ grip on power and set India on the path to freedom.

*United States.* In the 1960s, Gandhi’s nonviolent weapons were taken up by Black college students in Nashville, Tenn. Disciplined and strictly nonviolent, they successfully desegregated Nashville’s downtown lunch counters in five months, becoming a model for the entire civil rights movement.

*South Africa.* In 1985, a young South African named Mkhuseleli Jack led a movement against the legalized discrimination known as apartheid. Their campaign of nonviolent mass action, and a powerful consumer boycott in the Eastern Cape province, awakened whites to Black

## A Crowd Marches in Delano

On March 31, César Chávez Day, a crowd estimated at more than 7,000 people by the United Farm Workers (UFW) marched approximately three miles from Delano’s Memorial Park to 40 Acres, the site where the grape strike started in the mid-1960s, an event that led to the creation of the UFW by Chávez and Dolores Huerta, along with dozens of farmworkers and activists.

The march was organized in solidarity with immigrants who today face the threat of mass deportations and in celebration of what would have been Chávez’s 98th birthday.

The march was organized by the UFW and SEIU unions and the California Federation of Labor Unions.



Women’s leadership was evident during the Delano march on César Chávez Day. Photo by Gerardo Vasquez

grievances and fatally weakened business support for apartheid.

*Denmark.* In April 1940, German military forces invaded Denmark. Danish leaders adopted a strategy of “resistance disguised as collaboration”—undermining German objectives by negotiating, delaying and obstructing Nazi demands. Through underground resistance, organized sabotage and strikes, they rescued all but a handful of Denmark’s 7,000 Jews.

*Poland.* In 1980, striking workers in Poland demanded independent unions. Using their leverage to negotiate unprecedented rights in a system where there was no power separate from the Communist Party, they created a union called “Solidarity.” Driven underground by a government crackdown in 1981, Solidarity reemerged in 1989 as Poland’s governing political party.

*Chile.* In 1983, Chilean workers initiated a wave of nonviolent protests against the military dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet. Severe repression failed to stop the protests, and violent opposition failed to dislodge the dictatorship—until the democratic opposition organized to defeat Pinochet in a 1988 referendum. There are many other historical examples of successful nonviolent civil disobedience campaigns. Many say such a campaign is needed now in the United States.

\*\*\*\*\*

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

## Fighting Oligarchy

Continued from page 1

it hurts the people of Bakersfield, but he is not there to serve the working families of this community. He’s there to serve himself and the billionaires who support him and the Republican Party.”

Focusing her message locally, AOC painted a chilling portrait of the nation’s existential crisis. “In America, we are watching as our neighbors, students and friends are being fired, targeted and disappeared. It is real. Even out here in Bakersfield, we’ve had a UFW organizer that was taken up.

“People we love are being targeted and harassed for being LGBTQ. Our coworkers, U.S. citizens and immigrants alike, are being

disappeared off the street by men in vans with no uniform.

“And it’ll never, never just be institutions and officials alone that uphold our democracy. It will always be the people, the masses who refuse to comply with authoritarian regimes who are the last and strongest defense of our country and our freedoms. You, Bakersfield.”

Concluding on a hopeful note, AOC spoke from her personal working-class life experience. “So many of us know what it feels like for life to be one bad day, one piece of bad news, one setback away from feeling like it’s all gonna fall apart.

“And we’re here to say, Bakersfield, I’m here to say that we don’t have to live like this anymore. We can make a new world, a better country, where we fight for the dignity of all people.

“And Bakersfield, that dignity looks like living wages. It looks like stable housing. It looks like guaranteed healthcare, and it looks like respect for all our differences.”

Already quite energized, the audience gave a warm welcome to the man who has been promoting those values throughout his long political career, providing inspiration to progressives. Then Sanders made his case. “You’ve got millions and millions of people working for starvation wages. People cannot afford housing. People cannot afford the prescription drugs they need. People want to buy good food for their kids, so they go into a grocery store and the price of food is off the charts.”

Sanders observed that 800,000 Americans are homeless and 20 million others are spending 50% or more of their limited incomes on housing. He suggested instead of spending a trillion dollars a year on the military, building five million units of affordable housing. While condemning cuts to veteran care, Sanders emotionally went to the heart of why he is fighting.

“During World War II, some 400,000 young Americans, men and women, died to defeat fascism and authoritarianism. And

I will be damned if we’re going to dishonor those men and women who fought and died for democracy by allowing Trump to become a dictator.”

Earlier in the day of his April 15 Bakersfield appearance, Sanders wrote on social media that if you paid \$1 in federal income taxes, you paid more than Tesla in 2024 and 2022, AT&T in 2021, Nike in 2020, Elon Musk in 2018, Amazon in 2017 and Jeff Bezos in 2011.

Sanders noted the consequences of doing nothing about that. “If we sit back and allow the billionaire class and the oligarchs to do with us what they want, they will succeed. Our job now is to stand up and tell them, enough is enough.”

\*\*\*\*\*

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

**MEDITATION FOR INNER PEACE & HAPPINESS**

Raja Yoga is the most ancient form of meditation. You can learn to maintain stability of mind in stressful situations and gain more control over your life. Both individual and group instructions are available. No charge.

Monthly events:

*Women of Spirit & World Meditation Day.*

**Call Veena Kapoor: (559) 435-2212**

**Website: [www.bkwsu.com](http://www.bkwsu.com)**

**Helping to Preserve Fresno’s Pictorial History**

**HOWARD K. WATKINS**

**Fresno’s Photo Laureate**

**[www.watkinsphotoarchive.com](http://www.watkinsphotoarchive.com)**

**(559) 355-7040**

**[howardkwatkins@gmail.com](mailto:howardkwatkins@gmail.com)**

**DESERT RIVER PSYCHOLOGY**

Alexia Baca Morgan, Ph.D

Clinical and Forensic Psychologist

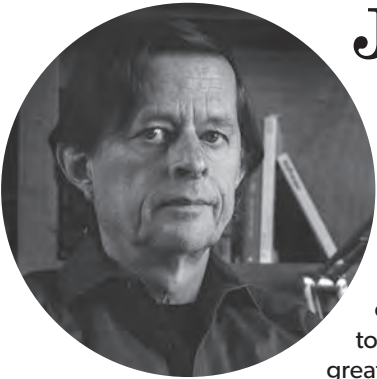
[Baca.Alexia@yahoo.com](mailto:Baca.Alexia@yahoo.com)

CA Psy 14911 559-472-8375

For appointment call 559-908-6488

Medi-Cal and most insurances accepted.





# Jane Fonda in Fresno

On April 16, Jane Fonda visited Fresno. She was a presenter at the 2024–2025 San Joaquin Valley Town Hall series (valleytownhall.com/). It was a great opportunity to meet and listen to a celebrity, a great actress who is also an activist and who was in the spotlight during the protests against the Vietnam war (1965–1973).

I personally “met” her when I was in college in my home country, Argentina. One day I attended a movie theater to watch *Barbarella* (originally released in 1968). Me, like the rest of those in the theater, fell in love with her. I was expecting to see her in similar movies, but instead I remember reading newspaper articles about her antiwar activism.

I was curious as to why a famous actress—her father, Henry Fonda, was already a Hollywood legend—was so involved in activism, and I thought that this would be a question for her should I ever meet her.

Fonda was really outspoken and she traveled around the United States and abroad to speak against the war. Obviously, she didn’t care about her activism negatively affecting her career. And that doesn’t seem to have affected her career so much.

# Valley Reps Vote Against Constituents’ Interest

BY JAMES MENDEZ

On April 10, Congress voted on a Continuing Resolution for the House Budget that would extend tax cuts that mainly benefit corporations and the wealthy. To partially cover the cost of the tax cuts, the resolution targeted cuts to Medicaid of \$880 billion or more over the next decade. All but two Republicans (Thomas Massie of Kentucky and Victoria Spartz of Indiana) voted for the resolution, whereas all the Democrats opposed it.

The bill allows for up to \$4.8 trillion in tax cuts and spending increases, which are to be offset by \$2 trillion in spending cuts (including the \$880 billion from Medicaid). The other spending cuts have not yet been identified. The changes would expire after 2034.

Medicaid is a joint federal and state program that pays for healthcare coverage for low-income people—individuals, families, children, pregnant women, the elderly and people with disabilities.

The federal government provides 70% of Medicaid funding and the states contribute about 30%. States provide different coverage under Medicaid (which is known as Medi-Cal in California) but generally include outpatient care, inpatient care, medications, long-term care services (including nursing home care) and in-home-based supportive services (IHSS).

In fiscal 2023 and 2024, the federal support for health programs and services was about \$600 billion per year—roughly \$585 billion for Medicaid and \$17 billion for the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP). CHIP provides low-cost health coverage to children in families

Yet, at 87, she remains energetic, sharp and funny.

During her presentation—at a packed William Saroyan Theatre—under the title “Resilience, Passion and Purpose,” she talked about several topics, including getting old and, of course, activism.

“When I was young I felt old; now I feel the opposite.” To get to this point, Fonda went through a difficult and painful process of knowing her family. She wanted to know who her close family really was. Her mother, Frances Ford Seymour, committed suicide at a psychiatric hospital when Fonda was 12 years old.

After researching her mother’s family, Fonda found out her mom was raped when she was seven years old. “Evidently she couldn’t overcome this trauma.”

Fonda said this was a necessary process to become at peace with herself and to be able to confront the last stretch of life in a positive tone. She added that exercising and eating well is crucial to good aging.

To Fonda, her activism is the result of injustice and unfairness. She explained her commitment to confront climate change and urged the audience to join the fight. She mentioned the polluted planet our children will inherit, noting that “by then it will be too late.”

She called burning fossil fuels the main source of pollution. And she was particularly critical of Democrats, many of whom, despite their nice words, continue to receive money from oil companies’ lobbyists. She called these Democrats “Oily Democrats.”

Fonda also urged to defend our democracy under attack by the current occupant of the White House.

I left the presentation with the feeling that, after so many years, she responded to the question I had for her during my college years.

that earn too much money to qualify for Medicaid but not enough to cover insurance for their children.

Rep. David Valadao (R–Hanford) was not present for the vote on the resolution due to what he said was a family matter. Vince Fong (R–Bakersfield) and Tom McClintock (R–Elk Grove) both voted for the motion to remove \$880 billion from Medicaid for those most in need.

All three of these Republican members of Congress have large numbers of Medicaid recipients in their districts. About 500,000 Medicaid/Medi-Cal recipients in Valadao’s district rely on Medicaid to pay for their healthcare. With almost two-thirds of the 775,000 residents depending on Medicaid, Valadao’s district is one of the most Medicaid-dependent in the country.

All the states must now make difficult decisions on how to provide healthcare for their residents who are low income, pregnant, disabled or elderly. For California, the decrease in federal funding of Medicaid will amount to billions of dollars.

As states are unlikely to raise taxes to cover the loss of federal dollars, how will they adjust their budgets to cover the shortfall? Do they cut back on medical services provided and/or cut the number of people served? Do they cut education, infrastructure or public safety programs to counter the loss of federal healthcare dollars?

With the reduced funding, hospitals and healthcare facilities will close or be unable to provide needed healthcare to their patients. Moreover, there will be a significant economic impact from these closures.

What are patients supposed to do now? Go without care for acute and chronic medical problems?

People will die from treatable medical illnesses due to a lack of access. Valadao, Fong and McClintock share responsibility for this healthcare disaster.

\*\*\*\*\*

*James Mendez came to Fresno in 1977 for his medical residency training at what was then called the Valley Medical Center. He stayed to practice medicine and raise a family. He is now a retired physician and a community activist.*

PROVIDE FEEDBACK. E-MAIL EDITOR@FRESNOALLIANCE.COM.

GET YOUR MESSAGE OUT!

Advertise in the

8,000 COPIES PUBLISHED AND DISTRIBUTED MONTHLY

All ads need to be camera ready (typesetting, layout and design are extra)  
Submit a black-and-white ad or upgrade to a full-color ad.  
Deadline is the 15th of the month preceding publication.

|   | ONE MONTH | THREE MONTHS | SIX MONTHS | ONE YEAR |
|---|-----------|--------------|------------|----------|
| <b>Business Card</b><br>(3.375w x 2h)   | \$44      | \$99         | \$165      | \$297    |
| <b>Eighth Page</b><br>(5.125w x 4.125h) | \$66      | \$176        | \$330      | \$594    |
| <b>Quarter Page</b><br>(5.125w x 8.25h) | \$132     | \$352        | \$650      | \$1,188  |
| <b>Half Page</b><br>(10.25w x 8.25h)    | \$220     | \$589        | \$1,100    | \$1,980  |
| <b>Full Page</b><br>(10.25w x 16.5h)    | \$440     | \$1,177      | \$2,200    | \$3,960  |

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

I. smiley G. Calderon | 714-290-6651 | smileycalderon@gmail.com

Community Alliance | P.O. Box 5077 | Fresno, CA 93755

YES! I WOULD LIKE TO SUBSCRIBE TO THE **COMMUNITY ALLIANCE** NEWSPAPER:

☐ Enclosed is \$40 for a one-year regular subscription.

☐ I would like to be a monthly sustainer at the rate of \$\_\_\_\_\_ a month.

☐ Enclosed is \$60 for a one-year progressive movement builder subscription.

☐ Enclosed is \$15 for a one-year subscription (low-income option).

☐ Enclosed is an additional contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_. I support alternative/independent media and want to see this publication grow.

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Community Alliance, P.O. Box 5077, Fresno, CA 93755



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

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

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

- EDITOR**

Eduardo Stanley  
editor@fresnoalliance.com
- NONPROFIT BOARD**

Olga Loza  
Norberto Gonzalez  
Michaelynn Lewis  
Bob McCloskey  
James Mendez  
Pam Whalen
- LAYOUT DESIGNER**

Ashley Harper
- DISTRIBUTION MANAGER/ PHOTOGRAPHY**

Peter Maiden  
maidenfoto1@gmail.com
- ADVERTISING**

I. smiley G. Calderon  
714-290-6651 (text)  
smileycalderon@gmail.com  
*Yo también hablo español*
- COPYEDITOR**

Michael D. Evans
- EDITOR EMERITUS**

Mike Rhodes
- TO SUBSCRIBE**

Send \$60 (progressive movement builder), \$40 (regular) or \$15 (low income) to COMMUNITY ALLIANCE  
P.O. Box 5077  
Fresno, CA 93755  
fresnoalliance.com
- SUBMISSIONS**

**Deadline:**

15th of the previous month.  
Articles 800–1,200 words.  
E-mail editor@fresnoalliance.com.

**Peace & Social Justice and Arts & Culture Calendars:**

Please submit all activities to calendar@fresnoalliance.com by the 15th of the previous month, or you can post anytime online at fresnoliance.com (select Calendar).

**Letters to the Editor:**

E-mail editor@fresnoalliance.com. Up to 200 words.

The *Community Alliance* newspaper, a 501(c)(4) entity, reserves the right to edit all articles for space and clarity. It is printed on recycled paper.

The *Community Alliance* newspaper is published monthly by the San Joaquin Valley Media Alliance, located at 1584 N. Van Ness Ave., Fresno, CA 93728. The *Community Alliance* newspaper is distributed free of charge, or by subscription. Subscriptions are \$40 per year, \$60 per year for a movement builder subscription or \$15 per year for a low-income subscription.





# Fresno Fails to Follow Through on No Camping Arrest

BY BOB MCCLOSKEY

On April 10, Fresno Superior Court Judge Brian Alvarez ruled that the Fresno City Attorney’s Office failed to meet the 45-day deadline to bring an unhoused individual to trial; 77-year-old Wickey Two Hands was accused of violating the City’s harsh no camping ordinance implemented on Sept. 23, 2024. California law states that a defendant on a misdemeanor charge must be brought to trial within 45 days, if out of custody.

Attorney Kevin Little, representing Two Hands, said, “On Feb. 20, we insisted on our right to a speedy trial and objected to any postponement. Today is well beyond the deadline so this judge just wasn’t having it. He saw that this was not a lawful continuance and therefore dismissed the case.”

Judge Alvarez noted that the case should have been heard by March 6.

Two Hands, the defendant, said he was glad it was over. “I think I deserve [this dismissal] and want to thank Kevin. He has my admiration.” He said he has lost work because of the trial and that he holds down several jobs. He has been offered a housing voucher, but it could take weeks to get an apartment.

On April 10, the City again offered Two Hands a diversion program before the case was rapidly dismissed. These programs often involve rehabilitation, community service or other interventions designed to address “the behavior” that led to the arrest.

In this case, there were no substance abuse issues, the defendant had several jobs and his only “crime” was being unhoused at the time of his arrest.

To date, there have been more than 400 arrests in Fresno for violations of the no camping ordinance and numerous citations. The Democratic majority on the City Council passed the no camping ordinance following a Supreme Court ruling that allowed cities to enforce camping bans, even when shelter is unavailable.

The Democrats on the Council sided with the conservative Republican justices on the court, ignoring the three liberal justices who said in the dissenting opinion that allowing municipalities to arrest people is criminalizing a basic human function: sleeping.

The Fresno ordinance “criminalizes people’s existence,” said Little. “It sends them into hiding.” He was a bit disappointed with the dismissal in that he had wanted to take the Two Hands case before a jury and pursue it on legal grounds.

“Sooner or later, we’ll have our day in court,” added Little. “[But] if the City never takes these cases to court, it begs the question: Why do we even have this stupid ordinance in the first place?”

The blatant disregard for time limits by the City Attorney’s Office raises the question if that was intentional to avoid a jury trial. Several more cases are being set for trial.

More than 25 California cities have passed similar ordinances. In response to the proliferation of such ordinances, many California cities, including Fresno, have increased sweeps of encampments, leading to the displacement of unhoused individuals, with little to no guarantee of alternative housing or services.

Violations of anti-camping laws can result in fines and even jail time. Criminalization can make it harder for unhoused individuals to find stable housing and employment, as arrests and criminal records can create barriers.

Arrests and sweeps increase morbidity and mortality rates, as the stress of frequent moves and interactions with

## CLIMATE POLITICS



Wickey Two Hands with his attorney, Kevin Little. Photo by Bob McCloskey

law enforcement can exacerbate health problems. In addition, jail stays can disrupt access to benefits, shelter and other crucial resources. Displacement and criminalization can be traumatizing and damaging to the health and well-being of unhoused individuals, according to the research.

Criminalization is also ineffective in solving homelessness and addressing the root causes of homelessness, which include lack of affordable housing, and can even perpetuate the cycle of homelessness. Moreover, it costs taxpayers; arresting and incarcerating unhoused individuals under laws that criminalize homelessness is expensive. In addition, the criminalization of homelessness can increase the risk of

violence against unhoused individuals and increase their interactions with law enforcement.

In response to the many no camping ordinances, SB 634, introduced on March 24 by State Senator Sasha Pérez (D–Alhambra), is working its way through the legislative process. If enacted into law, the bill would prohibit local and state authorities from imposing penalties, including jail time and fines, on unhoused individuals for acts related to their basic survival, and protects those providing assistance to homeless individuals.

\*\*\*\*\*

Bob McCloskey is an activist and a Community Alliance reporter. Contact him at bobmcloskey06@gmail.com.

## Take Action

Please contact your state legislators and ask them to support SB 634, which would prohibit local and state authorities from imposing penalties on unhoused individuals for acts related to their basic survival.

### State Senators for the Central Valley

|               |                    |              |
|---------------|--------------------|--------------|
| 4th District  | Marie Alvarado-Gil | 916-651-4004 |
| 12th District | Shannon Grove      | 916-651-4012 |
| 14th District | Anna Caballero     | 916-651-4014 |
| 16th District | Melissa Hurtado    | 916-651-4016 |

You can leave a comment at [senate.ca.gov/senators](https://senate.ca.gov/senators) by selecting “Contact” for the respective state senator.

### Assembly Members for the Central Valley

|               |                    |              |
|---------------|--------------------|--------------|
| 8th District  | David Tangipa      | 916-319-2008 |
| 27th District | Esmeralda Soria    | 916-319-2027 |
| 31st District | Joaquin Arambula   | 916-319-2031 |
| 33rd District | Alexandra Macedo   | 916-319-2033 |
| 35th District | Jasmeet Kaur Bains | 916-319-2035 |

You can leave a comment at [assembly.ca.gov/assemblymembers](https://assembly.ca.gov/assemblymembers) by selecting “Contact” for the respective Assembly member.

Also, contact Fresno’s mayor and City Council members and ask them to rescind the inhumane no camping ordinance and provide real solutions for the housing crisis, such as rent control, building low-income housing, establishing tiny home villages and supporting safe camps as an interim solution.

### Fresno Mayor Jerry Dyer

559-621-8000 [jerry.dyer@fresno.gov](mailto:jerry.dyer@fresno.gov)

### Fresno City Council Members

559-621-8000

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Annalisa Perea  | <a href="mailto:district1@fresno.gov">district1@fresno.gov</a> |
| Mike Karbassi   | <a href="mailto:district2@fresno.gov">district2@fresno.gov</a> |
| Miguel Arias    | <a href="mailto:district3@fresno.gov">district3@fresno.gov</a> |
| Tyler Maxwell   | <a href="mailto:district4@fresno.gov">district4@fresno.gov</a> |
| Brandon Vang    | <a href="mailto:district5@fresno.gov">district5@fresno.gov</a> |
| Nick Richardson | <a href="mailto:district6@fresno.gov">district6@fresno.gov</a> |
| Nelson Esparza  | <a href="mailto:district7@fresno.gov">district7@fresno.gov</a> |

You can also leave a comment at [fresno.gov/citycouncil](https://fresno.gov/citycouncil) by selecting the respective City Council member.

## GET INVOLVED!

Join us as we plan anti-war actions and demonstrations!

*“We are in the gravest danger of a nuclear war than at any time in the nuclear era.”  
—Former U.N. Weapons Inspector Scott Ritter.*



Monthly meeting: 4th Thursday 6:30pm

Fresno Center for Nonviolence

1584 N. Van Ness @ McKinley

Raza Against War protests: Wednesdays 11:30 - 1:30, 2500 Tulare St (Federal Building)  
Protests for Palestine: Saturdays 3:00 - 5:00pm, Blackstone & Nees



To receive our emails: [camille.russell@att.net](mailto:camille.russell@att.net)  
[president@peacefresno.org](mailto:president@peacefresno.org)

[peacefresno.org](http://peacefresno.org)  
559.513.0199



## FRESNO CENTER FOR NONVIOLENCE

[centerfornonviolence.org](https://centerfornonviolence.org)

- Dedicated to Peace & Social Justice since 1992
- Catch our radio program, *Stir it Up*, on KFCF 88.1 FM every 2nd Wednesday at 3:00 p.m.
- Please consider supporting our work with a DONATION —>
- Come visit our booth on EARTH DAY—April 12 at Fresno City College campus!

1584 N. VAN NESS AVE.  
FRESNO, CA 93728  
(559) 23-PEACE





# Gorging at the Public Trough

BY KEVIN HALL

While covering the recent special election win by Brandon Vang to the Fresno City Council District 5 to replace newly elected Fresno County Supervisor Luis Chavez, I dug into the campaign finances of Vang’s main opponent, Chavez’s wife, Elizabeth Jonasson Rosas, a trustee on the Fresno Unified School Board.

There, laid out in black and white, was a blatant violation of campaign contribution limits. While her \$120,000 failed effort confined its spending to printing and distributing yard signs and mailers, two separate—supposedly independent political action committees—spent another \$85,000 on digital advertising and canvassing (see “Endorsements ‘Sweep’ Fails Jonasson Rosas,” April 2025, *Community Alliance*).

Behind the scenes, things were even worse. Local campaign consultant Alex Tavlian, it has since been reported by Fresno’s Julianna Morano, sent a political hit piece to District 5 voters targeting Vang and his wife of 32 years and tried to hide its source. Improper and incomplete paperwork was filed with the City of Fresno, an amendment later submitted and a \$1,000 fine issued by City Attorney Andrew Janz, the proverbial drop in the bucket.

But Tavlian was not paid by the Jonasson campaign for any services. Apparently someone other than Jonasson, whose campaign filings also show no money spent on polling, realized she was in danger of not just losing to Vang but of him surpassing the 50% voter support mark and avoiding a runoff, which he did. Tavlian, and presumably others, decided in early March to indulge in some very dirty politics.

What remains unanswered is who paid for the hit piece and what motivated Tavlian to send it? Might it have been the promise of indirect repayment? There’s no proof of such, but a \$100,000 contract was signed in December between the City of Fresno and a Tavlian company, Park West Associates, to conduct community outreach in District 5 on behalf of outgoing City Council Member Chavez despite his imminent departure.

The money was to come from the district’s discretionary budget. Clearly, confidence was high that Jonasson was going to win and honor the contract. Besides, she needed the help, having told the *Fresno Bee* that she planned to serve part-time on the Council at \$123,000 annually in order to keep her \$150,000 per year job as the Westlands Water District’s deputy manager of external affairs. (Westlands is a quasi-governmental agency subject to state transparency laws.) Her spouse Chavez now pulls down \$216,000 annually as a county supervisor, a nearly \$100,000 raise in his annual income as a City Council member.

Chavez likes Tavlian. Apparently, they all do. In 2022, the *Fresno Bee*’s Tim Sheehan reported Chavez and his fellow City Council members voted unanimously to throw a \$450,000 contract Tavlian’s way under another of his entities, Local Government Strategic Consulting.

# Where Are the Democrats?

BY MICHAEL D. EVANS

“Where are the Democrats?” Everyone seems to be asking this question—from pundits such as Ralph Nader and Robert Reich to grassroots activists.

Nader called Trump’s March presidential address to Congress “a declaration of war against the American people, including Trump voters, in favor of the super-rich and the giant corporations.” Yet, what has been the Democratic response?

The high-profile tour of Senator Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) and Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) has drawn large crowds throughout the country, including last month in Bakersfield. Despite the huge appetite among activists for engagement, the Democratic Party’s leadership at every level seems reluctant to be at the forefront of the resistance to the Trump administration.

“I will admit I think the general response overall has been slower than many would have hoped,” says Rusty Hicks, chair of the California Democratic Party.

“I think there’s two schools...within Democratic circles: The first is you get to the plate and swing at every pitch. That’s the [U.S. Senator] Chris Murphy (D-Conn.) view of the world.

“And then you’ve got the [House Minority Leader] Hakeem Jeffries (D-N.Y.) view of

the world, which is you get up to bat and pick your pitches, but you can’t swing at everything. You’ve got to be strategic about what you engage with at this particular moment.

“I think I am probably more on the side of being strategic about how you engage.”

“It’s always interesting to figure out who people mean by ‘the party’ when they’re complaining or making suggestions about what the Democrats should do,” notes Daraka Larimore Hall, lecturer at UC Santa Barbara in labor studies and a former vice chair of the California Democratic Party.

“The ‘Democratic Party’ is a really diverse, diffuse, decentralized set of institutions and groups. It’s not like a very unified thing to begin with.

“There is a lot of desire out there, demand really, for a more unified message and more visibility from people that are identified with the Democratic Party, more visibility on their part, either actively resisting, slowing down or stopping Trump’s agenda or mobilizing people, engaging people for an alternative to take to the ballot in future elections.

“When people are like, ‘I want to see the Democrats out doing something,’ they often mean different things, but right now I think people aren’t seeing enough of either of those.

Nader also notes that “we’re dealing with a deranged, unstable pathological liar, who’s getting away with it” and asks how he gets away with it. His response: “Because the Democratic Party has basically collapsed.”



California Democratic Party Chair Rusty Hicks. Photo by Peter Maiden

## Looking Back

To paraphrase David Byrne of the Talking Heads, “How did we get here?”

Looking back at the 2024 election, Hicks says that “here in California, where we showed up, we won.

“If you look at the turnout difference, the electoral outcome difference, between those areas where there was targeted, dedicated, year-round organizing and infrastructure in place, primarily around the Congressional seats, we saw us able to cut in half swings that you might have seen in significant numbers in other parts of the state.

“And we were able to eke out a win in six of eight targeted battleground Congressional seats. In most sports, winning six of eight will get you in the Hall of Fame.

“It was a lot of things,” explains Larimore-Hall. “One is that there is a longer-scale process in which the Democratic Party has lost support among working Americans, and that has ebbed and flowed, it slowed and sped up, but it’s been a consistent trend since the 70s. And we never have really reckoned with the major reasons for that.

“That’s a process that has accelerated since the 90s. The party really abandoned

*Continues on page 6*

## CLIMATE POLITICS

“FRESNO CITY COUNCILMAN LUIS CHAVEZ IS A CHAMPION OF OUR NEIGHBORHOODS.”

- MAYOR JERRY DYER

### LUIS CHAVEZ FOUGHT FOR OUR SHARE OF RESOURCES FROM CITY HALL

Luis Chavez led **REBUILD FRESNO**, a \$250 million initiative to fix and rebuild crumbling roads and sidewalks in central and south Fresno that were long ignored by City Hall and create safe routes to schools to protect Fresno’s children and families.



### LUIS CHAVEZ DELIVERED A SAFER FRESNO

Luis Chavez helped deliver a record **925 police officers** and 375 firefighters to protect our city and spearheaded the development of a First Responders Academy at Fresno City College to recruit and retain public safety leaders.



### LUIS CHAVEZ PROTECTED OUR SENIORS

Luis Chavez led the charge to create and fund an **Elder Abuse Unit within Fresno Police**, helping protect Fresno’s seniors from financial fraud and physical abuse.

THANK LUIS CHAVEZ FOR DELIVERING FOR FRESNO • CALL (559) 621-2489

This mystery mailer was issued by an unknown entity while Luis Chavez was running for Fresno County supervisor in late 2024. Its anonymous backers never reported the in-kind campaign contribution.

Weirdly, the Council was convinced it would be legal for them to spend taxpayer dollars on a “public education” campaign during an election. The threat of legal action stopped the misguided venture, but local veterans were left to pay the cost; they could have benefited significantly had Measure M gained voter approval and a veterans district established in Fresno like that of Clovis.

The hit piece on Vang in March was similar to one sent last year by the Mike Karbassi campaign, which paid \$45,000 to Tavlian-owned Park West Associates for “campaign literature, mailings, signs, text messages, etc.,” giving full meaning to “etc.” Heavily racist in its overtone and designed to instill fear of Black people, its target was Karbassi’s opponent, fellow Democrat Mathew Gillian.

So it came as no surprise when Karbassi rose to Jonasson’s defense shortly before the election as the scandal broke, and in his usual bombastic style accused her accusers of dirty politics. It was Trump-level gaslighting.

Tavlian’s fondness for public funding extends to Madera County. According to a complaint filed in July by a group called Sierra Citizens, his Local Government Strategic Consulting firm received \$60,000 in taxpayer dollars to work on renewal of Measure T, the countywide transportation sales tax. He is accused of taking advantage of his publicly funded position to circumvent a promised public process and of not disclosing his role as a paid campaign consultant to Madera County Supervisor Jordan Wamhoff.

The complaint alleges that “days after the May 24, 2024 public release of the Expenditure Plan developed by the [Measure T Renewal] Steering Committee and the ordinance prepared by staff and others, the sub-contracted consultant, Alex Tavlian, commandeered those two documents. He recruited five people as co-signers of the paperwork, all living within a half mile of each other in a new housing development. He also created a new Political Action

Committee funded by a secret LLC, FrontPoint Partners LLC, formed in Las Vegas, and he personally filed the paperwork with the County for the so-called citizens’ initiative.”

Rounding out Tavlian’s activities is his San Joaquin Valley Sun website where he is promoting his latest campaign customer, Fresno City Council candidate Nav Gurm. Like Jonasson Rosas before him, Gurm is the Democratic Party establishment candidate with many endorsements. He’s running on the familiar “Fresno brain drain” theme, according to an opinion piece published last September by Tavlian and repeated in October by the *Fresno Bee*.

Gurm is running to replace his former boss at City Hall, Nelson Esparza. He and Tavlian are a good fit. Gurm put his name to a Tavlian-style hit piece leveled at me a few years ago, largely for some spoof videos I produced of Esparza on the topics of homelessness and lying and for a long blog I wrote about Esparza’s ugly start in politics.

To silence me, Esparza and Gurm then led the Fresno County Democratic Central Committee to ban this publication from their office and pull their advertising unless I was dropped from its pages (see “Local Dems Reiterate Opposition to Free Speech,” *Community Alliance*, March 2025).

Here’s hoping law school has taught Gurm how to follow the rules, but you can judge a candidate by the company they keep. And it doesn’t look promising.

\*\*\*\*\*

Kevin Hall, a former Fresno County Planning Commission, has worked as a community, labor and political organizer. He co-hosts the radio program Climate Politics, which airs on the second and fourth Fridays of every month from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. on KFCF 88.1 FM. He posts on Bluesky as @kevinhall.bsky.social.



# Copper-Wire Theft Ordinance Advanced

BY RACHEL YODELMAN

In a unanimous vote on April 8, the Fresno County Board of Supervisors advanced a new ordinance, brought by District 2 Supervisor Garry Bredefeld and District 5 Supervisor Nathan Magsig, aimed at curbing rampant copper-wire theft, a scourge particularly on the agricultural community in Fresno County.

The ordinance classifies such theft as a misdemeanor, punishable by a \$1,000 fine and up to 180 days in jail.

The ag industry is dependent on copper conductive lines and cables to convey electricity to their farm operations, while their rural locations make easy targets for thieves who sell the wire for scrap. The cost to victims of repairing the resulting damage to infrastructure, whether agricultural or otherwise, far outpaces the dollar amount thieves get by selling the metals at recycling plants, and some farmers who have experienced repeated thefts have consequently had difficulties renewing insurance coverage.

When asked by Chair Buddy Mendes (District 4) to introduce the item, a plotzing Bredefeld began reading eagerly from a lengthy prepared statement about the need to “crack down” on this specialized theft, noting the millions of dollars in damage to farms and businesses and victims’ “desperation.”

The ordinance will prohibit receipt and transportation of commercial-grade scrap metal and copper wire with protective sheathing removed (or “stripped”—the sheathing also identifies the owner), Bredefeld noted. When he finished reading his speech, he thanked a long list of people—as if accepting an award—including “my co-sponsor Nathan Magsig,” effectively diminishing Magsig’s role.

Magsig’s remarks highlighted the substance of the ordinance, pointing out that it was months in the making and would focus on individuals who steal—not on recyclers.

Sheriff John Zanonni was present to testify that about 20 people are committing 80% of the thefts, and most of the victims are farmers, though telecommunications and building industries are also affected. He emphasized that thieves might sell a few pounds of stripped copper wire for three or four dollars per pound, but victims must spend thousands, sometimes tens of thousands, to repair damage.

District 3 Supervisor Luis Chavez asked what could be done with this ordinance that can’t be done now. Zanonni explained that now an officer must be able to prove that the wire is stolen, but this ordinance will enable them to seize the wire (if there is at least 10 pounds of it) and either cite or arrest the suspected thief.

Now, when a thief takes stolen wire to a recycler, it stays there for three days and, if unclaimed, is exchanged for cash. However, when the identifying sheathing is stripped off, it is impossible to name the wire’s owner.

“We really need to go after these folks,” Chavez noted. “It’s been a problem for a long time.”

Zanonni said that the ordinance was not a panacea but, mixing his metaphors, a “tool in the toolbox” and a plug for a “hole in the dam.”

District 1 Supervisor Brian Pacheco questioned whether the terms of the ordinance would violate existing state law and pointed out that District Attorney Lisa Smittcamp had expressed “consternation” about it. Smittcamp’s office issued a statement warning supervisors that the ordinance might “violate state preemption laws” and that input from Attorney General Rob Bonta would be in order when prosecutions are referred to her office.” The DA did, however, express her support of the “intent behind the ordinance.”

Zanonni responded that “until the attorney general gives us a ruling” on the matter, to mitigate liability, wire could be seized, and suspects could be issued a citation, but not arrested. He touted this approach as a compromise to reduce conflict with existing state laws, noting the support meanwhile from the County counsel and the Fresno city attorney.

Pacheco, turning to Bredefeld, asked if anyone had actually consulted the Attorney General’s Office. As soon as Bredefeld started speaking, it was clear that he was not going to answer the question. He talked in avoidant and defensive terms—he had consulted County counsel, the City attorney, the DA, focusing on “the possession aspect of this.” He said that Magsig had asked the County counsel “many times” if the ordinance was “defensible,” and he thought the answer was “yes.”

Bredefeld’s long-winded justification for not having consulted the AG’s office continued: “We can continue to twist in the wind, to clutch pearls,” and ignore victims’ concerns for “fear of what an attorney general might say,” he rationalized.

It was a better choice, per Bredefeld, to “take the bull by the horns.” He appeared anxious as he repeated the phrases “clutch pearls” and “worry about an attorney general” multiple times. Anyway, Bredefeld reasoned, the AG was “pro-criminal,” so why talk to him?

Magsig weighed in and noted that individuals who steal copper wire typically have outstanding warrants for other offenses, so while they can be issued a citation for suspected wire theft, they will likely be arrested on other charges. He repeated the “tool in the toolbox” metaphor and said this was the right one.

Mendes, fond of the folksy but fatuous anecdote, lectured that “criminals are lazy,” that they will “hit the easy stuff,” but often they do “amazing things” such as marshal heavy equipment to pull out wires from deep underground. He then attacked the state government, calling it the “Supreme Soviet in Sacramento,” a phrase he cites regularly.

“They love criminals,” he said, grinning and twisting a pen in both hands. He added, “We’re shackled by these crazy people in Sacramento!” The question about consulting the state AG hung in the air.

Pacheco, the pragmatist, said that “realistically, this requires a legislative fix, not a county ordinance.” However, he added that issuing citations rather than making arrests was an acceptable compromise to circumvent conflicting state law, and hence he could support the ordinance.

Fresno City Council President Mike Karbassi was present to say that the City of Fresno would introduce a similar ordinance “in lockstep” with the County’s. Karbassi said, “If Rob Bonta wants to help us, we’ll meet him with open arms,” but if not, he should “get out of the way.”

Bredefeld again seized the floor to resume his complaints: Yes, there was state law to consider, but we as a county are not “helpless!” His many repetitions of “we shouldn’t clutch our pearls” and “we shouldn’t worry about what the attorney general thinks” raised suspicions about his level of anxiety.

He insisted that “we know” there will be no state legislation on the matter. He protested to Pacheco that he “appreciated the feedback, nothing wrong with feedback.” He continued for several minutes to defend the need for the ordinance, even though no one was opposing it. “If we wait for the state, thieves will steal every day!” he bellowed. Clearly, consulting the AG’s office was something he rationalized avoiding.

Fresno County Farm Bureau CEO Ryan Jacobsen commented that copper-wire theft has a “meth connection,” suggesting that thieves were addicts looking for quick cash.

Nisei Farmers League President Manuel Cunha was present to support the ordinance and joked about Floridians with similar issues using an alligator named “Joey” to “take care of the problems.” “Joey” thereafter became a running joke, suggesting that everyone had a lot of aggression to conceal. Cunha also suggested that Fresno County should host all the counties in the Central Valley for a collaborative meeting about the issue.

While other California counties—such as Los Angeles—and some individual cities have had copper-wire theft prevention strategies and laws in place for more than a year, including arrests of recyclers who accept stolen materials, these precedents were not acknowledged by anyone.

Notably, despite Bredefeld’s confident assertion that “we know” there will “never” be statewide legislation on the matter, it happens that such a bill is now in committee in the state legislature, but none of the supervisors or staff appeared to be aware of this longed-for “legislative fix.” Authored by Assembly Member Esmerelda Soria (D–Fresno), AB 1218 would create a statute making possession of copper materials a crime if a person can’t provide evidence of lawful ownership.

State law currently requires a thief to be essentially “caught in the act,” a spokesperson for Soria said, expressing surprise that the supervisors knew nothing about her bill.

If Soria’s bill becomes law, persons trying to sell copper wire for scrap must present proof that it belongs to them, and punishment will be far more stringent than what the County’s ordinance calls for, with fines up to \$10,000 and imprisonment for up to a year.

Soria’s spokesperson noted that though the Assembly Member was aware of the County’s ordinance, the opposite did not seem to be true.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Rachel Youdelman is a former photography editor and lives in Clovis. She attended UC Berkeley, CalArts and Harvard University. Contact her at [rachel27@berkeley.edu](mailto:rachel27@berkeley.edu).*

## Democrats

Continued from page 5

its historical commitment to putting workers first in the economy.

“We can focus on things that the Harris campaign should have done better given the very short time frame that they had, but, for me, the more important problem is how the party of FDR is not winning huge majorities of union members, working families and how are those voters falling for the lies of a fascist buffoon.”

### Looking Ahead

“We have to be strategic and focused on how we can change the Democratic Party effectively rather than just complaining about it,” intones Larimore-Hall. “But there’s no reason to pretend that we don’t have a real crisis in leadership.

He posits that Jeffries and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D–N.Y.) should be replaced. “They’re just not at all equipped for this moment.”

“What we need is to be able to provide working-class voters with a real alternative that is meaningful for their lives that is aimed at improving their economic well-being and to be bold about those things,” adds Larimore-Hall. “That’s the solution.

“We don’t have to roll back our commitment to civil rights, human rights and social progress to make that case.”

Hicks lays out a different strategy: “You’ve got to legislate; you’ve got to litigate; continue to push back on the overreach of the White House, and you’ve seen [Attorney General] Rob Bonta do that; and lastly, you’ve got to organize—really to help make voters and the public aware of what these actions mean and their impact to their everyday lives and to be in position for when public sentiment changes.”

“

**“The more important problem is how the party of FDR is not winning huge majorities of union members, working families and how are those voters falling for the lies of a fascist buffoon.”**

—Daraka Larimore-Hall

Heading into its convention in late May, Hicks says that the state party is “still in kind of a preparation phase, knowing that this is a two-year fight” adding that “it’s our job to use the organizing infrastructure we have to remind people as to what their member of Congress is doing.”

Larimore-Hall stresses the need to continue the work on “reforming the structures of the party and finding ways to truly empower activists and grassroots stakeholders in the party.

“We have to show up; we can’t walk away. That sounds trite, but it’s really true. In times like these, it’s very easy to get demoralized.”

The importance of engaging players outside the party was also noted. “The party is just a gathering place for

activists to come together to make political change,” says Larimore-Hall. “The resistance has to be led by ordinary people regardless of the hat that they’re wearing.

“The politicians are definitely not the ones who are going to do that. It’s going to be ordinary people taking time, developing leadership skills, taking risks even, to move American politics back to a pro-worker, environmentally sane kind of project.

“The party can’t be afraid of being part of the movement pressure on Democratic elected officials. That doesn’t mean you can’t be friendly, or have a good relationship or whatever, but our Democratic officials should take for granted that the Democrats will be on their asses to make sure that people have [for example] clean drinking water.

“They should never, ever expect that the party would give them cover to not do it or to do something bad.”

The California Democratic Party will hold its 2025 state convention on May 30–June 1 in Anaheim. Any Democrat can attend as an observer ([cdpconvention.org/register/](http://cdpconvention.org/register/)). Elections will be held for the state party officers and regional directors. Make your voice heard.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Michael D. Evans is a political activist, editor and writer. Contact him at [evansm@usa.net](mailto:evansm@usa.net).*

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
OF FRESNO  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



[bigredchurch.org](http://bigredchurch.org)

Every Sunday  
9am: Exploration Hour  
10am: Worship  
*Bold. Proud. Progressive.*

2131 N. Van Ness Blvd.



WE ARE AN **OPEN AND AFFIRMING**  
CHURCH WHERE ALL ARE WELCOME.

5550 N FRESNO ST • FRESNO CA 93710  
559.435.2690 • [communityucc.com](http://communityucc.com)



# First-in-the-World Online Pesticide Notification System

BY CRISTINA GUTIERREZ

For decades, farmworker communities across California have demanded the right to know beforehand what, when and where hazardous agricultural pesticides will be applied.

They have wanted to be able to take safety precautions against exposure to pesticides drifting from fields. For years, these communities have called for an online system that could warn of upcoming toxic pesticide applications.

On March 24, that system finally arrived, as the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) launched the new online statewide pesticide notification system called “Spray Days.”

The Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment (CRPE) and Californians for Pesticide Reform (CPR) sponsored a celebratory news conference attended by more than 50 supporters at Shafter Veterans Hall. At the same site, the DPR hosted a launch event presentation of the online Spray Days system and sign-up to receive pesticide notifications by text or e-mail.

“This is a first-in-the-world pesticide notification system,” said CPR Co-Director Angel Garcia. “Since California uses more pesticides than any other state, including more than 130 pesticides that are not approved in the European Union, farmworker communities have demanded a ‘heads up’ in order to take measures to reduce the risk of exposure to our loved ones.

“We need far better protections from the state, but this is a giant step forward toward transparency about toxic pesticide use.”

Byanka Santoyo, an organizer with the CRPE, added that “right here in Shafter, five years ago, our community called on the ag commissioner to give us advanced notice of cancer-causing fumigant applications, but he refused. We kept pushing and pushing at AB 617 meetings, at public hearings, at news conferences and protests. Now, not just Shafter, but the whole state will have access to upcoming pesticide information.”

The Spray Days system allows for anybody with Internet access to search a map of California for notices of intended pesticide applications for the following day (for fumigants, the information will be provided 48 hours in advance).

People can also sign up to receive notices of pending pesticide use through text or e-mail. The notices will be for restricted material pesticides only—the pesticides considered most hazardous by the DPR. Some of these restricted pesticides can cause cancer and damage brains and lungs, among other health harms.

“We love the pesticide map system and the opportunity to get text notices,” said Erika Alfaro, a public health nurse in Northern California and a member of Safe Ag Safe Schools. “With this information, for the first time, agricultural communities can take the proper health precautions by closing windows and doors, taking clothes off the line and allowing



Angel Garcia of Californians for Pesticide Reform addresses the crowd in Shafter at a press conference on the state’s new online pesticide notification system. Photo courtesy of Cristina Gutierrez

the especially vulnerable—like pregnant or asthmatic individuals—to stay indoors at home, work or school.”

Irene Gomez, an Oxnard resident and member of the Coalition Advocating for Pesticide Safety–Ventura County, or CAPS 805, raised a remaining concern: “When my community in Nyeland Acres had the pilot notification project, our biggest issue was that you couldn’t find out exactly where the pesticides would be applied—which farm?

“That’s still a problem with Spray Days. You can only know pesticides are being applied within a square mile, but not whether it’s coming from behind your house, across the street or even a mile away.”

It is possible for such concerns to be addressed through the Spray Days review process, which calls for an Environmental Justice Advisory Committee and the California Department of Food & Agriculture to make annual recommendations for changes, as well as a yearly public comment period.

\*\*\*\*\*

Cristina Gutierrez is the San Joaquin Valley regional environment justice coordinator of Californians for Pesticide Reform.

# Community Kitchen Will Help Street Vendors

BY EDUARDO STANLEY

Street vendors are already part of the landscape of the Valley’s cities and towns. Their presence is most noticeable during public events, from sporting and cultural events to political protests. The style of the carts they push under the blazing sun or rain depends on the product they offer; the *elotero* (corn) cart is not the same as that of a fresh fruit or hot dog cart.

The food they offer is more than just nostalgia—think of corn covered in cheese and chili (and sometimes mayonnaise too), or refreshing *raspados* (scraped fruit). During the Valley summer, it’s no surprise that we crave a *paleta* (popsicle).

And while we enjoy the products they offer, we rarely consider that street vendors are workers who spend long hours roaming streets and parks looking for customers and who have families to feed. We also don’t think about where they produce or cook what they sell. And this very aspect is crucial to their survival, as they don’t always comply with sanitary requirements and municipal permits. This often leads to fines.

“The law requires that the food sold by street vendors be prepared following strict sanitary rules; this food could be prepared in a community kitchen certified by health authorities,” says Genoveva Islas, director of the Fresno-based organization Cultiva la Salud, which is



Genoveva Islas, founder and director of Cultiva La Salud. Photo by Peter Maiden

leading a community kitchen project to benefit street vendors that lack the capacity to cook according to strict sanitary controls. The City of Fresno has donated \$700,000 to Cultiva la Salud for its community kitchen project.

The quality of the food consumed by low-income groups is questionable and affects people’s health and well-being.

“We promote the well-being of society, the health of the community,” says Islas. “To achieve this, people need to eat well and be active.

“In low-income communities and neighborhoods, there are more junk food restaurants, more alcohol stores, and fewer stores that sell fresher, healthier food or products.

“A few years ago, Los Angeles state university (UCLA) conducted a study in the Fresno area and found that the local population has five times more access to junk food than to healthy foods.”

In Fresno, the businesses that sell or prepare healthier foods are located in the north of the city, an area inhabited by higher-income people than in the south.

Consuming cheaper but less healthy products is a common practice in low-income areas, where options are much more limited. People form habits, and these affect health and lead to more diseases.

“We decided to do something,” noted Islas. “We started working with some Hmong farmers and the National Hmong American Farmers Association to establish five fresh produce stands at a school in southeast Fresno, and this was well received by the people.

“It’s not that they don’t want to eat healthy; the problem is access. The problem is that selling junk food—chips, soda, etc.—doesn’t require any permit, while selling healthy food does. That’s why we need a community kitchen, so that vendors can cook according to the authorities’ requirements and so that it can be a place where they can train and take courses.”

Cultiva la Salud already has a building for the future community kitchen: an old laundromat located in downtown Fresno. Cultiva la Salud’s offices will be upstairs, and they are now remodeling the building.

“The budget is \$3 million; we’ve already raised \$2 million,” Islas says enthusiastically. “We have to consider who will be using it; each person might cook different foods. We think about 50 vendors could use the kitchen. And we also have to think about logistics, which won’t be easy. The kitchen will also be a training ground.”

Islas’dream of creating a community kitchen is getting closer to becoming a reality.

\*\*\*\*\*

Eduardo Stanley is the editor of the Community Alliance newspaper.

## The Cost of Complying with the Law

The Street Vendors Association is an independent organization founded three years ago in Fresno. Its leader is Miguel López, and it has approximately 40 members. In recent months, the association has been negotiating with the City and County of Fresno to get more vendors to obtain permits in order to sell. This means that the carts used by vendors must be approved.

Starting July 1, authorities will require those permits. Those who don’t have one will have to pay a fine.

“A corn cart costs between \$8,000 and \$9,000, depending on the material used,” said López. “I don’t think all vendors will be able to have their carts by July 1; it seems they are behind on deliveries.”

López estimates that due to the high cost of the cart and the delay in delivery, many *eloteros* (vendors selling “*elotes*,” or corn) will decide not to sell corn on the cob. Other products, such as fresh fruit, only require a City permit.

“Carts are a little expensive, but I see it as a business. And besides, we won’t be bothered by the authorities anymore; we’ll be able to move around and sell more freely,” says López.

“I’ve been a street vendor for 16 years, and until now, there’s never been any control or order...So people from other towns come to sell because they see that in Fresno, they don’t ask for anything. As an association, we want everyone to have a permit to sell, no matter where they come from.”

Street vendors face serious risks in their work, López explains, from people not paying them for their products to harassment and physical violence. In Fresno, in 2023, 45-year-old vendor Lorenzo Pérez was murdered during a robbery. This crime generated pressure from the community for the City to better protect street workers. Negotiations for vendors to obtain permits and support for the community kitchen project are part of Fresno’s response.

López believes this process benefits everyone. “We have the right to sell, but we also have obligations.”





## WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

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

Graphic by Lincoln Cushing

### Bev Fitzpatrick Scholarship Launch and Stan Poss Dedication at the EcoGarden

May 3, Noon–3 p.m.

Dakota EcoGarden Open House, potluck and announcement of the Bev Fitzpatrick Scholarship: Join the dedication of the newest (fourth) Arthur Dyson–designed ecostructure, which will be named in honor of a longtime supporter, Stan Poss. Plus, Wings Advocacy Fresno and The Eco-Village Fresno Project are launching a Bev Fitzpatrick scholarship in Bev's memory and legacy to help empower Fresno City College students make positive changes in the community. Please consider contributing to endow this scholarship. Donations can be made at the open house or by contacting Gerry Bill at gerry.bill@gmail.com.

### WILPF Fresno Earth Democracy at Earth Day

WILPF Earth Democracy had a booth at the Earth Day Fresno Celebration on April 12 at Fresno City College. It was complete with two oceans (kiddy wading pools filled with plastic trash). Kids and adults alike loved cleaning out the oceans with our nets and looking at the clean water. We hardly had time to pollute them again for the next person to clean out!

Many people were very interested in our fliers about plastic pollution; PFAS in our water; safer, alternative things to clean with; and the danger the CEMEX gravel company poses with its wishes to dig a 600-foot-deep trench near the San Joaquin River at Lost Lake.

HUGE THANKS goes out to the following WILPFers for helping set up our booth and being there in 2–3 hour shifts to welcome visitors and answer questions. We COULD NOT have done it without you!

Please forgive us if we forgot to thank you!

Patricia Wells

Evonne Waldo

Carol Goiburn

Jan Slagter

Rich Rollin

Joan Poss

Carlos Haeussler

Lynn Jacobsson

Gioia Frank

Thanks, also, to the Fresno Raging Grannies who sang Earth Day songs and even an Earth Day Rap!

—Jean Hays & Kyla Mitchell, Fresno WILPF Earth Democracy Co-Chairs

### May 18 at 3 p.m. Malcolm X el-Hajj Malik El Shabazz Birthday

Free AME at 806 Collins Ave., Fresno  
We will celebrate and honor Black Revolutionary Internationalism, including Franz Fanon, Patrice Lumumba and Malcolm X, all born in 1925. Distinguished speakers Drs. Melissa Knight and Michael Onyebuchi Eze, a student art contest, cake and more. (Potluck optional; you can eat even if you don't bring food.)

### WILPF 110-Year Anniversary on April 29

In April 1915, about 1,200 women from Austria, Belgium, Britain, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United States gathered at The Hague for the Women's International Congress. Holding this congress at this time was remarkable due to the difficulties of organization and travel, and the courage required to advocate for peace in time of war. The delegates discussed the root causes of conflict and how to end the war; it was the first international meeting to declare the principles that were needed for peace, including democratic control of foreign policy, with no secret treaties, universal disarmament, international disputes to be settled by arbitration and equal political rights for women.

A moment of silence for those killed by the war was described by a notable participant, Rosika Schwimmer, a Hungarian pacifist leader of the international women's suffrage movement: "We had one who learned that her son had been killed—and women who had learned two days earlier that their husbands had been killed, and women who had come from belligerent countries full of the unspeakable horror, of the physical horror of war, these women sat there with their anguish and sorrows, quiet, superb, poised, and with only one thought, 'What can we do to save the others from similar sorrow?'"

Rosika Schwimmer returned to Hungary, then after the war was forced to flee to the United States where she was falsely accused of being a German spy and denied U.S. citizenship because she "refused to bear arms." She died stateless in 1948.



Cleaning the oceans at Earth Day Fresno.

### April 5 Protests—Of Course, WILPF and the Raging Grannies Were There!

Hands Off! was the name, and these protests were aimed at opposing billionaire fascist government and corruption, and protesting cuts to Social Security and Medicaid and attacks on health, education, the environment and racial justice—essentially trying to erase rights and visibility of all non-white people—and even harsher attacks on immigrants, trans people and supporters of Palestine.

Somewhere between 1,500 and 2,000 people showed up and showed out in Fresno. WILPF Fresno President Teresa Castillo spoke with heartfelt eloquence and the Raging Grannies "sang truth to power."

Protests are necessary against this fascist regime that abducts people and sends them to concentration camps. What are the next steps for the resistance?



Fresno Raging Grannies singing truth to power

One protester carried a sign with the Audre Lordé quote "Your silence will not protect you." Audre Lordé was good at truth, and here are some more quotes to guide us.

"And at last you'll know with surpassing certainty that only one thing is more frightening than speaking your truth. And that is not speaking."

"In a society where the good is defined in terms of profit rather than in terms of human need, there must always be some group of people who, through systematised

oppression, can be made to feel surplus, to occupy the space of the dehumanised inferior."

"In order to be whole, we must recognise the despair oppression plants within each of us—that thin persistent voice that says our efforts are useless, it will never change, so why bother, accept it. And we must fight that inserted piece of self-destruction that lives and flourishes like a poison inside of us, unexamined until it makes us turn upon ourselves in each other."



Fresno Raging Grannies at Hands Off! protest

**SAVE THE DATE**

Commemorating the 100th  
birth anniversary of  
**AL-HAJJ MALIK AL-SHABAZZ  
BROTHER MALCOLM X**

**Sunday, May 18th**  
Details Coming Soon

Contact  
hajjreza@gmail.com

Graphic by Reza Nekumanesh

#### RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP NOW! HERE'S HOW:

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

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

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

#### WILPF MEETING

May 8 (second Thursday), 6:30 p.m., via Zoom (and sometimes also at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N. Van Ness Ave.). This meeting is open to all. Watch your e-mail for an announcement. To check the in-person option, contact Teresa at taca\_03@ymail.com or 559-360-8054.

#### STIR IT UP—WILPF ON KFCF 88.1 FM

May 28 (fourth Wednesday), 3 p.m. Jean Hays highlights people and events important to our WILPF community.

#### VALLEY VOICES FOR PEACE

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

#### WOMEN IN BLACK

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

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



# Irvine Foundation Recognizes Central Valley Leaders

BY DENISE LOPEZ

On the heels of Women’s History Month, two women from the Central Valley are gaining well-deserved recognition for their transformative leadership. Shantay R. Davies-Balch and Nayamin Martinez have been named recipients of the 2025 James Irvine Foundation Leadership Award—an honor that underscores their tireless efforts to advance maternal health and environmental justice in some of the state’s most underserved communities.

The annual award recognizes innovative leaders whose work is transforming California’s future, with a particular focus on addressing the state’s most pressing challenges. Each recipient’s organization will receive a \$350,000 grant to accelerate their impactful work.

This year’s award recipients reflect the depth of resilience and innovation coming out of the Central Valley, a region often overlooked despite being the backbone of California’s agricultural economy and home to some of the state’s most vulnerable communities.

Davies-Balch and Martinez are tackling two timely and critical issues—environmental justice and maternal health—and their work is setting a blueprint for systemic change.

### Championing Environmental Justice for Farmworkers

Nayamin Martinez, executive director of the Central California Environmental Justice Network (CCEJN), is a powerful advocate for the rural farmworker communities of the Central Valley.

Martinez’s work focuses on protecting these communities from pollution and climate-related hazards—issues that disproportionately affect low-income families and communities of color.

Farmworkers in the Central Valley face exposure to dangerous pesticides, poor air quality and extreme heat—conditions that pose severe health risks but have long gone ignored by regulators. Under Martinez’s leadership, the CCEJN has mobilized farmworkers to testify at legislative hearings, drawing attention to these injustices and spurring action from state agencies.

In 2024, the CCEJN co-organized a legislative hearing where farmworker testimonies helped push the state to audit Cal/OSHA’s enforcement of workplace safety laws. This effort marked a significant step toward ensuring better protections for farmworkers facing dangerous working conditions.

“Our goal is to give farmworkers a voice and the power to advocate for their rights,” Martinez said. “For too long, their stories have gone ignored—we’re changing that.”

Martinez’s grassroots approach combines direct advocacy with systemic change. The CCEJN provides training to farmworkers, empowering them to document and report environmental violations, and collaborates with policymakers to strengthen enforcement and accountability.



Nayamin Martinez, executive director of the Central California Environmental Justice Network (CCEJN), left, and Shantay R. Davies-Balch, the CEO of the Black Wellness and Prosperity Center (BWPC), right, were among the recipients of the 2025 James Irvine Foundation Leadership Award. Photo courtesy of the James Irvine Foundation

The Irvine Foundation grant will enable the CCEJN to expand these initiatives and strengthen partnerships with state agencies and environmental organizations.

### Advancing Black Maternal and Infant Health

Shantay R. Davies-Balch, the CEO of the BLACK Wellness and Prosperity Center (BWPC) in Fresno, has made it her mission to reduce alarming disparities in Black maternal and infant health outcomes. Black women in California face a maternal mortality rate that is three to four times higher than that of white women—a stark health crisis that Davies-Balch is determined to change.

Under her leadership, the BWPC has created a rigorous doula training program that has tripled the number of Black doulas serving Fresno County. This culturally competent workforce not only supports mothers during pregnancy and childbirth but also advocates for systemic changes within healthcare institutions to address racial bias and improve maternal care.

Her work extends beyond the delivery room.

The BWPC also partners with local health systems and policymakers to implement broader structural changes, including improved access to prenatal care and more comprehensive postpartum support.

The Irvine Foundation grant will allow the BWPC to expand its programs, increase outreach efforts and further influence healthcare policy statewide.

### Women Driving Change from the Ground Up

As we reflect on the contributions of women around the world, the work of Martinez and Davies-Balch underscores the importance of investing in community-led solutions and is a testament to the impact and determination of women leaders. Both leaders have built trust within their communities and are working from the ground up to address longstanding disparities in health and environmental justice.

“Each recipient exemplifies leadership qualities vital for advancing progress in our state—through innovation, inclusivity and measurable results,” said Don Howard, president and CEO of the Irvine Foundation.

This recognition brings funding and statewide visibility to the issues that Martinez and Davies-Balch are addressing. Their success sends a clear message that meaningful change happens when communities are empowered to lead—and when the voices of those most affected are centered on the solutions.

\*\*\*\*\*

Denise Lopez is a communications strategist and storyteller with roots in California’s Central Valley.

# Tulare Lake Reflections

BY VIC BEDOIAN

Tulare Lake has been many things to many people over a very long time. It’s not a lake anymore except when in certain wet years it becomes the ghost of a lake, bringing back memories of what was once the dominant natural habitat in the southern reaches of the Central Valley. Two years ago, atmospheric rivers of rain lashed the state submerging a vast tract of farmland bounded by straight-line levees. It was not the first time the ghost lake reappeared and it will not be the last to prove that mother nature cannot be confined.

It was a temporary emergence of the lake, and by midsummer the water gave way to saturated soil. But in that short life span, the lake’s rebirth generated a cascade of articles and wide-eyed media reports.

Much has been written about this historic and enigmatic place over the years, but one account that stands out is *Vanishing Landscapes: Land and Life in the Tulare Lake Basin* by William L. Preston. He grew up in Tulare County and the work is a product of his personal appreciation and love of the region’s natural history and people. It led to his life work as a professor of geography at California Polytechnic University in San Luis Obispo. Preston succinctly observes the Tulare Lake of our time in his introduction.

In the southern San Joaquin Valley of California, midway between San Francisco Bay and the Los Angeles Basin, lies the dwindling remnant of a broad Pleistocene lake. Eastward lie the foothills of the Sierra Nevada; westward the Coast Range. A century ago, Tulare Lake was known as the center of a distinct natural and cultural realm; the Tulare Valley, but the regional identity of the lake basin has steadily diminished with the demise of the lake itself, and the rise of human-dominated landscapes. Once upon a time, Tulare Lake and its associated environments were the region’s dominant landmarks; now these are subordinate to cultural creations.

Comprehensive in its scope, *Vanishing Landscapes* documents the broad range of human and natural history, from prehistoric to the near-present along with the relationship of people to the land from historic, geographic and ecological perspectives. Preston takes us through the kaleidoscope of time from the region’s changing terrains through geological epochs all the way to the familiar surroundings of our present-day manufactured and manicured landscapes. It is mainly a story about people and the land and how it was utilized over the ages from the Yokuts, through the Spanish empire and Mexican occupation, and finally waves of immigration from the United States.



Farm fields submerged in April 2023 brought back the ghost of Tulare Lake. Photo by Vic Bedoian

The resurrection of Tulare Lake in 2023 sparked not only media attention but also a thirst for a deeper look at the larger meaning of its history and changes over time. What does Tulare Lake mean for us today? That topic was recently explored in a series of lectures at the College of Sequoias (COS) collaborating with the Alta Peak chapter of the California Native Plant Society (CNPS).

Tulare Lake was explored from a myriad of viewpoints. Barbara Brydolf is president of the CNPS chapter and main organizer of the events. She suggests the 2023 flood events did focus renewed attention on the regional environment.

Continues on page 12





# One Fresno or the Tale of Two Cities

BY MIKE RHODES

This map of the November 2024 presidential election in Fresno County illustrates a voting pattern that is consistent ever since the *Community Alliance* started creating them in 2012.

What you see is the precinct-by-precinct outcome of the 2024 presidential election on a map from the Fresno County Registrar of Voters. Red shows the precincts won by Donald Trump, whereas blue shows the precincts that Kamala Harris won.

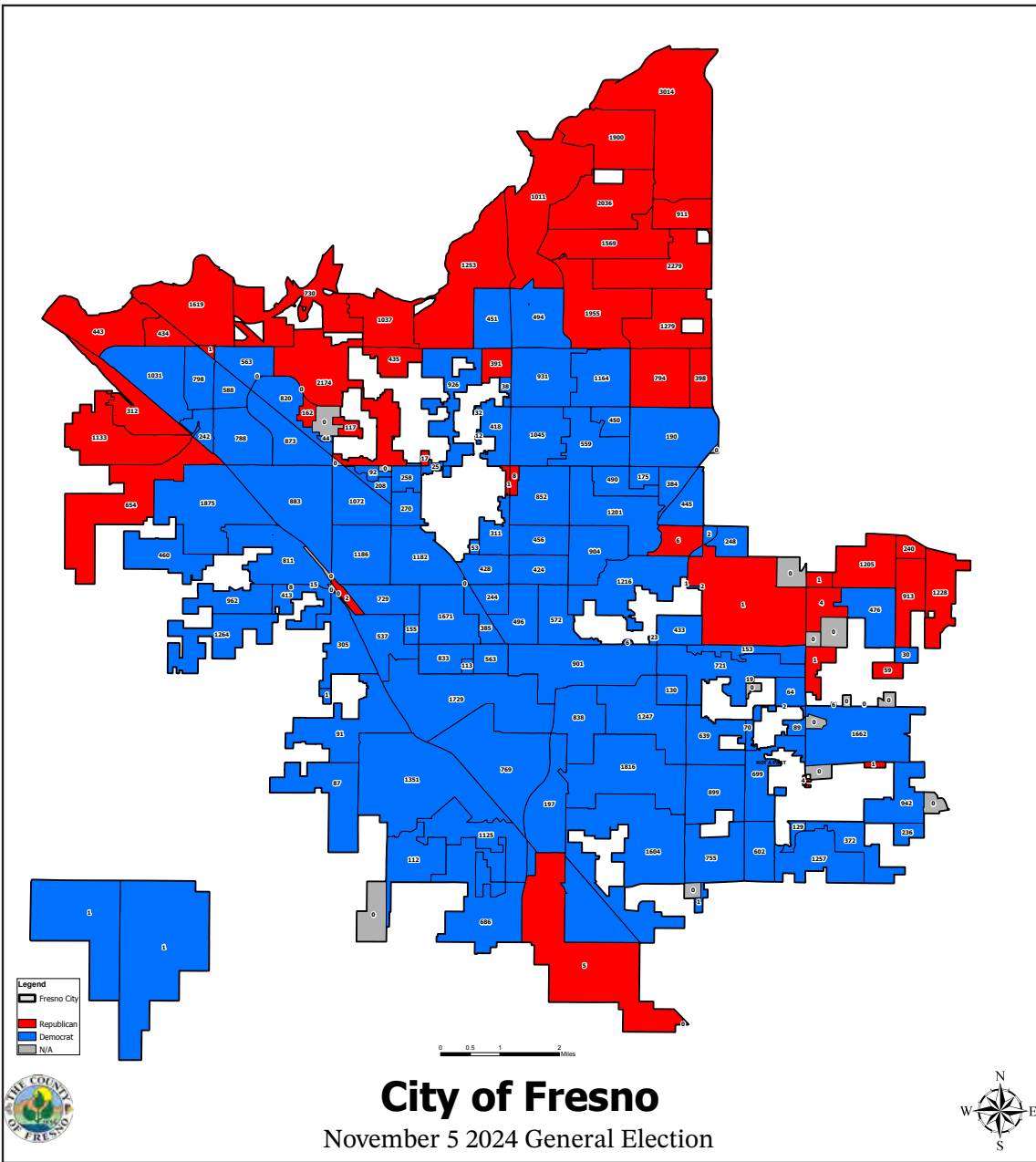
The affluent northern part of the city constantly votes for the more conservative candidate or proposition and they turn out 80%+ of their voters in most elections. Compare that with southwest or southeast Fresno where voting turnout is often in the 20%-30% range. It does not matter that those in south Fresno vote for the more progressive candidate, their votes are insignificant compared to the higher voter turnout of affluent north Fresno voters.

It is not surprising that many people see Fresno and the Central San Joaquin Valley as a conservative holdout in an otherwise liberal California. Republican Fresno Mayor Jerry Dyer is pushing his narrative of One Fresno, which encourages rich and poor alike to row together as one.

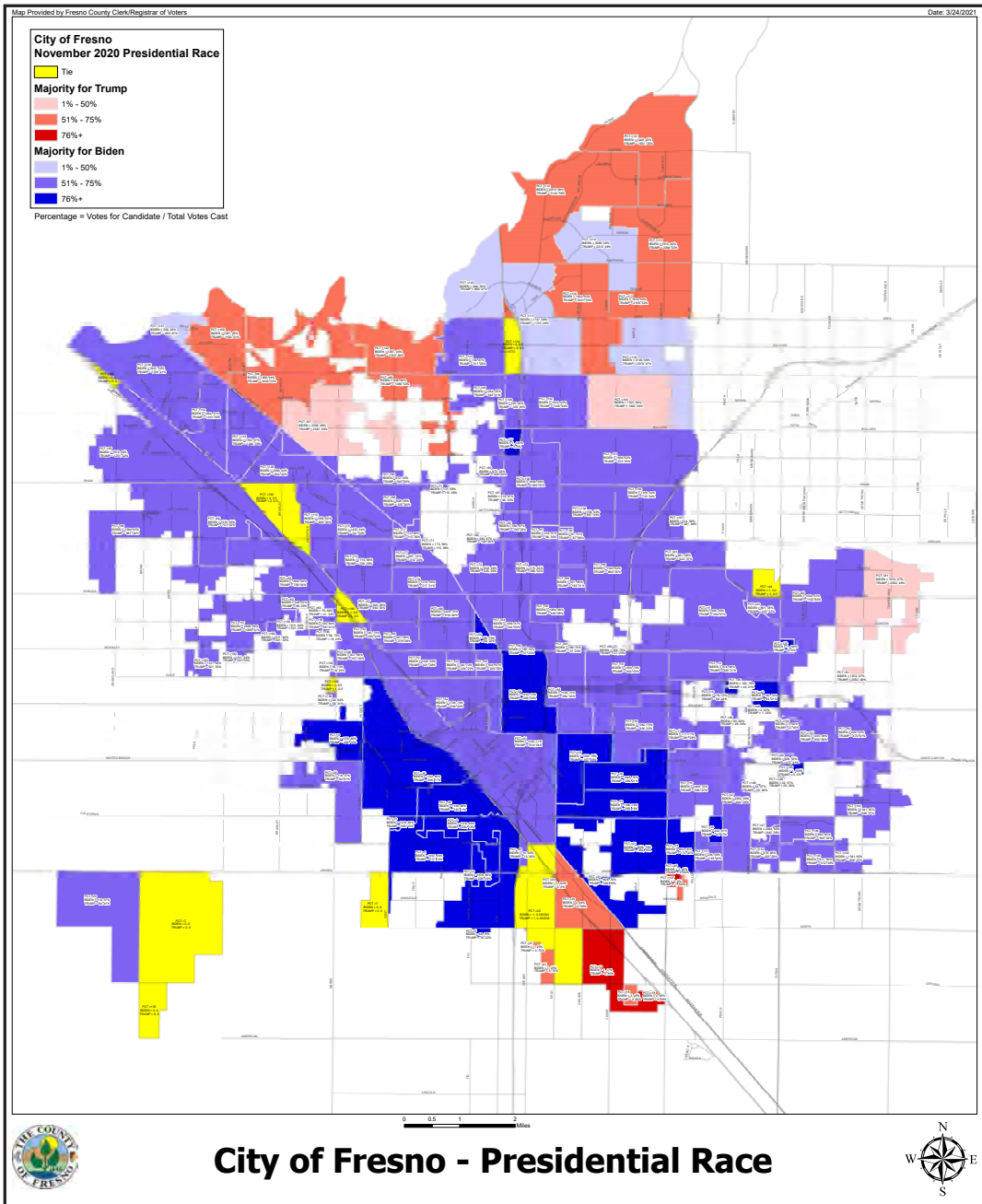
The problem is, as this map illustrates, we don't have a level playing field. Builders, developers and the affluent fund candidates that will represent their interests. Few campaign contributions come from poor and working-class areas where just paying for rent and food is challenging.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Mike Rhodes was a founder of the Community Alliance newspaper. He has also been the editor and executive director over the past 28 years. He wrote this article while on Hospice because of his diagnosis of Stage 4 lung cancer and urges you not to mourn, but to organize, when he dies. Contact him at mikerhodes@comcast.net.*



2024 presidential election results by precinct in the city of Fresno. Map produced by the Fresno County Registrar of Voters



## CVPPAC May Meeting

Saturday, May 10, at 3:30 p.m.

Join Zoom Meeting

Meeting ID: 954 0655 9582

Passcode: 725170

Or you can use this QR code:



2020 presidential election results by precinct in the city of Fresno. Map produced by the Fresno County Registrar of Voters



# Community Response to the Tale of Two Cities Map

The Central Valley Progressive PAC asked community members from throughout Fresno to reflect on their impressions of the implications of the 2024 presidential election map that clearly reveals a "tale of two cities" in the city of Fresno. Here is a sampling of those comments:



**Simone Cranston-Rhodes**  
*President, Central Valley Progressive PAC*

The Central Valley Progressive PAC has requested and shared the voting precinct maps of the city of Fresno for over the last decade. And what the data presented is a very clear picture of politics in Fresno. In the north, we see high voter turnout with a steep conservative leaning, and in the south, we see low voter turnout with a progressive learning.

The issue is not that the city of Fresno is a conservative place, it is that the high levels of disenfranchisement when it comes to voting happening in our low-income communities. If the issue of empowering low-income communities was a simple one it would have been done long ago, but this is a complicated issue that will need a complicated solution.

The Fresno County Registrar's Office needs to make an investment in education, communication and turnout focused on low voter turnout areas. They need to focus on programs that engage the youth communities to see the importance of voting.

In the 2022 Primary Election, the voter turnout in Fresno County for residents ages 18-35 was 13%. Embarrassingly low. Clearly there needs to be an investment in reaching these low-voter populations where they are at (social media, online, in schools) and engaging them in the process of voting. This is one part of the solution needed to solve low-voter turnout.

**Rafael Avitia**  
*Organizer and educator*

The people of Fresno, and especially south of Shaw, possess tremendous political muscle that when exercised will bring about the change we need in areas from healthcare for all to housing and better-paying jobs. It is only when we stay home and choose not to vote that certain politicians work against our interest and make decisions that serve the elite.

Ultimately, we need to register to vote and ensure that our children do the same so that it becomes as common as applying for a California driver's license. Until we change our attitude, we will not realize our true political standing.



**Sandra Celedon**  
*President and CEO, Fresno Building Healthy Communities*

We can learn from countries that encourage and make voting easy. The solution to increased voter turnout requires action from the state and local decision-makers.

First, we need to automatically register everyone who is eligible to vote, period. Second, we need to make voting easy by moving elections to a weekend instead of the middle of the workweek or making it a national holiday.

We need to centralize elections so that they are carried out consistently, with clear communications and processes, and eliminate the confusion of competing and contradicting policies and procedures.



**Heather Evans**  
*Academic librarian and vice president of CVPPAC*

Make sure we're talking with people, every day, everywhere. We can't let politics be a forbidden topic; we can't surrender the public sphere.

This helps people who may feel isolated feel more connected, which encourages hope and action.



**Daniel O'Connell**  
*Executive director, Central Valley Partnership*

The voting pattern of the 2024 presidential election shows a deep cynicism in our system of governance. People feel disempowered and have

little faith in electoral processes to create changes to improve their lives. The political power structure seeks this precise outcome.

Our collective work is to foster revolutionary action starting with using the existing electoral system while not being naive to think it is our only recourse or the sole solution. The question of how to build a powerful multiracial, genderinclusive and intergenerational movement in a moment of existential crisis is before us.



**Dr. Matthew Jendian**  
*Professor of sociology, Fresno State*

The vote, even if limited and limiting, is still a legitimate political tool, among many, in the struggle to build a better world, and we can be better off using the franchise and exercising our political voice, even if it is to vote against another candidate.



**Luis Chavez**  
*Fresno County supervisor, District 3*

As Democrats, we oftentimes take voters for granted and don't do the necessary outreach. I've run in every election cycle since 2010, with the exception of 2020.

The last presidential election results map shows the stark difference of voters in north and south Fresno. Vice President Harris clearly won the majority of the geographical areas of Fresno. However, the numbers of "consistent voters," those that vote often and consistently in north Fresno always outnumber the working-class neighborhoods of south and central Fresno.

We have to show up at their doorsteps and engage, dialogue and communicate why they should vote blue. When we do that, we win! The younger generation will soon change that, and my hope is the city/county will reflect the diversity we have in our communities—but only if we give working men and women a reason to vote for us!

**Carole Laval**  
*President, Fresno County Democratic Women's Club and Kennedy Club of the San Joaquin Valley*

We have a two-party system. I am a lifelong Democrat because I believe Democrats to always be working toward justice and social welfare.

The other party is not interested in the welfare of our citizenry. They have fought against the Social Security system since its inception, a program that has lifted more people above the poverty line than any other government program.



**Jason Carns**  
*Democratic political consultant*

The map is a perfect illustrator of why we need people to vote, and we need to turn out voters. It is not just registering new voters, but bringing out those who are already registered.

The Valley in the end is a Democratic place. The problem is the electorate; those who actually vote are a much more conservative population that do not truly represent our values.

**Matthew Gillian**  
*Community advocate*

GOTV needs to be year-round, not just during election cycles. Now what that GOTV looks like or how it's delivered probably changes between cycles (or during a presidential election), but we should always be engaging the community in many different ways.



**Rachel Youdelman**  
*Fresnoland and Community Alliance contributor*

When people willingly relinquish their right to vote, the consequences can be devastating, as we are witnessing now. In Fresno County, registered Democrats outnumber registered Republicans, but because of low Dem turnout, Republicans prevailed in the last election.

What can we do about it? We can strategize around identifying precincts with low Dem turnout and target [them] for mobilization.

We can work on building a stronger local presence and infrastructure—such as assigning residents to serve as precinct captains and creating teams of volunteers to work as neighborhood organizers—to keep voters engaged year-round, not just during elections.

**Kevin Hall**  
*Community and political organizer and Community Alliance columnist*

First, find better candidates; too few have genuine community service experience. Start by asking them, "What have you done for someone other than yourself?"

Second, political committees need to set higher standards for endorsements and to add a category of "none suitable."

Finally, voters want economic fairness in their daily lives, not more platitudes from "business Democrats."

In the upcoming race between Fresno Building Healthy Communities CEO Sandra Celedon and Fresno City Council Member Annalisa Perea to succeed Joaquin Arambula in State Assembly District 31, people will have a real opportunity to choose between a community leader and a status quo politician. People are more likely to turn out to support the former.

**Annalisa Perea**  
*Fresno City Council member, District 1*

One of the best ways to improve the democratic process locally is to invest more in engaging voters year-round: Voter outreach shouldn't only happen during election season. Building a more consistent voter engagement engine builds trust and keeps people involved throughout the year. If we wait until election season to begin engaging, it may already be too late for some.



**Janet Slagter**  
*Activist and retired Fresno State professor of philosophy and women's, gender and sexuality studies*

If we want people to vote, we need good candidates. For the most part, local candidates have little to recommend them. Note the Perea dynasty. And the rabid right wingers and their moneyed developer and big ag funders.

I remember a fundraiser for TJ Cox at the home of a progressive who was part of our community. Cox turned out to be a crook.

Nearly all local candidates tow the line of acceptability palatable to the local power structure. We need to develop candidates!



**Paul Gilmore**  
*Professor of history and political science, Fresno City College, and co-coordinator, FCC Social Justice Center*

I think that get-out-the-vote campaigns are great, and I'm impressed (and feel properly guilty about not doing enough) with all the work many of my friends do, knocking on doors and doing phone banks. But I think what's missing are the deep institutional ties that make our non-voting residents feel an ownership of our local, state and national governments.

We too often talk about a "sense of" community or a "sense of" ownership. It always sounds like an admission of defeat—all we can provide is "a sense of" these things? How about the real thing?

We need to revive unions—and unions as social organizations; we need to revive neighborhood organizations and clubs; we need to revive our schools and colleges as civic centers; we need to create co-ops and more publicly owned institutions; and we need to revive precinct party organizations.



**Daren Miller**  
*Retired K-12 educator*

I agree with numerous national progressive pundits that say, "the Democratic Party has a leadership problem and not a membership problem." There are way more registered Democrats in the city of Fresno than any other political group. Now [the] Fresno County Democratic Party leadership must find ways to engage, motivate and stimulate local political action into greater voter education and election turnout.



**Olga Loza**  
*State coordinator, Poder Latinx*

To improve the democratic process in Fresno, we need to build a culture of ongoing participation—not just during elections. Listening to our communities, especially those that have been historically ignored, is key. We can start by organizing locally, educating ourselves about our rights, and demanding transparency from our representatives. If we want real change, we must stay actively and consistently involved.

## Join CVPPAC

Visit our website at  
<https://www.cvppac.org>



# Tulare Lake

Continued from page 9

“I do think that the 2023 flooding has raised the awareness of Tulare Lake in the minds of the public. As I and others in the lecture series said, we didn’t even know that the lake existed, even though we grew up in California. The Central Valley was just something you drove through to get to somewhere else.

“I think that the floods were a reality check for us and caused us to realize that this isn’t natural or desirable. Also, because of the State Groundwater Management Act we now have to look at changing how we manage the landscape. That opens up opportunities.”

Yokuts called it Pa’ashi, and that name is making a comeback too. The contrast over the lost lake’s ecosystem and today’s industrial agriculture helped inspire the concerns of local nature lovers.

“The Tulare Lake region used to be so rich and is now so impoverished,” says Brydolf. “When I see how abundant birds are in the wetlands in the northern Central Valley and think that they were once here in Tulare County as well, it seems like a tragedy. I think it’s wrong that the development of the Tulare Lake basin was so one-sided, resulting in almost all the natural landscape being destroyed for the sake of farming.

“Because of this, there is almost no native vegetation left in the valley floor, and animals that used to be abundant, like roadrunners, blunt-nosed leopard lizards, kangaroo rats, tricolored blackbirds, marsh wrens and western pond turtles, are now scarce and in danger of extinction.”

Renowned naturalist Rob Hansen learned about the Tulare Lake area as a teenage birder. His interest and expertise grew from there. He spent time managing at a wildlife refuge that was an offshoot of the J.G. Boswell ranch that now covers much of the old lakebed. Now a retired COS professor is continuing to appreciate what is special about this place.

“Tulare Lake was a patchwork of habitats running that ecological gambit from alkaline desert to lush riparian forest. The western portions lay in the rain shadow of coastal mountains, and moving further east, flatlands gave way to short grasslands, and these grasslands in turn transition to salt marshes that thrive along the lake’s tall grasslands.”

Hansen is especially in wonderment of the creatures living in that severe habitat. “Many of the critters live underground to escape the extremes of desert. You see blunt-nosed leopard lizards and burrowing owls and birds that live underground too.”

Tulare Lake and its environs provided a diverse range of plant communities. Fanning out from the water’s edge to the mountains was marshland, lowland heath, spiny saltbush, desert saltbush, prairie, tree savannah, riparian forest, chaparral and evergreen forest. All that habitat provided homes and resources for the numerous Yokuts villages in the basin. The basin was fed by four rivers: the Kings, Kaweah, Tule and the seasonal White. Experts say it was one of the most densely populated regions in pre-European America.

Then came Spain’s string of missions along the coast. Vivian Underhill, who specializes in environmental and water justice at UC Santa Cruz said the Yokuts environment was their protector.

“The lakes and wetlands really served as a front line of defense against Spanish and Mexican colonization and the villages among them became a place of refuge for both and runaways from the Spanish missions along the coasts.”

For a brief period in the early 1800s, newly liberated Mexico governed California and divided much of the landscape into large land-grant ranchos. They too mostly avoided Tulare Lake. And they respected Yokuts’ land rights. Hispanic peoples, Preston writes, “did little to change regional patterns of land and life, but their diseases, their livestock, and their plants, their politics and their values soon began to wield tremendous influence.”

But they were followed by increased immigration from the United States followed by the Mexican-American War that ceded the Southwest. Statehood in 1850 changed everything forever as settlers came into the valley to establish ranches and farms. Underhill explains how it happened.

“They said any lands that were not successfully claimed within two years would just revert to being public lands of the United States. This process was long, often intentionally drawn out and lawyers charged exorbitant fees specifically for non-white claimants. It ultimately bankrupted many Mexican land-grant holders.

“Meanwhile indigenous nations weren’t notified of the commission. If they had decided to go and represent their claims they would have had to travel to San Francisco during a time when U.S. law restricted their travel. There was a significant urgency felt by the state of California to begin assigning private ownership to white settlers.”

Growing up on the 40-acre Tachi Yokuts rancheria near the shores of old Tulare Lake, Robert Jeff told of his fears growing up and trying to comprehend history. “I never understood why people that were running away to find a better way of life would come over here and make our life bad. Never understood it.

“You know they came here looking for opportunities, running from whatever they were running from, and they had a clean slate. We could start this new way of life any way we want to, and this is how they wanted it.”

Jeff emphasized his people were peaceful and at first trusted settlers. “We were going to teach them our way of life, they’re going to learn how to live like us. But we didn’t know they had other plans. We didn’t know they didn’t respect the land, respect the water. We didn’t know they wanted to extract everything they can just to make money for themselves and their families down the line.”

Preston observes that “the years from 1844 to 1856 were most important as a transition between two very different ways of life in the Tulare Lake Basin: the termination of a balanced relationship between land and people, and the introduction of a new relationship based on forceful control of the land by people.”

It was the beginning of the end for indigenous Pa’ashi, as Vivian Underhill describes. “The lake did begin to shrink as settlers diverted river water to irrigate their crops, and settlers began to plant crops in the lake bed when it was dry, then slowly crops all year round. Vista Lake, Kern Lake and Goose Lake dried first, but then in 1898 Pa’ashi went dry for the first time. But it returned 19 times. So really, Tulare Lake wasn’t drained so much as it was starved.”

Jeff is now Tachi Yokuts tribal vice-president. They now have a casino resort operation on 4,000 acres. But he ponders why his people were left out and remembers it as a painful time. “As a little kid I felt like nobody cared about us. You know we were stuck on a small rancheria and there was nobody coming out to plant trees and paint the fences, there were no Toys for Tots, there was none of that coming to our community.”

Throughout the 1850s and 1860s, most of the settler lands in the basin were dedicated to cattle grazing and some grain growing. With the coming of the Southern Pacific Railroad, wheat demand grew dramatically. By the end of the century that market played out and land-use patterns transformed again. This time, smaller farms of orchards and vines flourished attracting a permanent, land-based population.

As Preston documents, the early 1900s saw the basin’s farmers develop an increasingly intimate relationship with the land, using new technologies and specialization of crops. However, he states that between 1926 and 1945 economic and social upheaval caused small farms to give way to large operations. This prompted another change with the influx of farmworkers from Mexico, Asia and the American South to work the increasingly large farms and dairies.

Agribusiness in the Tulare Lake basin today follows that land-use pattern of domination. Since 1925, the J.G. Boswell company has been engaged there in the production, processing and marketing of cotton, tomatoes, oil seeds, orchards and cattle on roughly 135,000 acres. Mark Arax in his classic work *The Dreamt Land: Chasing Water and Dust Across California* paints an indelible picture of the current reality when he observed the lake’s comeback a few years ago.

The lake, maybe one-twentieth of its native size, had come back. Bordered on all sides by the hard lines of levees, it had come back square. The lake bottom, once fished by four tribes of Yokuts, now belongs to the J.G. Boswell, the biggest farmer in the world at the time and last of California’s land and water barons. The Boswells had been chased out of the Georgia cotton fields by the boll weevil in the early 1900’s. They’d landed in Kings County along with a handful of southern transplants and proceeded to drain the largest body of freshwater west of the Mississippi. They straightjacketed the four rivers that fed into Tulare Lake and installed a series of pumps that made the Kings River run backward.

As Brydolf sees it, “A fair amount of the ‘flooding’ that we experienced can be attributed to our attempts to manage the water—diverting, channelizing, separating it from its floodplains to deliver more water to farmers. As a result, we have increased flood danger.

“Large amounts of water flowing in channelized rivers tears out the banks, and if houses are too close, it tears them out too. When you allow extra water to spread out on floodplains, it dissipates the force and danger of the water. So perhaps the word ‘flooding’ is really a misnomer.”

American occupation, Preston emphasizes, served to homogenize the basin. “The cultural and physical diversity and distinctiveness that gave the Tulare Basin an identity of its own have been lost. Landscapes created by centuries of close interrelationships between land and life have been cleared away, and new patterns have taken over.”

However, he also points out to those who take the time to look around that “the influences of history and distinctive local ecologies may still be detected in the landscapes of the Tulare Lake Basin.”

Learning from the past is essential to creating a better future, reckons Brydolf, “We live in unsettled times: fire, drought, floods, groundwater overdraft, wells going dry, undrinkable water, land subsidence, and the conflict and anxiety that surrounds SGMA, the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, and its implementation.”

Groundwater overdraft is the most acute problem in the Tulare Lake basin as Arax documents. “Farmers are poking so many holes in the ground, sucking out so much water from prehistoric depths that the earth is pulling away, first by inches and now by feet. The earth doesn’t sink alone, of course. It takes with it roads, bridges, dams, and canals.

“No farmer dares to go deeper than J.G. Boswell, who had drilled fifty-two wells in the bottom of old Tulare Lake, seven of the wells to a depth of 2,500 feet. That’s a hole the length of one Empire State Building on top of another. And so on and on it goes, in a rush to the nethermost.”

Brydolf believes the Tulare Lake basin could be transformed again. “Now is the time to review our past actions and current approach to see if there is a better way forward. It is essential that we know the past.

“We need to know what was here before we reengineered the land and took away the lake, we need to understand how that happened and we need to know about the injustices perpetrated on the native peoples before we can make informed decisions about what we do going forward.”

Jeff has a dream of making water and the spirit of Pa’ashi a part of Yokuts life again. “We’re Lake people, we’re water people, we need to recreate the environment that our ancestors once lived in. One of our big focuses right now is to revitalize that slough and bring it back to life, and by putting water in there and letting water circulate throughout our community and see it moving.”

That’s where Julie Rentner of River Partners comes in. Her organization works mostly in the Central Valley and was founded in 1998 with a mission to create wildlife habitat for the benefit of people and the environment. They have restored 20,000 acres of riparian landscapes.

“We’ve learned from various cross-sector partnerships in the valley about exactly how we can recover lost ecosystems and exactly what benefit those recovered ecosystems play for people as well as for wildlife. The first big lessons we learned were how to use farming practices in large-scale restoration.”

Rentner cautioned that such a restoration would be expensive and require a lot of technical expertise. “Restored Tulare Lake obviously could be an incredible cultural asset but even the act of restoring it can be healing and revitalizing.

“Tulare Lake doesn’t have to just be a spot of wet on the landscape. It can be a place of lasting wildlife recovery for terrestrial species like the monarch butterfly that’s on the brink of extinction, and for aquatic critters that live in rivers, streams and wetlands fringing the lake.”

There is a way to initiate a restoration project, according to Rentner, through the State Department of Conservation. “With multi-benefit floodplain restoration, we can actually find those places where it makes sense for the water to spread across the landscape and sink in. We can work with willing sellers and willing water managers to put this water to positive use, to flip this damage into something that’s a tremendous community asset.

“Bringing life back to Pa’ashi is finding places with willing partners and finding ways to speak to all sectors about how it can benefit them, in turn benefiting all of us.”

Maybe restoring a semblance of the aquatic ecosystem that was Pa’ashi is a long shot. But the concept has many supporters and it is worth a try. Toward that end, legislation sponsored by State Senator Melissa Hurtado (D–Bakersfield) would bring floodplain restoration investment to the Tulare Basin. SB 556 passed the subcommittee with a unanimous vote. It is a beginning.

\*\*\*\*\*

*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.*



*Chase Flower Shop*  
(559) 233-8631  
1405 N. Van Ness Ave  
Fresno, CA 93728

*World Wide Delivery*  
[www.chaseflowershop.com](http://www.chaseflowershop.com)

*Michael Butler*  
Floral Design

32954 Rd. 222  
North Fork, CA  
(559) 877-8400  
[kernfamilyfarm.com](http://kernfamilyfarm.com)  
[kernfamilyfarm@netptc.net](mailto:kernfamilyfarm@netptc.net)





A local, natural,  
seasonally changing  
market



WHAT IN THE WORLD  
ARE WE DOING?



BE A PART OF THE SOLUTION TO OIL POLLUTION.  
RECYCLE USED MOTOR OIL AND OIL FILTERS

Free recycling with the City of Fresno  
residential curbside program and free  
recycling at certified collection centers.

CALL (559) 621-1111 FOR MORE INFORMATION



**Got CBD?**

100% Effective  
Natural  
0% THC

100% Affordable

**Contact: smiley**  
smileycalderon@gmail.com

STRATEGY + VISION  
**PAUL E. PIERCE**



BOARD/STAFF DEVELOPMENT

PRODUCTIVE MEETINGS

STRATEGIC PLANNING

PAUL@PAULEPIERCE.COM

559 246 7236

When the party at your pad is over...  
**ALWAYS REMEMBER**  
to recycle CRV Bottles & Cans!





# FRESNO ARTS & CULTURE

## MAY 2025 CALENDAR

01

**Waitress** (through May 18) Roger Rocka’s. A waitress/pie chef living in a small town feels trapped in an unhappy marriage but sees the grand prize in a pie contest as her chance to get out.

**International Public Art Exhibit: Wings of the City** (through August) Maple Mall, Fresno State. World-renowned Mexican artist Jorge Marín’s bronze mythical creatures have taken perch, silently watching the bustle of campus.

**Evany Zirul** (through June 1) Fig Tree Gallery. Evany Zirul exhibits her newest piece, Big Bird, created from steel coat hangers and 5’ tall.

**John Sierra: A Retrospective** 9:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Arte Américas. Born in Kerman, Sierra’s work as a muralist, author, illustrator and educator has shaped not only the artistic landscape of the Central Valley but also fostered the creation of Arte Américas.

**Tony Natsoulas: Artist Heroes** 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Fresno Art Museum. Natsoulas, a student of famed ceramist and educator Robert Arneson, continues the Funk Clay Movement of the 1960s into the 21st century.

**Art of the Word: Once Upon a Book** (through June 29) 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Fresno Art Museum. Featuring the original illustrations from *Once Upon a Book*, which emphasizes the power of books to help one experience other places outside your own reality.

**The Harmon & Harriet Kelley Collection of African American Art: Works on Paper** (through June 29) 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Fresno Art Museum. The 65 works in this exhibition date from the late 1800s to 2002 and represent just a fraction of one of the country’s major African American art collections.

**Pixels: Image as Mythology, Contemporary Paintings by Michael Azgour** (through June 29) 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Fresno Art Museum. This exhibit explores the various ways in which images have been used to tell stories over time.

**ArtHop** 5 p.m.–8 p.m. Downtown Fresno. Exhibitions, gallery shows, special performances and unique art experiences. Free

**Fresno Pacific University Student Art Show** 5 p.m.–8 p.m. Warkentine Culture & Arts Center. Free

02

**Silent Sky** (through June 22) 2nd Space Theatre. Henrietta Leavitt, a pioneering astronomer, made groundbreaking discoveries at the Harvard Observatory in the early 1900s, despite being a woman in a male-dominated field. \$29.49

**for colored girls who have considered suicide/when the rainbow is enuf** Artistry Unbound. The premier performing arts program of the African American Historical & Cultural Museum of the San Joaquin Valley. \$21+

**Cinco De Mayo Celebration** 6 p.m.–10 p.m. Old Administration Building. Fresno City College’s Latino Faculty & Staff Association kicks off the weekend with tacos, drinks, live music and dancing.

**Swede Fest** 6:30 p.m.–8:30 p.m. Royce Hall. Film festival for sweded films—short, homemade re–creations of your favorite Hollywood movies. Free

**Soli Deo Gloria Performs “In Love’s Shadow”** 7 p.m. University Presbyterian Church. Love, in all its beauty and sorrow, casts both light and shadow; exploring the dual nature of love, both spurned and returned. \$20+

**State Ballet Theatre of Ukraine: Sleeping Beauty** 7 p.m. William Saroyan Theatre. World-class artistry with lavish sets, hand-painted scenery and exquisite costumes. \$49+

**The Sins of Sor Juana** (through May 10) John Wright Theatre. See “*Sins of Sor Juana*” sidebar.

**Fresno State Symphony Orchestra Concert** 7:30 p.m.–9:30 p.m. Fresno State Concert Hall. \$15+

03

**Bilingual Storytime** 10 a.m.–noon. Arte Américas. Listen to a story in English and Spanish followed by making art together inspired by the day’s book.

**Communities Read Together** 10:30 a.m.–11:30 a.m. Betty Rodriguez Regional Library. Author Ernesto Cisneros discusses his award-winning book, *Efrén Divided*.

**Nakology 2025** 10 p.m. Strummer’s. The biggest college party of the year is back with a Y2K theme. \$26+

**San Joaquin Valley Bookfest** 2025 9 a.m. Old Administration Building. A daylong gathering to celebrate San Joaquin Valley readers and writers. Free

**2 Fast 2 Fiesta: A 2000s Latin Night** 9 p.m. Fulton 55. The biggest 2000s Latin hits. \$20+

07

**Fresno City College Choir** 7:30 p.m. Old Administration Building. End-of-semester music during this spring concert. \$8

09

**Nu’u Yavi Culinary: Culinary Heritages** Noon–8 p.m. Madera Courthouse Park. Traditional foods from Oaxaca prepared by indigenous women from Oaxaca. Flavors with Love: A Mother’s Day Celebration will celebrate mothers through food, youth art and garden unveiling.

**Nights in the Plaza Concert** 6 p.m. Arte Américas. Featuring Grammy Award winners La Santa Cecilia. \$30

**Fresno City College Jazz Combos** 7:30 p.m. FCC Theatre. The Fresno City College Small Jazz Ensembles and Large Jazz Ensemble. \$8

10

**Old Time Fiddlers & Music Jam** 2 p.m.–4 p.m. Santa Fe Basque. Free

**Let’s Go Bowling** 7:30 p.m. Fulton 55. Legendary ska pioneers. \$26.95

**George Lopez Live** 8 p.m. William Saroyan Theatre. Lopez has broken ground for Latino comics by embracing his ethnicity and confronting racial stereotypes. \$49+

11

**Mother’s Day Brunch** 11 a.m. Arte Américas. Annual fundraiser to celebrate those who mother in our community. \$85

**Irish & Breton Session** 2 p.m.–4 p.m. La Boulangerie. An open session of Irish and Breton tunes on the patio. Free

**Cold** 6:30 p.m. Fulton 55. Celebrating 25 years of *13 Ways to Bleed on Stage*. \$25+

12

**Tina: The Tina Turner Musical** (also May 13) 7:30 p.m. William Saroyan Theatre. Experience the powerful journey of a music icon who redefined music and inspired generations. \$49+

14

**Fresno City College Jazz Concert** 7:30 p.m. FCC Theatre. The Fresno City College Small Jazz Ensembles and Large Jazz Ensemble. \$8

15

**Nurse John: The Short Staffed Tour** 7 p.m. William Saroyan Theatre. Nurse John’s comedy is like talking to your work bestie: You trauma dump, cry, scream and laugh together through all the high and the lows of working in the service industry. \$59+

**Buzzcocks** 7 p.m. Strummer’s. A constant, ever-evolving presence over the last 45 years of pop culture. \$37

**Luis Coronel** 7 p.m. Fulton 55. “Eterno Enamorado 2025”: A night of romance and music. \$42

16

**Inner Ear Beat Down Slams** 7 p.m.–9 p.m. River Park Art Groove. 7 p.m. open mic, 7:30 p.m. slam. Hosted by Bryan Medina.

**Fresno Folklore Society: Kevin Burke** 7 p.m. Wolk Garden. Exquisite fiddle tunes from the Irish tradition. \$25+

**Artur Zakiyan Solo Piano** 8 p.m. Tower Theatre. Skillfully blends the captivating essence of ethnic music with the

timeless charm of classical contemporary and the soothing vibes of new age influences. \$41+

**Nora En Pure** 9 p.m. Fulton 55. Catch the queen of deep house, up close and personal. \$25+

17

**Bilingual Storytime** 10 a.m.–noon. Arte Américas. Listen to a story in English and Spanish followed by making art together inspired by the day’s book.

18

**Considering Matthew Shepard: A Choral Suite** 2:30 p.m. St. James Episcopal Cathedral. Fresno Community Chorus featuring Coro Piccolo.

20

**Jazz at the Library** 6:30 p.m.–8 p.m. Woodward Park Library. Live jazz performance.

**Fresno City College Symphonic Band Concert** 7:30 p.m. FCC Theatre. Last concert of the spring semester. \$8

21

**Why Not Wednesdays** 5 p.m.–9 p.m. Fulton St. (Mono to Fresno). Street fair that transforms Fulton Street into a vibrant pop-up market, featuring a diverse mix of vendors, food trucks, artists and live music.

**Art Grooves Got Jokes** 7 p.m.–9 p.m. River Park Art Groove. 7 p.m. open mic (3-minute limit for jokes, singing, poetry), 7:30 p.m. comedian talent contest.

**MURS The Final Run Tour** 7 p.m. Strummer’s. A true rap icon from the sun-drenched streets of Los Angeles, bringing a raw and unfiltered voice to the culture of hip hop. \$22

22

**ArtHop** 5 p.m.–8 p.m. Fresno Metro Area. Exhibitions, gallery shows, special performances and unique art experiences for art lovers of all ages. Free

23

**1776** (through July 20) Roger Rocka’s. A musical based on the events leading up to the signing of the Declaration of Independence. \$45+

**Hermanos Espinoza** 7:30 p.m. William Saroyan Theatre. Highly acclaimed regional Mexican music group known for their versatility and unique talent. \$98+

**The Emo Night Tour** 8 p.m. Fulton 55. Spinning all the angst your teenage dirtbag heart desires all night long. \$18+

24

**The Big Fresno Beer & Taco Festival** 2 p.m. Rotary Amphitheater. Come get your eat on and your groove on with your friends and family. \$39

**The Purple Ones** 8 p.m. Fulton 55. An insatiable tribute to Prince. \$20+

25

**Youth Orchestras of Fresno** 4 p.m. William Saroyan Theater. 75th Anniversary Gala Concert. \$25+

27

**Ringo Deathstarr** 8 p.m. Strummer’s. American shoegaze band. \$24

30

**New Wrinkles: That’s Entertainment** (through June 8) FCC Theatre. A salute to the icons of stage and screen. \$15

31

**Tower Rats** 7 p.m. Strummer’s. *I Aim to Please* release celebration. \$21

**Margaret Cho Live and Livid 2025** 7:30 p.m. Tower Theatre. Cho staunchly supports the causes important to her—anti-racism, anti-bullying and gay rights—all while fulfilling her successful creative side. \$42

Submit arts-related events to [calendar@fresnoalliance.com](mailto:calendar@fresnoalliance.com) by the 15th of the month preceding publication, or you can post anytime online at [fresnoalliance.com](https://fresnoalliance.com) (select Calendar).

## VENUES

|  |   |   |   |  |  |
|--|---|---|---|--|--|
| 2nd Space Theatre • 928 E. Olive Ave. • 559-266-0660 / <a href="https://gcplayers.simpletix.com">gcplayers.simpletix.com</a> | FCC Theatre • Fresno City College • 559-442-8221  | John Wright Theatre • Speech Arts Building/Fresno State • 559-278-2216  | Roger Rocka’s Dinner Theatre • 1226 N. Wishon Ave. • 559-266-9494 / <a href="https://rogerrockas.com">rogerrockas.com</a> | Strummer’s Bar & Grill • 833 E. Fern Ave. • 559-485-5356 / <a href="https://strummersclub.com">strummersclub.com</a>   | Wolk Garden • 6661 N. Forkner Ave. • 559-431-3653  |
| Arte Américas • 1630 Van Ness Ave. • <a href="https://arteamericas.org">arteamericas.org</a>                                 | Fig Tree Gallery • 644 Van Ness Ave. • 559-485-0460 / <a href="https://figtreegallery.us">figtreegallery.us</a>                             | La Boulangerie • 730 W. Shaw Ave. • 559-222-0555                        | Rotary Amphitheatre • Woodward Park • 7775 N. Friant Rd.  | Tower Theatre • 815 E. Olive Ave. • 559-485-9050 / <a href="https://fresnotowertheatre.com">fresnotowertheatre.com</a> | Woodward Park Regional Library • 944 E. Perrin Ave. • 559-600-3135 / <a href="https://fresnolibrary.org">fresnolibrary.org</a>   |
| Artistry Unbound Theatre Collective • 1611 E St. • <a href="https://aamcentralvalley.org/autc">aamcentralvalley.org/autc</a> | Fresno Art Museum • 2233 N. First St. • 559-441-4221 / <a href="https://fresnoartmuseum.org">fresnoartmuseum.org</a>                        | Madera Courthouse Park • 210 W. Yosemite Ave., Madera • 559-675-7703    | Royce Hall/Fresno High School • 1839 N. Echo Ave. • <a href="https://swedefest.com">swedefest.com</a>                     | University Presbyterian Church • 1776 E. Roberts Ave. • <a href="mailto:upc@upcfresno.org">upc@upcfresno.org</a>       |  <p>The San Joaquin Valley Media Alliance is funded in part by the City of Fresno Measure P Expanded Access to Arts and Culture Fund administered by the Fresno Arts Council.</p> |
| ArthHop Venues • <a href="https://fresnoartscouncil.org/programs/arthop">fresnoartscouncil.org/programs/arthop</a>           | Fresno State Concert Hall • 2380 E. Keats Ave. • 559-278-2654   | Old Administration Building • Fresno City College • 559-442-8221        | Santa Fe Basque Restaurant • 3110 N. Maroa Ave. • 559-226-7499  | Warkentine Culture & Arts Center • Fresno Pacific University • 559-453-2267  |  |
| Betty Rodriguez Regional Library • 3040 N. Cedar Ave. • 559-600-9245   | Fulton 55 • 875 Divisadero St. • <a href="mailto:info@fulton55.com">info@fulton55.com</a> / <a href="https://fulton55.com">fulton55.com</a> | River Park’s Art Groove Event Center • 80 E. Via Del Oro • 559-840-8886 | St. James Episcopal Cathedral • 4147 E. Dakota Ave. • 559-439-5011  | William Saroyan Theatre • 700 M St. • 559-445-8100   |  |

Note: All locations are in the city of Fresno unless otherwise noted.



# Sins of Sor Juana

The *Sins of Sor Juana* by Karen Zacarías and directed by Gina Sandí-Díaz is a student production at Fresno State organized by the School of Music that runs from May 2 to May 10.

Legendary Mexican poet Juana Inés de la Cruz writes expressive, sensual verse at the Viceroy’s court in the

1600s, a time when it was unfashionable and sinful for women to exercise their intellect.

The Viceroy is jealous of Juana’s influence on his beautiful wife, the Vicereine, who has arranged a profitable marriage to ensure that Juana will always have a place in court. Believing his own marriage is threatened by Juana’s engagement, the Viceroy hires a charming, educated rogue to seduce Juana and destroy her reputation.

When Juana refuses to compromise her poetry for what the church ordains appropriate, she stands to lose everything she loves.

May 2–3: 7:30 p.m.–9:30 p.m.  
May 4: 2 p.m.–4 p.m.  
May 6–10: 7:30 p.m.–9:30 p.m.

All performances are at the John Wright Theatre at Fresno State at a cost of \$10–\$20.

# Storyland and Mother Goose

BY JAMES MENDEZ

Storyland, where fairy tales come to life, has been in the news of late due to the planned closing of the Playland amusement park, which is next to Storyland in Roeding Park. Roeding Park is the oldest park in Fresno County having been established in 1903 through a gift from Frederick and Marianne Roeding.

The Playland amusement park opened in 1955, six weeks before Disneyland. It would have turned 70 in 2025 but was scheduled to close on March 30. Storyland opened in 1962.

At Storyland, children could see a storybook full of “Three Little Pigs,” a castle, queens, cottages, a pirate ship and more. Magic keys would open a story that would be read to the visitor. The keys sold in the 1960s still work.

Due to funding and maintenance issues, both Playland and Storyland closed in March 2014. Only through a tremendous community effort that raised nearly \$500,000, along with almost 13,000 volunteer hours, were Storyland and Playland able to be refurbished and reopened.

Storyland reopened in September 2015 and Playland in 2016. Both closed in March 2020, in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. According to Cindy Lee, executive director of Storyland, Inc., the Storyland theme park reopened in March 2021 and has been flourishing ever since.

Storyland’s educational mission, with a focus on literacy and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering—like building castles—Arts and Math), helped it secure significant grants from private individuals and institutions to maintain the park.

Although Storyland is now doing well financially,

Playland’s future is unclear. After the pandemic ended, Helm and Sons Amusements assumed operation of Playland and reopened the park in 2023 but were unable to generate a profit to keep it open. The company decided to end its contract in February and permanently close Playland at the end of March.

## Mother Goose

Joan Casper plays the role of Mother Goose at Storyland. Casper is a delightful, energetic woman with a positive outlook on life.

In her role as Mother Goose, she reads books to schoolchildren ages 5 to 8. On weekdays, schools bring students to Storyland for field trips. Parents also bring their children to Storyland during the week and on weekends. During the summer months, Mother Goose spends one weekend a month reading to children in the shade of a tree.

For 35 years, Casper was the Grass Valley School District librarian in Grass Valley, about 60 miles north of Sacramento. While working as the librarian, she would dress up in costumes and decorate the library based on the book of the week.

Eventually, she began to dress up as Mother Goose when she would read the book of the week. On occasion, she also worked in Oakdale, between Stockton and Modesto, dressing in a different costume (e.g., cowboy, pilgrim, ballerina, dinosaur) depending on the book she was reading.

After retiring, she moved to Fresno in 2022 to be near her son. Shortly after arriving in Fresno, she heard about an opening at Storyland. She applied for the job in one of the five Mother Goose costumes her daughter-in-law had made for her. She was hired that day and has been Storyland’s Mother Goose ever since.

As Storyland’s Mother Goose, Casper reads stories, does magic tricks and throws fairy dust around the park. She says, “I just do my thing.” She sees her role as encouraging



Joan Casper, dressed in her Mother Goose regalia. Photo by James Mendez

children to read whatever they want to read without censorship.

She feels that children need to “learn to read to be respectable citizens.” She tries to make the reading experience positive and happy.

Mother Goose is now booked for about 48 school field trips from February through June. She sees about 3,000 students during those four months. Each presentation takes about 20 minutes. She can see up to 40–50 kids at a time and might have three or four shows a day. Kids ask her many questions like, “Where do you live?” The kids clap and cheer, often hugging her afterward.

In the summer, Storyland is open on weekends, but Mother Goose only visits Storyland on the fourth Saturday of each month in June, July, August and September.

\*\*\*\*\*

James Mendez came to Fresno in 1977 for his medical residency training at what was then called the Valley Medical Center. He stayed to practice medicine and raise a family. He is now a retired physician and a community activist.

# Fresno Storyland

890 W. Belmont Ave., Fresno

Contact: 559-486-2124 (book a Storyland school field trip)

Hours:  
Wednesday–Friday 9 a.m.–2 p.m.  
Saturday/Sunday 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

Children (11 & under) \$4, Adults \$6, Seniors (65 & older) \$5

Field trip admission: \$4 per student and parents.

One teacher admitted free for each field trip class attending.

Teachers can book a live interactive performance of a childhood nursery rhyme put on by Mother Goose for \$75.

Support the *Community Alliance* newspaper by becoming a subscriber. See page 3.

# Nu'u Yavi:

## Culinary Heritages, 4th Edition

**FREE ENTRY**

Traditional Oaxacan cuisine

Art and kids play area

Flavors with Love: A Mother's Day Celebration

Friday, May 9, 2025  
Noon to 7:00 p.m.

Madera Court Park,  
210 W Yosemite Ave, Madera,  
CA 93637

Information: Spanish: (559) 481-0680 English: (559) 216-5459

American Friends Service Committee

Pan Valley Institute

# KFCE

Music & News, Arts & Views.

## HIGH COUNTRY

## CELTIC RADIO

Saturdays at 4 PM

## PROJECT CENSORED

The News That Didn't Make The News

Fridays 1 PM

# DEMOCRACY NOW!

6 AM & 9 AM Mon-Fri

INDEPENDENT GLOBAL NEWS

## The Soul Kitchen

KFCE 88.1 FM

FRESNO

Saturdays 2 - 4 PM



# MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

## Why Mental Health Awareness Matters:

- 1 in 5 people experience mental health challenges every year.
- Mental health affects how we think, feel, and act.
- It's important to talk about mental health and seek help when needed

## Tips for Taking Care of Your Mental Health:

- Stay connected: Reach out to friends, family, and loved ones.
- Practice self-care: Engage in activities that bring you joy and relaxation.
- Get moving: Physical activity can help reduce anxiety and improve mood.
- Seek support: Therapy, support groups, or talking to a trusted person can make a big difference.



**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT**

OFFICE: (559) 374-5750

www.wfresnofrc.org

700 Van Ness Ave Suite 201, Fresno, CA 93721

## Digital Mental Health Resources

**Soluna** is a digital application designed to help users ages 13-25 focus on their mental and emotional well-being. The app offers

- Scheduled or drop-in 1:1 coaching with diverse, bilingual coaches
- Interactive and engaging tools to lower stress
- Moderated community forum, self-support guides, and articles



**Bright Life Kids** is a digital platform for kids 0-12 and parents aimed at helping children navigate their emotions and build resilience. The app includes:

- Video or chat-based 1:1 coaching with diverse, bilingual coaches
- On-demand digital tools and resources
- Coach Specialists to help with referrals



## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Every Thursday of the month: **WFFRC Food Distribution** at 1350 E. Annadale Ave, Fresno, CA 93706, from 1PM -3PM.
- 05/24: **Summit of Hope Community Health & Resource Fair** at 2025 E Dakota Ave, Fresno, CA 93726, from 10:30AM- 2:30PM
- 5/07 &5/21: **Wellness Wednesday** at 1515 East Annadale Avenue Fresno, CA 93706, from 10AM-12PM
- 5/21: **Tea In the Garden** at 1515 East Annadale Avenue Fresno, CA 93706, From 10AM-12PM
- 5/06 &5/20: **Family Matters Support Group** via Zoom, from 6-7PM, call our office at (559) 374-5750 to register.



## PROFESSIONAL CLEANING SERVICES FOR YOUR HOME

### Our Services

- ✓ Trash Can Cleaning
- ✓ Solar Panel Cleaning
- ✓ Pressure Washing



**BOOK YOUR SERVICE NOW!**

@scrubcan\_inc  
info@scrubcan.com  
559.375.5252



**WWW.SCRUBCAN.COM**

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO DISCOVER OUR RESIDENTIAL CLEANING SERVICES!**

- ✓ EXPERTISE AND RELIABILITY
- ✓ PROFESSIONAL CLEANING SERVICES
- ✓ TRUSTED AND GUARANTEED



# A Fading Legacy

BY PAULINA DEEDS ORTIZ

The building on the corner of Oak Avenue and Willis Street in Visalia is quiet now. The metal gate is chained. A sun-faded sign still reads St. Mercy Free Clinic. The windows are dark, and the bench where patients once waited under the weight of fever and fatigue is empty.

To those who know, that corner isn't just where a clinic stood. It's where a legacy has ended.

Before there was a clinic, there was a kitchen. In 1985, the Sisters of Sacred Heart—a small Franciscan order of nuns known for a working-class ministry—arrived in Visalia. They settled in the city's neglected south side and rented a crumbling parish hall next to a closed school. They called it The Mercy Table.

At the time, Visalia had no formal services for the city's growing homeless population. Emergency food banks were rare. Hot meals were even rarer. The Sisters didn't sit on idle hands. They opened the doors, set out plastic chairs and served what they had—to anyone that came. There were no sign-in sheets. No ID checks. No sermons.

The people came.

By 1987, they had added a walk-in clinic in the adjacent bungalow—three exam rooms, a waiting area and a cramped supply closet packed with gauze, blood pressure cuffs and donation bins of Tylenol. The Sisters partnered with local nurses, retired doctors and medical students. On Wednesdays and Saturdays, they offered free consultations, wound care, vaccinations, glucose testing and whatever else they could manage.

They called the clinic St. Mercy. No insurance, no billing. No requirements beyond need.

As Visalia grew, the neighborhood around the clinic shifted. Gentrification crept in. The city moved toward downtown revitalization. And the work of the Sisters—feeding the hungry, treating the undocumented, housing the mentally ill—no longer fit the preferred image of a “cleaner,” “safer” Visalia.

In the late 2000s, pressure mounted. The diocese began formalizing its oversight over lay ministries. The Sisters, never known for compliance, resisted new restrictions, including the proposed relocation of their operations to the north side of town—far from the people they served. When they refused to cede administrative control, they were summoned by the bishop. Within a year, they were removed.

Technically, the church used softer language: “reassignment,” “consolidation” and “realignment of

resources.” But on the ground, the meaning was clear. The Sisters were told to leave. Their order was dissolved locally. The last four Sisters left Visalia in 2010.

The soup kitchen was taken over by a diocesan nonprofit and continued as the Bethlehem Center, eventually absorbing the Good News Clinic into its operations. But the model changed. The original culture of open access began to erode. After years of struggle with funding, staffing shortages and administrative realignment, the Bethlehem Center Clinic closed permanently in January 2024.

Its closure was not isolated.

Just three months later, the Samaritan Center Free Clinic—Visalia's last remaining walk-in health service for the uninsured—closed on April 15. Founded in 2003, the Samaritan Center provided primary and dental care, prescriptions, lab work and health education. Run entirely by volunteers, it has served thousands in Tulare County for over two decades.

But in the past few years, it became harder to recruit medical professionals willing to donate time. Its funding base thinned. The pandemic years drained its reserves. In its final statement, the board cited volunteer burnout and lack of sustainable financial support as the reasons for closure.

With the end of Samaritan Center, Visalia joins a growing number of California cities without any fully free health services.

Tulare County is one of the poorest in the state. More than 55% of its residents are enrolled in Medi-Cal. But access is not the same as care. Roughly 15.8% of the population remains uninsured—disproportionately undocumented, working-class or recently unemployed. Even those who are eligible often struggle to navigate the bureaucracy. Language barriers, documentation issues and provider shortages make appointments difficult to obtain, especially in rural zones.

Clinics such as St. Mercy and Samaritan filled those gaps. No forms. No proof of income. Just treatment.

Their loss is not abstract.

During its final full year of operation, St. Mercy recorded more than 4,000 patient visits. Most were uninsured adults—farmworkers, low-income workers. People who delay care because they can't afford time off work, let alone a doctor's bill. People who die younger, not because they're sicker, but because they're invisible.

What disappears with St. Mercy and Samaritan is not just a building or a program, but a way of thinking about health: not as a commodity, but as a human right.

This was the ethic the Sisters brought to Visalia four decades ago. It wasn't radical then. It is now.

In an era of digitized appointments and telehealth prescriptions, St. Mercy was analog, inefficient—and

profoundly humane. It operated on paper files, word-of-mouth referrals and handwritten notes tacked to the bulletin board. You could show up without an appointment. You could speak in Mixtec or Spanish. You could cry in the waiting room, and someone would hold your hand.

Presence was the first step toward healing.

The legacy of St. Mercy, of the Bethlehem Clinic, of Samaritan Center, deserves to be remembered. Not in plaques or dedications, but in action. California still needs free clinics. It still needs spaces where care isn't conditional. And it still needs people willing to serve those in need.

\*\*\*\*\*

Paulina Deeds Ortiz is a former fellow with the Community Alliance newspaper. She is a Mexican immigrant currently attending Fresno State, working on an anthropology major with a minor in psychology. She spends her free time writing poetry or painting.

## We Are Their Legacy

My family benefited from both the Bethlehem and Samaritan clinics. Without the Bethlehem Clinic, my family would've gone days without eating. Without those nuns, I wouldn't have had food in my stomach and clothes on my back.

Without the Samaritan Center, my mom wouldn't have been able to keep her diabetes under control for years. They kept us alive in some of the most difficult periods of our lives.

The buildings might be empty and locked away, but the positive effects they had on this community—on my family and on me—will carry on. People like me, we are their legacy.

—Paulina Deeds Ortiz



www.yogacenteroffresno.com  
California non-profit

Affordable Eastern style yoga  
for all levels of experience

6 classes per week  
both online and at

Community United  
Church of Christ  
5550 N Fresno Street

current schedules available on  
our website & our Facebook page

Join us for a quiet time in a busy day.

## Love is Our Doctrine



Unitarian Universalist  
Church of Fresno

Sunday Services with Rev. Tim Kutzmark 10:30 a.m.

Children and Youth Religious Exploration Sundays 10:30 a.m.

UU Buddhist Study and Meditation Wednesdays 2:00 p.m.

2672 E. Alluvial Avenue  
(between Willow and Chestnut)  
Fresno, CA 93720  
(559) 322-6146 (9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.)

www.uufresno.org



AUTO • HOME • BUSINESS

Worker's Comp  
Life Insurance

LICENSE #0608912 / 0C1343

RioMESAINSURANCE.COM

292-2490

3134 Willow Ave., Suite 102 • Clovis, CA 93612

Good driver?  
GREAT RATE!



RMI



FRESNO

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

PO Box 5553  
Fresno, CA 93755-5553  
[nwpcfresno.org](http://nwpcfresno.org)

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

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

In memory of our past president, Carol Bequette

## THE LAW OFFICE OF KEVIN G. LITTLE

30+ Years Fighting for the Underdog!

- Civil Rights
- Employment
- Personal Injury
- Medical Malpractice



- Criminal Defense
- Juvenile
- Dependency
- Family Law

1225 East Divisadero Street, Fresno, CA 93721  
Tel. (559) 342-5800, E-Mail: [kevin@kevinglitle.com](mailto:kevin@kevinglitle.com)  
[www.kevinglitle.com](http://www.kevinglitle.com)

With a record of success over more than two decades, the Law Office of Kevin G. Little is one of the preeminent small firms in Fresno and surrounding areas. We represent our clients in a variety of matters, including civil rights, employment, personal injury, general civil litigation, family law, bankruptcy, and criminal cases. Our firm also offers excellent mediation services in civil and family law matters. We approach each case with dedication, aiming to protect you and exceed your expectations. Call us today for a consultation and let us help.



# “Immigration” Is Not in the U.S. Constitution

BY THOMAS A. CALDWELL JR.

As an educator who has spent years studying the U.S. Constitution—not just the 603+ volumes of commentary written about the Constitution—but studied the Constitution of original intent itself, as well as how the framers and ratifiers said that document is to be interpreted, it has become well apparent that the federal government’s heartless immigration policy is not supported by the Constitution, and a call to return the power to regulate immigration to where the framers and ratifiers had originally intended for them to be is necessary.

The term *immigration* does not appear in the Constitution although the term *naturalization* (becoming a U.S. citizen) does. Almost from the beginning of the Republic, “naturalization” was accepted as a federal function.

Congress passed the Naturalization Act of 1790, requiring a two-year residency before applying for U.S. citizenship—with no restrictions on immigration: In the separate naturalization acts of 1795, 1798 and 1802, the residency requirement varied between five and 14 years—but with the one constant that there were no restrictions on immigration.

It was recognized by all that the power to control immigration was a power reserved to the states via Article X of the 10th Amendment: “The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.”

Depending on how they are counted, there are 30–35 powers expressly granted to Congress in the Constitution. The “power...to establish an [sic] uniform Rule of Naturalization” is mentioned as are “uniform Laws on... Bankruptcies” (Article I, Section 8 [Clause 4]), but the power to regulate immigration is not.

The Supreme Court did not mention the federal power to regulate immigration until the *Passenger Cases* (1849). In that decision, the Court incorrectly declared that power to be one of federal jurisdiction that remained unimplemented by Congress.

The vague justification for that authorization relied on Article I, Section 8 [Clause 3], the Foreign Commerce Clause. This is one of those “catchall” clauses that allegedly allows Congress to regulate anything that it is not expressly permitted to do. Ironically, this “power to regulate commerce in human beings” is relevant to the heinous practice of chattel slavery.

The states have exercised this lawful prerogative from the beginning of the Republic, most notably by free state constitutional and statutory prohibitions on freedmen (former slaves) from migrating into their jurisdictions; some states (mostly in the Northeast) welcomed freedmen, and some states (mostly in the Midwest) did not.

One of the last attempts by a state to limit immigration occurred in the 1930s when California passed the “Anti-Okie Law,” forbidding the immigration of indigent people from other states.

Congress did not begin to usurp this state power over immigration until the Page Act of 1875, when it banned the entry of Chinese women, as they were all deemed “imported for the purposes of prostitution.” Seven years later, the first Chinese Exclusion Act banned Chinese men (laborers) as well.

Federal interference in this state’s prerogative progressively worsened until it has decayed into the insanity that we are experiencing today.

Our way out of this unruliness is the return of immigration to state control, as the framers and ratifiers had intended. If Texas wishes to restrict immigration it is certainly free to do so, as it does regardless of federal policy. More importantly, if California wishes to be open to those who want to better themselves, thus contributing to the dynamics of our free-market economy, Governor Newsom should protect them from unlawful federal interference.

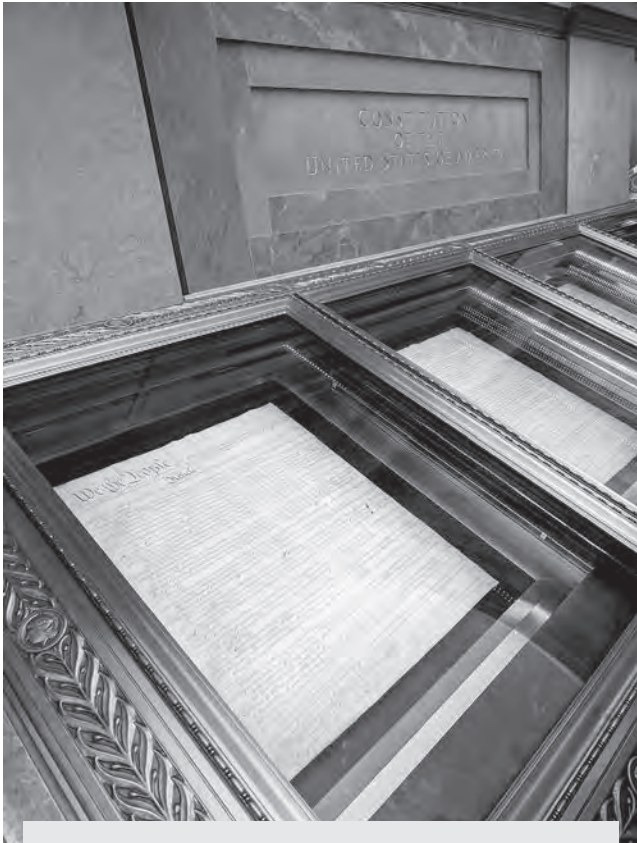
If Newsom truly cared about the lot of free-market workers—calling them “undocumented” implies that they are doing something illegal—he would shut down the illegitimate activities of the Department of Homeland Security, by arresting all Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents and all Customs and Border Protection agents who are operating outside the Supreme Law of the Land by attempting to deprive human beings to their un/inalienable right to travel and peacefully sell their services in a free market.

The precedents for this action were established early on in the Republic:

- In the 1790s, Georgia threatened to arrest any federal agent who attempted to enforce the Supreme Court’s decision in *Chisolm v. Georgia*.
- During the War of 1812, the governor of Massachusetts refused federalization of his state’s militia for the purpose of conquering Canada, as the militiamen of New York refused to do the same thing.
- In the 1820s, South Carolina refused to allow the collection of Trump-like tariffs on imported goods.
- And in 1861, the governors of Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia refused the federalization of their militias for the purpose of making war on the Confederate states.

In the modern era, Utah refused water needed to cool the supercomputers of the National Security Agency.

## OPINION & ANALYSIS



The U.S. Constitution displayed in the Rotunda of the National Archives in Washington, D.C. Photo courtesy of The Commons

- Also, various states and municipalities have attempted to nullify unconstitutional federal statutes by declaring themselves to be sanctuary zones for guns and immigration.
- As a further example, several states have enacted “Defend the Guard” legislation prohibiting their National Guards from foreign deployments in the absence of a Congressional declaration of war.

The time has come for progressives to realize that the U.S. Constitution is on their side and to start pressing “progressive” Governor Newsom to start enforcing the law against these federal usurpers.

\*\*\*\*\*

Thomas A. Caldwell Jr. is secretary of the Libertarian Party of Fresno County. Contact him at [tacaldwelljr@yahoo.com](mailto:tacaldwelljr@yahoo.com).

# Cuban Doctors the Pride of the Nation

BY LENI VILLAGOMEZ REEVES

For many decades, Cuba has been sending thousands of medical professionals overseas to work in countries that needed doctors for a variety of reasons—post-colonial countries such as Algeria, Zimbabwe, Botswana or East Timor, for example, and countries suffering after natural disasters such as Pakistan, Indonesia, Peru, China, Chile, Nepal, Haiti and Ecuador after earthquakes, or from epidemics such as Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea during Ebola.

Everybody loves the Cuban doctors. And indeed it’s hard to think of a negative aspect to a country sending doctors internationally who will work in countries with insufficient healthcare and go to areas where private medicine, accustomed to urban settings and patients with money, will not go. It takes a special malicious inventiveness to find a way to attack this initiative.

Unfortunately, in the U.S. war on Cuba, that kind of malice is not lacking. It takes a special kind of cruelty, too, to try to force host countries to send their Cuban international medical workers home. The U.S. government has also done that.

In 2006, the George W. Bush administration created the Cuban Medical Professional Parole Program, which continued until 2017. This offered international Cuban

medical professionals a guaranteed U.S. visa and a fast track to legal residence status if they would leave their jobs and patients. Some did, but not nearly enough to suit the U.S. government or to discredit the Cuban programs in any way.

## Accusations of Human Trafficking

Beginning in 2019, U.S. Senator Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) and Secretary of State Michael Pompeo came up with a new idea: that Cuban internationalist medical workers are somehow victims of human trafficking. To countries that are poor and those in disaster situations, Cuba provides medical help free of charge. But for countries that can pay, the Cuban doctors are contracted for by the host government.

Not all the money goes to the medical personnel. Some of it goes back to Cuba to pay for medical education, which is free in Cuba, and funding the universal access health system, which is free in Cuba. Cuban doctors on international missions are paid more than they are paid in Cuba.

But the U.S. government is not content with putting Cuba on the (worst) Tier 3 Human Trafficking List (along with Nicaragua and Venezuela as the only others in the Americas). The United States has been threatening countries that invite Cuban doctors and nurses.

It takes a special cynicism to politicize the struggle to eliminate human trafficking in this way, and it’s more than a little bit disgusting. But what about the accusation that Cuban health workers are not volunteers?

John Kirk, a professor of Latin American Studies at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Canada, and the author and co-editor of 16 books on Cuba, interviewed 270 Cuban

medical personnel and found the same things that this author has found in talking to people, in smaller numbers, who have been on internationalist missions. (Before Covid-19, this author spent about two and a half months each year in Cuba.)

It’s an economic opportunity, it’s an adventure, it’s a chance to contribute. People naturally have idealism and the desire to help, and Cuban education encourages this spirit. But no one is coerced; indeed, there are waiting lists, and a place in an international brigade is an honor as well as a chance to make some extra money.

“I have interviewed 270 Cuban doctors working on medical missions. I have never met a doctor who said they were exploited,” said Kirk. “This is just the U.S. obsession with bringing about regime change in Cuba.”

Kirk also says that “it is morally reprehensible for the United States...to try to stop medical services being provided to other countries.”

## New York Times Cozies Up to Trump

Recently, a *New York Times* article critical of the Cuban international medical programs was published, apparently in support of the Trump regime’s attempt to make sure that Cuban doctors, nurses and other medical workers cannot work in other countries. Trump’s (and Rubio’s) attack on the Cuban international medical program starts with the demonstrably false accusation that Cuban medical workers are being trafficked rather than being professionals who volunteer to work on contract overseas, getting paid according to a previously agreed contract.

Continues on page 21

Parents, Families & Friends  
Allied with the LGBTQ+ Community

Meetings the 2nd Sunday  
of the month @2PM

At Wesley UMC  
1343 E. Barstow Ave  
Fresno CA 93710

[www.PFLAGFresno.org](http://www.PFLAGFresno.org)  
(559) 434-6540  
[pflagfresno@gmail.com](mailto:pflagfresno@gmail.com)

PATIENCE MILROD  
LAWYER/LICENCIADA EN LEYES

985 NORTH VAN NESS AVENUE FRESNO, CALIFORNIA 93728  
559.246.7239 [PM@PATIENCEMILROD.COM](mailto:PM@PATIENCEMILROD.COM)

Javier Rangel (559) 977-4413 Jesus Ibarra (559) 977-5481

1772 E. Barstow Ave. Fresno, CA 93710  
**(559) 447-5569**

We are located inside the Bulldog Plaza





# SIERRA CLUB

## TEHIPITE CHAPTER

### North Dakota jury finds Greenpeace liable for \$667 million in connection with 2017 Dakota Access Pipeline protest

BY GARY LASKY, SIERRA CLUB  
TEHIPITE CHAPTER LEGAL CHAIR

On March 19, 2025 a North Dakota jury found defendants Greenpeace Inc., Greenpeace International, and Greenpeace Fund, Inc. ("Greenpeace") liable for \$667 million in damages to plaintiffs Energy Transfer LP and Dakota Access LLC ("Dakota Access") for actions related to the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL, pronounced "dapple") protests of 2016-2017.

With a budget of \$130 million, the Sierra Club, along with other climate advocacy non-profits, is in danger from coordinated, groundless lawsuits condoned by the courts and an uncritical media. Following up on President Trump's unconstitutional attacks on law firms and universities, Trump has warned environmental groups that he may strip them of their 501(c)(3) nonprofit status (although the Club is not a non-profit, its foundation is a 501(c)(3). Accordingly, our national Club requests that *Chapter activities involving mobilizations, public statements, or coordination with other nonprofits receive prior approval from our national Club attorneys.*

The Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) is an 1,722-mile underground 30-inch pipeline delivering fracked oil from North Dakota. A project of Energy Transfer and its

billionaire CEO and Trump donor Kelcy Warren, DAPL crosses more than 25 rivers and streams, ending at the Missouri River, drinking water supply for the Standing Rock Sioux tribe and millions of residents. In December 2016, President Obama halted construction and called for a thorough environmental review. Just a month later, a newly inaugurated President Trump reversed the decision. Oil began flowing that June.

Beginning in April 2016, a DAPL protest encampment adjacent to the Standing Rock Reservation was organized by the tribe with support from North American and global tribes to defend the Tribe's historic lands. An estimated 100,000 peaceful, unarmed "water protectors" camped where the pipeline was proposed to run underneath Missouri River, protesting the threat to the water supply, tribal sovereignty, and sacred Native lands, including burial grounds. Their motto was *Mni Wiconi* (Water is Life).

The trial focused on Greenpeace's involvement in the pipeline protests. Although just six Greenpeace participants participated, the organization was *blamed for the entire protest movement*. Defendants never had a chance after the judge refused to admit evidence that the pipeline had already caused \$1 million in oil spills.

Plaintiffs filed in state court after the case was quickly dismissed by federal court. The jury found Greenpeace liable for inciting illegal behavior by protestors, defaming Energy Partners, trespass, conversion, nuisance, conspiracy, and tortious interference with business. The jury was drawn from Morton County, location of the protest. *Seven jurors and*



*alternates had financial ties to the fossil fuel industry and some admitted to the court that they could not be impartial, but the judge seated them anyway. The judge also refused three requests from Greenpeace to relocate the trial.*

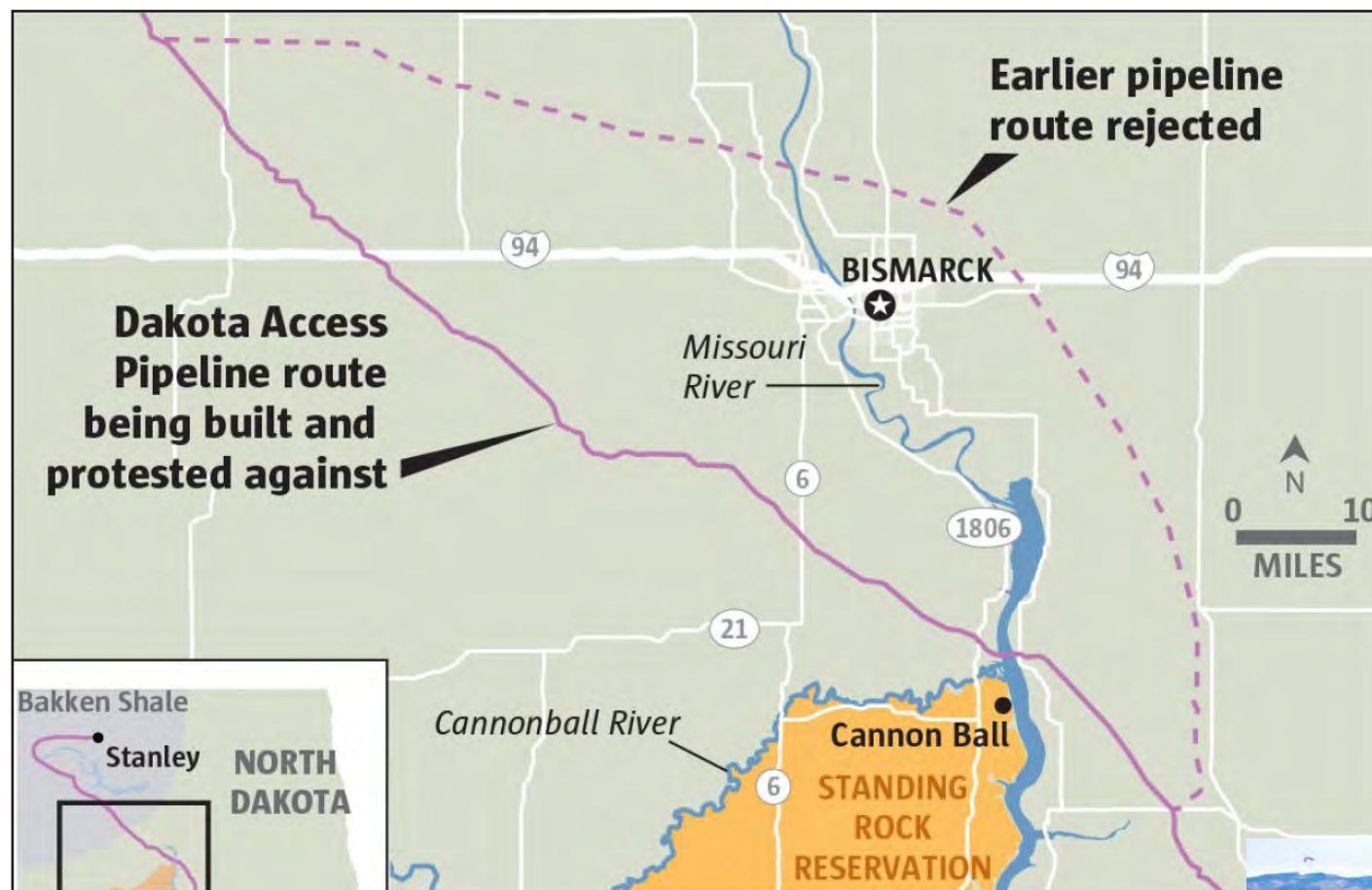
Attorney Steven Donziger described the jury verdict as *"a direct attack on the climate movement, Indigenous peoples, and the first amendment."* He accused Energy Partners of filing the lawsuit with the **primary intent** of intimidating climate activists and silencing free speech. Donziger, seated at the trial with an independent monitoring team of nine attorneys and four prominent human rights advocates, wrote that the

Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher law firm, which represents Energy Transfer, literally wrote the corporate playbook on how to intimidate environmental organizations through SLAPP lawsuits.

As part of a coordinated smear campaign by local police, federal agents, and private TigerSwan mercenaries, peaceful protestors were labeled as jihadists and terrorists. Police dogs were unleashed on protestors, who were sprayed by fire hoses in sub-freezing temperatures. "Nonlethal" bullets produced serious injury, and one peaceful protestor had an arm shredded when a bang grenade was fired at her from close range.

Greenpeace said it would appeal the verdict to the North Dakota Supreme Court and is pursuing an action against Energy Transfer in the Netherlands under the European Union's new anti-SLAPP directive, arguing that the real goal of the lawsuit was to suppress First Amendment-protected free speech.

**Sources:** Columbia University Law School U.S. Climate Change Litigation Database; *E & E News* 3/19/2025. "Jury finds Greenpeace at fault for protest damages, awards pipeline developer more than \$660 million"; Steven Donziger, "I was an independent observer in the Greenpeace trial: what I saw was shocking." *The Guardian*, 3/28/2025; American Civil Liberties Union, "Why did a private security contractor treat Standing Rock protestors like 'jihadists'?" 6/2/2017. **Credits:** Map: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; DAPL protest photo: Rob Wilson, peoplesdispatch.org; city protest photo: Devon Young Cupery, Sierra Magazine, 11/14/2023.



**Tuesday, May 13 at  
7:00 PM on Zoom**

In collaboration with the Fresno Audubon Society, the Sierra Club Tehipite Chapter hosts author Scott Harris who will speak about **"RaptorQuest."**

This book captures his adventures and misadventures during 17 months spent chasing 53 raptors across 34 states. It's about the birds of course, but it's also about the people he met and the things he learned.

To attend you must pre-register IN ADVANCE to receive the Zoom link on May 13. Visit [sierraclub.org/tehipite](https://sierraclub.org/tehipite) for the registration link.





# Navigating the Global Battle for Critical Minerals

BY DEBAY TADESSE

Nations with access to large oil deposits, especially those in Russia, the Middle East and North America, were able to influence the world’s energy scene for much of the 20th century. With oil-rich areas becoming major focus points in international relations, this “scramble for oil” shaped the geopolitical strategy and resulted in cooperation and conflict. However, as the 21st century progresses, the global race is no longer just for oil. Critical minerals, necessary for technologies influencing our future, are now the center of attention.

Critical minerals such as cobalt, lithium, rare earth elements and nickel are essential to produce electric cars, renewable energy systems, cellphones and other high-tech gadgets.

Since the shift to green energy requires certain minerals, competition to obtain them has recently increased globally. With nations like Zambia, Zimbabwe and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) holding substantial mineral deposits that are essential to the future of global technology, Africa, a continent rich in these critical minerals, is again in the vanguard of this international competition.

For much of the 20th century, the global battle for oil significantly impacted the world’s geopolitical environment. Modern industrial economies rely heavily on oil. A consistent and dependable oil supply was essential to developing automobiles, aircraft and industries. Sizable oil reserves provided nations with unmatched influence on the world stage due to their economic and military might.

During this time, the Middle East became the battleground for oil control. As massive oil deposits were discovered in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran and Kuwait, the region became a focus for world powers. A struggle for control over these areas by the United States, the Soviet Union and European colonial powers resulted in strategic alliances, proxy wars and even direct military operations.

Control over oil production was further consolidated in 1960 with the creation of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), which allowed its member countries to manage the price and supply of oil jointly. During the 1970s oil crisis, when OPEC enforced oil embargoes that resulted in fuel shortages and spiking prices in the West, this power transfer was particularly evident. These incidents demonstrated oil’s geopolitical influence and capacity to influence the world economy.

### Critical Minerals

As we entered the 21st century, critical minerals became a new resource essential to the next economic and technological advancement. These minerals are crucial for creating cutting-edge technologies that power contemporary economies. Batteries for electric vehicles, solar panels, wind turbines and other renewable energy technologies depend on essential minerals, including lithium, cobalt, nickel and rare earth elements. These minerals are critical to powering the green energy revolution as the globe moves toward more environmentally friendly and sustainable energy sources.

The demand for these minerals has skyrocketed as governments, corporations and individuals race to a low-carbon future. As a result, there is more geopolitical competition for access to these resources, and more exploration and mining activities have intensified. Oil is concentrated in a few regions, whereas critical minerals are more widely dispersed globally.

Again, Africa emerged as a key location for extracting natural minerals. Controlling the mineral supply chain has become the focus of a new type of geopolitical conflict.

Africa is becoming the most essential source of vital minerals on the globe. Large mineral deposits found on the continent are necessary for developing green energy and technologies in the future.

For instance, more than half of the world’s known supplies of cobalt, a mineral essential for the manufacture of batteries for electric vehicles, are found in the DRC. Significant lithium reserves are found in Zambia and Zimbabwe, and rare earth elements are found in large quantities in South Africa and Madagascar.

The geopolitical importance of these resources has led to a scramble by global powers to secure access to African minerals. China, in particular, has made significant inroads into the African mining sector. Through investments, loans and infrastructure projects, China has gained a dominant position in extracting and processing critical minerals in countries like the DRC and Zambia. This has raised concerns in the West, where there is increasing fear that China’s control over these resources could give it an excessive influence over global supply chains.

Africa’s growing significance in the global race for vital minerals also presents opportunities for the continent. Increased foreign investment in mining could facilitate infrastructure modernization, employment creation and economic growth. These advantages, however, are not assured, and there is a chance that Africa will be exploited similarly to how it was at the time of colonization.

### Growing U.S. Interest in Africa’s Critical Minerals

The United States has realized that gaining access to these minerals is critical to maintaining the competitiveness and sustainability of its economy in the face of this new resource race.



Critical minerals such as cobalt, lithium, rare earth elements and nickel are essential to produce electric cars and other high-tech gadgets. Photo by Eduardo Stanley

However, navigating a complex geopolitical landscape, where China is already well-established, presents additional challenges beyond simply mining for minerals in Africa. With emphasis on sustainable development, energy security and technical leadership, the United States must develop a revolutionary plan to interact with Africa’s vital natural resources.

Compared to other world powers such as China, the United States has historically been less reliant on African minerals. However, considering the growing demand for essential minerals, the United States has increasingly focused on securing these resources.

The United States needs to create a comprehensive strategy that balances geopolitical, ethical and economic objectives to gain access to Africa’s vital minerals. America needs a more proactive and sustainable paradigm shift. Investment, partnerships, cooperation, governance and environmental protection should be the main focuses of this paradigm shift.

Strengthening intra-African cooperation on the governance of mineral resources could help reduce the potential for conflict and exploitation. The United States can play a key role in facilitating dialogue among African nations to create regional mineral management strategies that benefit all stakeholders.

### Conclusion

The need for minerals is growing as the globe moves toward a low-carbon future. To guarantee access to these resources and support sustainable development in Africa, the United States must establish strategic alliances, make infrastructural investments, encourage ethical mining methods and challenge China’s increasing hegemony. This will require a multifaceted strategy incorporating investment, technology innovation and diplomacy.

Ultimately, the United States must focus on securing resources for its industries and ensuring that Africa benefits economically and socially from its mineral wealth. By championing responsible mining practices, supporting local communities and strengthening African governance, the United States can help transform Africa’s critical minerals into a foundation for long-term economic growth, stability and sustainability. In doing so, America will secure its future supply of critical minerals and contribute to a more equitable and prosperous global economy.

The global race for critical minerals signifies a dramatic change in the world’s geopolitical and economic climate. The race for oil characterized the 20th century, but the 21st century is already defining itself as a race for the minerals that will fuel future technology.

Because of its wealth of mineral resources, Africa is at the forefront of this new global battle. The continent has opportunities but faces complex problems like environmental degradation, social inequality and geopolitical instability. This development will significantly impact Africa’s economic growth, the worldwide shift to a sustainable future and the balance of power in the world.

The importance of key minerals in influencing international relations and global economies will only increase as the globe transitions to a more technologically sophisticated and environmentally friendly future. Africa is ideally situated to have a significant role in deciding the course of this new global competition for key minerals, as the geopolitical conflict for control over these resources is expected to heat up.

\*\*\*\*\*

Debay Tadesse has a Ph.D. in African studies focusing on 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 lectures at Fresno State and Fresno City College.

## From Our Advertisers

“I HAVE BEEN AN ADVERTISER IN THE COMMUNITY ALLIANCE FOR SEVERAL YEARS. I AM PROUD TO SUPPORT THE ‘REAL NEWS’ IT PROVIDES TO THE CENTRAL VALLEY. I KNOW THE PAPER IS WIDELY READ IN THE AREA I WORK, AND IT MAKES GOOD CENTS/SENSE TO SPEND MY MARKETING DOLLARS HERE.”

—PAUL PIERCE

Looking for a volunteer  
delivery driver for the  
*Community Alliance*

The Madera Route needs a  
driver. Could that be you?

Help us get out the "voice of  
the progressive movement!"

CONTACT  
Peter, Distribution Manager  
✉ maidenfoto1@gmail.com



# Cuban Doctors

Continued from page 18

The writer, Frances Robles, did not include a single interview or quote from a Cuban medical worker currently serving on a mission. Instead, she limited her primary sources to two well-known critics of Cuba’s international health programs. The first, Maria Werlau, is the hardline founder of a U.S. government-funded organization called Cuba Archive (also known as the Free Society Project). The second is Ramona Matos, a former doctor living in South Florida who has been the poster child for the campaign against the medical missions.

Robles apparently interviewed Carlos Fernandez de Cossío, Cuba’s deputy minister of foreign relations, but decided to leave out his answers. Here’s that interview, hidden from readers of the *New York Times*, but available to you as a *Community Alliance* reader:

Q. (Robles) What are the most serious consequences of the hardening of policies related to Cuba by the Trump administration? I also ask myself if there are current discussions between the Cuban government and the Trump administration about relaxing some of these sanctions, migration and other affairs.

A. (Fernandez de Cossío) The policies of the Trump administration, as defined by those in charge of these within the government, seek to strangle the Cuban economy through threats and coercion directed at governments and entities (organizations and businesses) of third countries, thus reinforcing the siege that they have imposed during decades.

The consequences are tangible, with growing difficulties in gaining access to international banking agencies, finding providers for supplies and technology that are necessary for the economy, ensuring the fuel supply, and finding markets for Cuban exports, including tourism.

As was to be expected, this has affected the living standards of our population, restricting income and damaging essential services such as electricity, water, transportation and medical services. It has changed the macroeconomic balances and placed obstacles in the path of growth and development.

There have been no bilateral policy talks.

Q. Has any country already notified the Cuban government of their desire to withdraw from an agreement regarding Cuban medical brigades, due to the new Trump measures?

A. Countries that have relied on Cuban medical brigades have varied over the years. None of the countries with which we currently have bilateral health system cooperation have expressed the desire that we leave their territory.

Q. Many people contend that the Cuban medical brigades constitute “human trafficking.” Clearly, the Cuban government disagrees. What are the criteria in international law that demonstrate that the program does not constitute human trafficking?

A. This is a falsehood without foundation. None of the characteristics internationally recognized as human trafficking apply to this activity. The Cuban professionals who participate do so voluntarily. They know where they are going, they have complete freedom of movement, they receive their whole salary and accumulate pension contributions in Cuba while they lend their services in other countries. Furthermore, they receive a salary appropriate for the country in which they are working, often larger than the salary that they already receive.

Their living expenses, transportation and, often, food are also covered. On occasion, the Cuban authorities of the public health system receive compensation for these services, based on bilateral intergovernmental agreements that are absolutely in keeping with Global South-South cooperation practices recognized by the United Nations and consistent with activities developed by numerous organizations, private and governmental international institutions that manage and offer professional services anywhere in the world.

The fundamental difference lies in the broad reach, the number of countries and services offered and the habitual willingness to take these services to remote communities where others are not prepared to go.

### Latin America and the Caribbean Say No to U.S. Coercion

In March, the CARICOM countries (the Caribbean Community; a collective of Caribbean nations and dependencies that work together) asserted their sovereignty and rejected the U.S. government attacks on their right to have Cuban medical workers in their countries helping care for people who otherwise would have no medical care.

In April, the heads of state of many of the 35 countries of CELAC (Community of Latin American and Caribbean States) met at Tegucigalpa, Honduras, and—despite the opposition of the right-wing governments of Argentina and Paraguay—reaffirmed Latin America and the Caribbean as “‘a Zone of Peace’ adhering to the principles of the UN

Charter, International Law, democracy, multilateralism, human rights, self-determination of countries, sovereignty and territorial integrity.”

They rejected “unilateral coercive measures, contrary to international law, including those of a commercial nature.” Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum put it clearly: “We reject, as Mexico has historically done, trade sanctions and blockades. No to the blockade of Cuba. No to the blockade of Venezuela.”

Sheinbaum also addressed the issue of immigration and the need to “cooperate in addressing human mobility from a humanistic perspective.”

“Our historical position has been that the most humane and most successful way is to address the structural causes of inequality, unemployment and violence that drive migration,” Sheinbaum said. “We reject racism, classism, the violation of human rights and the criminalization of our brothers and sisters on our continent who, for whatever reason, have had to migrate north.”

At Tegucigalpa, Dr. Luther Castillo Harry, secretary of state for science and technology of Honduras, also delivered a message. Dr. Castillo is a member of the first graduating class of the Latin American School of Medicine (ELAM). “Today, there is no doubt in the world about the technical, scientific and human capacity of Cuban healthcare professionals, and ELAM now has a worldwide brotherhood of more than 31,000 doctors in 122 countries,” he stated.

“The altruism that characterizes this healthcare professional, unconditional and willing to give his life for his patient, constitutes a fundamental element that our enemies are deeply afraid of. They know us so well that they go to the trouble of inventing fallacies, all in an attempt to discredit something they themselves are clear about.”

And Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel declared that “Cuban doctors are the pride of the nation and of many nations around the world. The maneuvers of [Secretary of State] Marco Rubio and [Special Envoy of the State Department for Latin America Mauricio] Claver-Carone, and the lies of those who serve their criminal plans, will crash against that formidable wall of dignity and proven professionalism; just as the invaders of Playa Girón (Bay of Pigs) crashed against Cuban heroism in 1961.”

\*\*\*\*\*

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

# Why We Call It Genocide

BY GERRY BILL

There seems to be a lot of confusion about what constitutes a genocide and why it gets applied to Israel’s behavior in Gaza. Among those seemingly confused is Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.), who was interviewed at some length about the issue on NPR in March.

To help dispel the confusion of Schumer and others, let us start with the internationally recognized definition of the term found in the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which was ratified and put into force in 1951.

This international convention was signed by both Israel and the United States, and it contains the legal definition of the term that all signatories should be using. Here is the definition:

- In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, *in whole or in part*, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:
- (a) Killing members of the group;
  - (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
  - (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction *in whole or in part*;
  - (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
  - (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group [emphasis added]

In the interview by NPR news host Scott Simon on March 15, Schumer apparently has his own definition of *genocide*:

Schumer: “And the one—if I can talk for a second, the one that bothers me the most is genocide, accusing the Jewish people or Israel of genocide. Genocide means you want to wipe...”

Simon: “Because of Israel’s policies in Gaza...”

Schumer: “Yeah...”

Simon:: “Which have...”

Schumer: “Which can be legitimately criticized as...”

Simon: “Yeah.”

Schumer: “...even I have done. But genocide is to want to wipe out a whole people. If Israel, unprovoked, invaded Gaza and started shooting at innocent Palestinian civilians, that would be genocide. But that’s not what’s happened.

“What’s happened is that Hamas has waged a very, very tough war. They went into Israel. They were vicious, almost to inspire—inspire—a tough retaliatory attack.”

Schumer claims that “genocide is to want to wipe out a whole people.” He is totally ignoring the phrase “in whole or in part,” which appears twice in the legal definition. The phrase “in part” clearly applies to some subset of a larger population. Palestinians living in Gaza and/or the West Bank would certainly qualify as a subset of the Palestinian people as a whole.

But there is another gigantic flaw in Schumer’s definition of *genocide*. He says that if Israel had done the things it is doing in Gaza “unprovoked,” it would constitute genocide—but as it was provoked, the very same behaviors are no longer genocide.

Where in the legal definition of *genocide* does it say anything like that? Is there an asterisk, a footnote somewhere, saying that if the offending party is provoked, they can go ahead and try to destroy an entire subset of a people?

Hitler claimed that what he was doing had been provoked by the actions of some Jews. Thus, he claimed that he was justified in punishing all Jews, not just the offending ones. That is group guilt and collective punishment, a war crime.

## OPINION & ANALYSIS

Collective punishment is clearly what is happening in Gaza these days. Schumer is conveniently ignoring all of this—and much to his discredit, Simon did not challenge Schumer on his misreading of the law.

Apparently, Schumer is also claiming that anyone who disagrees with him about the meaning of the term *genocide* and applies it to the actions of the Israeli government (not the Israeli people as a whole) is engaging in antisemitism. Antisemitism is a real problem, but it is a serious mistake to broaden the definition to include criticisms of the actions of the Israeli government.

These are not criticisms of the Israeli people as a whole, many of whom oppose the actions of their government. And it certainly is not a criticism of the Jewish people as a whole, as large segments of the Jewish population, both in the United States and abroad, oppose the actions of the current Israeli government. Many Jewish critics of Israel’s actions also call it a genocide.

This helps explain why so many of us who oppose the actions of Israel in Gaza and the West Bank call it a genocide. It clearly fits the internationally recognized definition of the term.

(Author’s note: If I were an international student or a green card holder, I might get deported for writing this article.)

\*\*\*\*\*

*Gerry Bill is professor emeritus of sociology and American studies at Fresno City College. He is vice president and treasurer of the Eco Village Project of Fresno and, as such, oversees daily the operations of the Dakota EcoGarden. He is also on the boards of the Fresno Free College Foundation/ KFCF, Peace Fresno and the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, and is past co-chair of the Central California Criminal Justice Committee.*

# VISIT OUR WEBSITE!

All of our content is available online for you to read

<https://fresnoalliance.com/>





Peace & Social Justice Calendar  
May 2025

Sponsored by the Fresno Center for Nonviolence

WEEKLY

KFCF 88.1 FM: **Nuestro Foro** (Spanish) Tuesdays, 7 p.m. News, commentaries and music with a Latino touch hosted by Eduardo Stanley. For more info, visit [kfcf.org](http://kfcf.org).

**Raza Against War/Women in Black** Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m. 2500 Tulare St. For more info, contact [comworkeradvocate@gmail.com](mailto:comworkeradvocate@gmail.com).

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

**Protest for Palestine** Saturdays 3 p.m.–5 p.m. Blackstone and Nees avenues. Yokuts’ Land. Connect, build community and stand for all oppressed and occupied people.

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

**THU 01** **Tulare Democratic Club** 7 p.m. For meeting location, contact [tularedemocraticclub1@gmail.com](mailto:tularedemocraticclub1@gmail.com).

**May 1 Coalition March** 4 p.m. Blackstone and Alluvial avenues. Stop deportations and family separations. Defend, rise and organize. For more info, contact 559-776-6642.

**May Day ArtHop Screening: *We Mean to Make Things Over*** 5:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. screenings. Arte Américas, 1630 Van Ness Ave. An award-winning half-hour documentary that explores how May Day became a global workers’ holiday everywhere except the United States, despite its origins in American labor struggles. Followed by a moderated discussion. Register at [bit.ly/mdafs25](http://bit.ly/mdafs25).

**FRI 02** **Symposium on Hmong Americans** 9 a.m.–noon. Fresno State Library Ellipse Gallery. Explore the origins of the Hmong and contemporary issues through keynote speakers, panel discussions and research poster presentations. Providing insight into these origins will be two Miao (Hmong) scholars from China. For more info, contact 559-278-0210 or [kremenschool@csufresno.edu](mailto:kremenschool@csufresno.edu).

**CineCulture: *The Sharp Edge of Peace*** 5:30 p.m. Peters Education Center Auditorium, Fresno State. Discussant: Roya Sadat (director). This powerful, revealing and necessary political thriller follows four courageous women on the Afghan government’s negotiating team during the war in Afghanistan as they risk their lives to navigate the hard road to peace with a group of men historically committed to denying their most basic rights. Free and open to the public. For more info, contact [mhusain@mail.fresnostate.edu](mailto:mhusain@mail.fresnostate.edu) or visit [cineculture.csufresno.edu/](http://cineculture.csufresno.edu/).

**SAT 03** **Kennedy Club of the San Joaquin Valley** 9 a.m. Via Zoom. For more info, contact 559-435-4043 or [claval@comcast.net](mailto:claval@comcast.net).

**Moving Forward Together** 3 p.m.–5 p.m. Veterans Memorial Hall, 22001 W. Manning Ave., San Joaquin. Residents from Firebaugh, Mendota, San Joaquin, Kerman and unincorporated communities share your vision to shape the transportation future of Fresno County.

**MON 05** **FCC Speakers Forum** 11 a.m. OAB Auditorium, Fresno City College. ASL (American Sign Language) artist, dancer and activist Brandon Kazen-Maddox presents SOUL(SIGNS), a celebration of ASL, heritage and belonging. For more info, contact 559-442-8200.

**Cinco de Mayo** 11 a.m.–5 p.m. Dunkle Park, 1500 Q St., Firebaugh. Raffles, performances, food and much more. For more info, contact [gamayer20@gmail.com](mailto:gamayer20@gmail.com).

**Lunch at the Center** Noon–2 p.m. Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N. Van Ness Ave. Share a meal of Beyond Burgers with all the fixings and sweet potato fries. For more info, contact 559-237-3223.

**TUE 05** **Social Tapestry: Weaving Stronger Communities** 5 p.m.–7:30 p.m. The New Manchester, 1901 E. Shields Ave. Learn and discuss how social connections and social capital can weave together a stronger and more cohesive community. Featuring short clips from the documentary *Join or Die*, based on Robert Putnam’s book *Bowling Alone*. For more info, contact 559-226-5600 or [drive@centralvalleycf.org](mailto:drive@centralvalleycf.org).

**National Women’s Political Caucus (NWPC)** 5:30 p.m. Los Amigos Restaurant, 5088 N. Blackstone Ave. Speaker: Fresno City Council Member Annalisa Perea (District 1). Topic: The Impact of Cutbacks on the City of Fresno. For more info, contact 559-222-6212 or [joanne@pb yoga.com](mailto:joanne@pb yoga.com).

**WED 07** **California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA)** 1 p.m. Via Zoom. Regional meeting. Link: [us06web.zoom.us/j/2284684729](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/2284684729). For more info, contact [ycuevas@californiaalliance.org](mailto:ycuevas@californiaalliance.org).

**KFCF 88.1 FM: *Stir It Up!*** 3 p.m. *Community Alliance* radio show hosted by Daren Miller. For more info, visit [kfcf.org](http://kfcf.org).

**THU 08** **KFCF 88.1 FM: *Valley Rising*** 3 p.m. Hosted by Daren Miller and Daniel O’Connell. For more info, visit [kfcf.org](http://kfcf.org).

**Healthy Mind, Healthy Planet** 7 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Church, 2672 E. Alluvial Ave. Speaker: Sonja Ohlsson, Brahma Kumaris Environment Initiative and meditation teacher. Topic: A Transformational Approach to a Sustainable Environmental Future. For more info, contact 559-435-2212 or [bkfresno@gmail.com](mailto:bkfresno@gmail.com).

**Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)** 7 p.m. Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N. Van Ness Ave. Online/in person. For more info, contact 559-360-8054 or [taca\\_03@ymail.com](mailto:taca_03@ymail.com).

**SAT 10** **Central Valley Progressive** 3:30 p.m. Via Zoom. For more info, contact 559-978-4504 or [swhalenr79@gmail.com](mailto:swhalenr79@gmail.com).

**SUN 11** **PFLAG Fresno** 2 p.m.–4 p.m. Fireside Room, Wesley United Methodist Church, 1343 E. Barstow Ave. Supporting, educating and advocating for LGBTQ+ people and their families. For more info, contact [pflagfresno@gmail.com](mailto:pflagfresno@gmail.com).

**MON 12** **Lunch at the Center** Noon–2 p.m. Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N. Van Ness Ave. Share a meal of curry, vegetables and rice. For more info, contact 559-237-3223.

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

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

**TUE 13** **Black American Political Association of California (BAPAC)** 6 p.m. Via Zoom. For more info, contact 559-287-1308 or [bapacfresno@gmail.com](mailto:bapacfresno@gmail.com).

**Kings County Democratic Central Committee** 6 p.m. Round Table Pizza, 208 N. 12th Ave., Hanford. For more info, contact [cathyjorgensen@hotmail.com](mailto:cathyjorgensen@hotmail.com).

**Porterville Democratic Club** 6 p.m. Pizza Factory, 879 W. Henderson Ave., Porterville. For more info, contact [contactportervilledems@yahoo.com](mailto:contactportervilledems@yahoo.com).

**Stonewall Democratic Club** 6:30 p.m. Los Amigos Restaurant, 5088 N. Blackstone Ave. For more info, contact 559-285-1641 or [info@fresnostonewalldemocrats.org](mailto:info@fresnostonewalldemocrats.org).

**Sierra Club Tehipite Chapter** 7 p.m. Via Zoom. Speaker: Scott Harris. Topic: *RaptorQuest*. Harris’s book captures his adventures and misadventures during the 17 months he spent chasing 53 raptors across 34 states. Free and open to the public. Visit [sierraclub.org/tehipite](http://sierraclub.org/tehipite) for the registration link. Advance registration required.

**WED 14** **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](http://kfcf.org).

**THU 15** **Clovis Democratic Club** 6 p.m. Seven Bar & Grill, 25 Shaw Ave., Clovis. For more info, contact 559-322-9740 or [clovisdemocraticclub@gmail.com](mailto:clovisdemocraticclub@gmail.com).

**Community Film Screening: *The Encampments*** 6 p.m. Forum Hall 101, Fresno City College. “Documentary that shows if there is a cause that you believe in, let your voice be heard. The response may be unexpected and overwhelming.” For more info, contact 559-442-8270 or [sjc@fresnocitycollege.edu](mailto:sjc@fresnocitycollege.edu).

**Tulare County Democratic Central Committee** 7 p.m. In Tulare and via Zoom. For more info, contact [tdccsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:tdccsecretary@gmail.com).

**SAT 17** **Central Valley Leadership Round Table** 10 a.m. Mendota City Council Chamber, 725 Riofrio St., Mendota. For more info, contact 559-250-1253 or [gamayer20@gmail.com](mailto:gamayer20@gmail.com).

**Rally to Protest Our Veterans’ Healthcare** 11 a.m.–1 p.m. Radio Park, 2233 N. First St. Hear from vets affected by the cuts to services. Then those who are able will march to the VA Hospital and back.

**Fresno Center for Nonviolence Way of Peace Awards** 2 p.m.–4 p.m. Skylight Room, OAB 251, Fresno City College. Resistance Movements: Then and Now. Panelists: Paul Gilmore, professor of history, FCC; Bob McCloskey, local journalist; Laura Kensinger, professor of women’s studies, Fresno State; Gerry Bill, moderator, emeritus professor of sociology, FCC.

**MON 19** **Lunch at the Center** Noon–2 p.m. Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N. Van Ness Ave. Share a meal of Beyond Burgers with all the fixings and sweet potato fries. For more info, contact 559-237-3223.

**TUE 20** **Central Valley Partnership** 5:30 p.m. Room 251, Old Administration Building, Fresno City College. For more info, contact [admin@centralvalleypartnership.org](mailto:admin@centralvalleypartnership.org).

**Kings County Jimmy Carter Club** 6 p.m. Lemoore. For more info, contact [kcyjimmycarterclub@gmail.com](mailto:kcyjimmycarterclub@gmail.com).

**WED 21** **KFCF 88.1 FM: *Speaking Truth to Empire*** 3 p.m. Hosted by Dan Yaseen. For more info, visit [kfcf.org](http://kfcf.org).

**San Joaquin Valley Democratic Club** 6:30 p.m. Round Table Pizza, 3710 W. Shields Ave. For more info, contact 559-669-8724 or [sjvdemclub@gmail.com](mailto:sjvdemclub@gmail.com).

**THU 22** **Harvey Milk Day** 4 p.m.–9 p.m. Cool Hand Luke’s, 1470 N. Cherry Ave., Tulare. \$27/ person for BBQ chicken or sirloin steak. Sponsored by the Tulare Stonewall Democrats. For more info, contact [tcstonewdalldems@gmail.com](mailto:tcstonewdalldems@gmail.com).

**Land Justice: Toward Equity, Conservation and an Agroecological Future** 5:30 p.m.–7:30 p.m. OAB 251, Fresno City College. How can land policies promote racial justice, ensure economic equity and offer ways to restore democracy? An evening with Daniel O’Connell, Ph.D. and co-author of *In the Struggle: Scholars and the Fight against Industrial Agribusiness* in California. Register at [bit.ly/clclj25](http://bit.ly/clclj25).

**Central Valley Indivisible** 6 p.m. The Big Red Church, 2131 N. Van Ness Ave. For more info, contact 559-495-0606 or [pattycapp@gmail.com](mailto:pattycapp@gmail.com).

**Peace Fresno** 6:30 p.m. Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N. Van Ness Ave. Monthly meeting to plan antiwar strategies. For more info, contact 559-513-0199 or [president@peacefresno.org](mailto:president@peacefresno.org).

**FRI 23** **KFCF 88.1 FM: *It’s a Queer Thang*** 5 p.m.–6 p.m. Covers local and national LGBTQ+ issues and events. Hosted by Chris Jarvis and Kaylia Metcalfe Armstrong. For more info, visit [kfcf.org](http://kfcf.org).

**MON 26** **Fresno County Democratic Women’s Club** 11 a.m. Marie Callender’s Restaurant Garden Room, 1781 E. Shaw Ave. For more info, contact 559-435-4043 or [claval@comcast.net](mailto:claval@comcast.net).

**Lunch at the Center** Noon–2 p.m. Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N. Van Ness Ave. Share a meal of curry, vegetables and rice. For more info, contact 559-237-3223.

**WED 28** **KFCF 88.1 FM: *Stir It Up!*** 3 p.m. WILPF radio show hosted by Jean Hays. For more info, visit [kfcf.org](http://kfcf.org).

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

**SAT 31** **Second Annual Madera Pride** 4 p.m.–8 p.m. Hatfield Hall, 1850 W. Cleveland Ave., Madera. For more info, contact 559-507-9644 or [jazming@maderaccj.org](mailto:jazming@maderaccj.org).

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



**root access**  
Community Hackerspace  
and Makerspace

3D Printing • Laser Cutting • Electronics • Technology  
Sewing & Fiber Arts • Workshop • ...and more!

Proudly located in the Tower District at 1476 N. Van Ness Ave.  
Check us out online at [rootaccess.org](http://rootaccess.org)



**KENNEDY CLUB OF THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY**

**Founder: Lawrence J. Kelly**



**The Kennedy Club  
of the San Joaquin Valley**

**Meeting and Discussing  
Democratic Ideas Since 1997**

*Kennedy Club meets 1st Saturday of each month.  
9:00am to 11:00am. Please Join Us!  
More Information: [fresnocountydemocrats.org](http://fresnocountydemocrats.org)*



# Equity on the Mall

BY PETER MAIDEN

Fourteen hundred people, many of them representing nonprofits in the San Joaquin Valley, came together on April 23 on the mall in front of the State Capitol in Sacramento to listen to speakers, see dance performances and lobby their representatives.

The event, called Equity on the Mall, was organized by the Sierra Health Foundation. The founding CEO of Sierra Health, Chet Hewitt, addressing the crowd, said when the first Equity on the Mall event took place in 2015, there were 50 people attending and they had a hard time being heard by the politicians.

Two years later, 750 people came out in the rain. The organizers had ordered 1,000 umbrellas with “Equity on the Mall, the Valley is Rising!” printed on them. “I can tell you that imagery from that particular moment was profound and powerful,” said Hewitt. Politicians began to engage with the organizers’ lobbying efforts.

Three thousand came out in 2019. During the pandemic, the event was held virtually. Then, in 2023 and 2024, the organizers took the event on the road throughout the Valley. This year, celebrating 10 years of organizing, they were back in Sacramento.

“This is not just a protest,” Hewitt said, “this is a process of democracy, where the power of the Valley, your power, is expressed here at the Capitol.”

Civil rights icon Dolores Huerta addressed the crowd, stressing the importance of healthcare in the Valley.

“We do not have enough dentists, we do not have enough doctors, we do not have enough nurses,” noted Huerta.

“And now with all of the big cuts that we see are coming down from the federal government, we know that the situation is not going to get any better. The situation is going to get a lot worse.”

Huerta acknowledged that we as a nation are entering into a bad time. But she said that the country will turn around, and good things can come out of a bad time. Out of

the Depression of the 1930s came the New Deal, the right to organize a union and public education.

“We look to the future,” Huerta exhorted. “What do we want? Universal healthcare!” “Don’t lose hope,” she said. “Because we have to remember that we are the future, and we have the power!”

“We are not just doers, we are also thinkers,” said Hewitt. “We have ideas about what will improve the lives and the life chances of families and our communities.” The program of Equity on the Mall included a panel discussion by activist intellectuals.

There had been a blessing and land acknowledgement at the top of the day’s program by Regina Cuellar of the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok.

A member of the panel, Fresno’s Daniel O’Connell, reflected on the spirituality of land. “Land is sacred. We’re in a moment when our values and our communities are going to be assaulted. We need to hold together during this time.

“There’s a vast overreach in what’s happening in our country right now. The opportunity for us is to go further together, envisioning what’s going to come. And I think land can’t just be a basis for our economics, which it is, but a basis of our morality, a basis of our spirituality.”

After the program, 40 advocates from nine community-based organizations lobbied politicians. They met with five Assembly members and two state senators. The topics that were discussed included education, environmental justice, immigration, healthcare, stop the hate protections and affordable housing in the Valley.

Lisbet Mastache, who lives in Sacramento, was one of 20 activists from Líderes Campesinas (Women Farmworkers’ Leadership) who attended Equity on the Mall. She was picking up a box of t-shirts commemorating the event from a booth where they were being given out to distribute among farmworkers.

“We’re at this rally because we are getting information about health matters, benefits for farm laborers and how to achieve equality,” said Mastache.

She added: “¡La unión hace la fuerza!” (Unity is strength!)

\*\*\*\*\*

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

## CENTRAL VALLEY BRIEFS

### Valley Voices for Peace

*Valley Voices for Peace* is an idea turned into reality by a grant from the U.S. Women’s International League for Peace & Freedom (WILPF). The idea behind this podcast is to supplement the already existing outlets such as the *Community Alliance* newspaper, KFCF 88.1 FM and many others to help Central Valley residents have even more of a voice.

Host Carol Goiburn says that as far as she knows, this is the first podcast of its kind for the peace community in Fresno. The grant focuses on giving voice to younger and up-and-coming activists who face their own issues and concerns surrounding justice and equality.

“The podcast is simple,” says Goiburn. “I ask all those who come on the show one question and that is, ‘Why is peace important to you?’ Wherever that takes us is wherever we go. It’s a simple question to ask but not an easy one to genuinely answer without reflection and contemplation and so the answers have been heartfelt and thoughtful.

“Imagine what the Gandhi peace walker answered or the retired Army captain who flew Blackhawk Medivac helicopters in Afghanistan or the world traveler who in her teens spent an entire summer with people very different from herself.”

Goiburn also noted that the peace community lost one of its most beloved activists last December: Bev Fitzpatrick. “While Bev could not be recorded for the show before her transition, her family and friends were, and they lovingly spoke of what they thought peace meant to Bev.”

Episodes are published at soundcloud.com; search for “valley voices for peace.”

### CD22 Canvassers’ Feedback on the Central Valley’s Mood

The Bay Area Coalition, in conjunction with Central Valley Matters, had 1,400 canvasser days and knocked on 49,000 doors, reaping 11,000 conversations in Congressional District 22 during the 2024 election. The canvassing campaign focused on low-propensity voters (the “don’t” or “won’t” voters).

Post-election, canvassers were asked to share their experiences. A summary of those comments:

- “Economy and kitchen table issues were top of mind, and I never felt like I had a good handle on a story of why the Democrats would be better at lowering prices than the Republicans...I needed to be able to tell [a] voter how [Democratic candidate Rudy] Salas and the Democrats would help their family feel secure about making their next mortgage or rent payment and putting groceries on the table.”
- “I came away from the campaign thinking that if we start knocking on doors a few months before the election, we will get nowhere. The work has to begin now...regularly stopping by homes to find out people’s needs and to give them information on what the Democratic Party is doing for them.”
- “We asked one man if he had already voted or planned to vote. He said he was voting for Trump.

I asked him what he thought about Trump’s promise to round up undocumented residents. He said that Trump wasn’t targeting Latinos, [rather] Trump was targeting trans people like the trans homeless man who walked by as we were speaking.”

- “A delivery person I conversed with also told me he was voting for Trump. He explained that he thought Trump would improve the economy. He said that Trump’s tariffs would cause Chinese companies to transfer their manufacturing to the US, thereby increasing jobs in the US.”
- “I can’t help but feel like if the [Democratic] party leadership had walked the streets of Bakersfield a year ago and knocked on doors and talked to voters, they would have realized how deep the disaffection is, and heard what the voters really care about and course-corrected. I don’t fully understand why it feels like the party leadership was blindsided by the national mood.”
- “My experience canvassing left me more optimistic about the future, despite the result. At this point, I believe that we need more and more in-person direct outreach to voters. People are inundated with false and/or conflicting information online and on TV, and many are being radicalized or simply opting out because they can’t make sense of what to believe.”

### Fair and Lawful Treatment

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has revoked the student visas of more than 300 international students in recent weeks. Among those affected are students from several California institutions, including campuses within the UC system.

Although DHS has not publicly stated the criteria used, the timing, pattern and statements by the current Secretary of State suggest that students engaged in advocacy around Palestinian human rights might have been disproportionately impacted. This raises significant constitutional questions around free speech and viewpoint discrimination.

CAIR-Sacramento Valley/Central California is committed to ensuring that all students—regardless of their national origin or political views—are treated fairly and lawfully. In response, CAIR is

- opening legal intakes for students affected by these revocations;
- coordinating with civil rights attorneys, campus groups and national partners;
- offering guidance to institutions navigating their responsibilities to international students; and
- sharing community voices in the media.

If you or someone you know has been impacted, visit [ca.cair.com](http://ca.cair.com) and click “Get Help.”

Students and faculty can report campus discrimination or retaliation through CAIR’s “Hostile Campuses” tracker at [islamophobia.org/reportcampus](http://islamophobia.org/reportcampus).

CAIR-SVCC remains focused on defending the civil liberties of all members of our community. With community support, it can continue to provide free

legal aid, engage in policy advocacy and protect fundamental rights in this critical moment.

### Dolores Huerta Turns 95

On June 6 at La Plaza de Cultura y Artes in Los Angeles, the Dolores Huerta Foundation (DHF) is hosting a celebration of Dolores Huerta’s 95 years of organizing, activism and community. She turned 95 on April 10.

Leaders across the country are standing up to honor Huerta’s extraordinary life and impact. From Los Angeles to the California State Capitol—and even the U.S. Congress—resolutions are being introduced to officially recognize April 10 as Dolores Huerta Day.

Her tireless fight for justice, dignity and equity has changed countless lives—and continues to inspire new generations of organizers and changemakers.

Huerta’s legacy is more than history—it’s a living movement.

Supporting DHF helps amplify her vision and continue the work of

- empowering youth leaders;
- uplifting the voices of grassroots organizers in local communities; and
- rallying for justice and democracy every day.

To attend the celebration or learn more about DHF, contact [cbaer@doloreshuerta.org](mailto:cbaer@doloreshuerta.org).

### Abolishing Education Department Hurts Impoverished Communities

“Trump’s proposal to abolish the Department of Education is not just a political maneuver; it’s a direct attack on the educational opportunities of our most vulnerable communities,” says Espi Sandoval in a recent article in *Tribuno Del Pueblo*. “Education is the key to breaking the cycle of poverty, and without a strong, accessible public education system, these communities will continue to fall further behind.

“The idea of a government that serves all citizens should include ensuring access to high-quality education for every child—not just those who can afford private schooling.”

Sandoval, an educator himself and a former Kerman City Council member, adds that “as educational leaders, we must fight for our children’s future and the dignity of families in underserved communities. Our elected officials must rise to the occasion and demand that education remains a priority for all Americans. We must maintain strong leadership standards and ensure every child can succeed.

“Trump’s push to abolish the Department of Education would leave our communities more vulnerable than ever. Our leaders must stand up, speak out and fight for our children’s futures. If they do not, the consequences will be felt for generations. Our youth’s education and our communities’ future depend on it.”



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

Desde 1996, *Alianza Comunitaria* ha sido una voz progresista independiente para el Valle Central de San Joaquín. *Alianza Comunitaria* aboga por la justicia racial, social, ambiental y económica; igualdad de derechos para todos, incluidos los inmigrantes, las personas sin hogar y la comunidad LGBTQ+; Acceso a una educación pública gratuita y de calidad para todos; Acceso a la atención sanitaria para todos; Un salario digno para todos los trabajadores. Nuestro objetivo es exponer los problemas raciales, sociales, medio-ambientales y económicos e injusticias políticas. Ayudaremos a construir un poderoso movimiento progresista que hará que todas nuestras comunidades sean más seguras, más sanas, más equitativas y más habitables.

**EDITOR**  
Eduardo Stanley  
editor@fresnoalliance.com

**MESA DIRECTIVA, SECCIÓN NO LUCRATIVA**

Oiga Loza  
Norberto Gonzalez  
Michaelynn Lewis  
Bob McCloskey  
James Mendez  
Jim Mendez  
Pam Whalen

**COMPAGINADORA**

Ashley Harper

**DISTRIBUCIÓN/ FOTOGRAFÍA**

Peter Maiden  
maidenfoto1@gmail.com

**PUBLICIDAD**

I. smiley G. Calderón  
714-290-6651 (texto)  
smileycalderon@gmail.com  
(También hablo español)

**CORRECTOR DE PRUEBAS**

Michael D. Evans

**EDITOR EMÉRITO**

Mike Rhodes

**SUSCRIPCIÓN**

Envíe \$60  
(constructor del movimiento pro-gresista), \$40 (regular) or \$15 (bajo ingreso) a:  
COMMUNITY ALLIANCE  
P.O. Box 5077  
Fresno, CA 93755  
fresnoalliance.com

**ENVIO DE ARTÍCULOS PARA PUBLICACIÓN**

**Fecha límite:**  
El 15 de mes previo.

Artículos 800–1,200 palabras.  
E-mail editor@fresnoalliance.com.

**Calendarios de Paz y Justicia Social y de Arte y Cultura:**

Por favor envíe sus eventos para anunciarlos a:  
calendar@fresnoalliance.com

el 15 de mes previo.

**Cartas al Editor:**  
E-mail editor@fresnoalliance.com.

Hasta 200 palabras.

El periódico Alianza Comunitaria se reserva el derecho de editar los artículos por razones de espacio y claridad. Alianza Comunitaria se imprime en papel reciclado. Alianza Comunitaria es una entidad 501(c)(4).

## Ataque

*Continúa de página 25*

Y el padre no era ciudadano estadounidense ni residente permanente legal al momento de su nacimiento".

En resumen, no se es ciudadano de Estados Unidos si los padres son indocumentados o se encuentran aquí temporalmente. La

Orden Ejecutiva concluyó que "es política de Estados Unidos que ningún departamento ni

agencia del gobierno estadounidense emitirá documentos que reconozcan la ciudadanía

estadounidense, ni aceptará documentos emitidos por gobiernos o autoridades

estatales, locales u otros que pretendan reconocer la ciudadanía estadounidense,

a personas: (1) cuando la madre de dicha

persona se encontraba ilegalmente en Estados Unidos y su padre no era ciudadano

estadounidense ni residente permanente legal al momento de su nacimiento, o (2) cuando

la presencia de la madre de dicha persona en Estados Unidos era legal, pero temporal, y su

padre no era ciudadano estadounidense ni residente permanente legal al momento de su

nacimiento". Esta Orden Ejecutiva fue bloqueada

temporalmente por los tribunales.

*Orden Ejecutiva 14163: Reestructuración*

*del Programa de Admisión de Refugiados de Estados Unidos (20 de enero)*

El texto comienza con una declaración política que busca desacreditar a la administración

anterior, sin embargo, esta declaración dista mucho de la realidad: "En los últimos cuatro

años, Estados Unidos se ha visto inundado de niveles récord de migración, incluso a través

del Programa de Admisión de Refugiados de Estados Unidos (USRAP). Ciudades y pueblos

por igual, desde Charleoi, Pensilvania, y Springfield, Ohio, hasta Whitewater,

Wisconsin, han experimentado una afluencia significativa de migrantes". El texto continúa

indicando que Estados Unidos no puede permitirse esta cantidad de refugiados porque

compromete sus recursos.

Por lo tanto, Trump afirma: "Ordeno que se suspenda la entrada a Estados Unidos de

refugiados bajo el USRAP", al menos durante 90 días. Durante este período, el gobierno

establecerá nuevas normas para quienes soliciten la condición de refugiado. Se prevé

una fuerte reducción en el número de personas

aceptadas.

*Orden Ejecutiva 14218: Fin del*

*Subsidio Contributivo a la Apertura*

de Fronteras (19 de febrero)

Esta Orden Ejecutiva simplemente refuerza lo

establecido por la Ley de Reconciliación de Responsabilidad Personal y Oportunidades

Laborales (PRWORA) de 1996, bajo la presidencia de Bill Clinton, que prohíbe a las

personas indocumentadas recibir beneficios públicos. Establece que "en las décadas transcurridas

desde la aprobación de la PRWORA, numerosas administraciones han actuado para socavar

los principios y limitaciones establecidos por el Congreso a través de dicha ley. En

particular, durante los últimos cuatro años, la administración anterior socavó repetidamente

los objetivos de dicha ley, lo que resultó en el gasto indebido de importantes recursos de los

contribuyentes".

Esto constituye un ataque contra la administración Biden, sin embargo, no existen

puebas. Trump añadió: "Para evitar que los recursos de los contribuyentes actúen como un

imán y fomenten la inmigración ilegal a Estados Unidos, y para garantizar, en la máxima medida

permitida por la ley, que ningún beneficio financiado por los contribuyentes se destine

a extranjeros no cualificados". Esto refuerza el viejo mito de que los inmigrantes vienen a

recibir dinero del gobierno estadounidense.

Los solicitantes de asilo, como los cubanos, reciben una compensación monetaria por un

período determinado. Pero la gran mayoría de los inmigrantes vienen aquí a trabajar. Cuando

trabajan, pagan impuestos, pero ni siquiera

## Trabajadores indocumentados pagaron

## miles de millones en impuestos

Un nuevo estudio de Americans for Tax Fairness muestra la enorme contribución de los

trabajadores indocumentados a la economía estadounidense.

Las principales conclusiones son las siguientes:

En 2022, los 10.9 millones de inmigrantes indocumentados en Estados Unidos pagaron \$96.7 mil millones en impuestos. Esto incluyó \$19.5 mil millones en impuestos federales

sobre la renta y \$32.3 mil millones en impuestos federales sobre la nómina. A nivel estatal y local, los inmigrantes indocumentados contribuyen con \$37.3 mil

millones en impuestos, y en 40 de los 50 estados, pagaron una tasa impositiva estatal/local efectiva más alta que el 1% de los hogares con mayores ingresos. El 1% de los

hogares con mayores ingresos pagó un impuesto estatal/local efectivo promedio del 7.2% en 2023; el inmigrante indocumentado promedio pagó una tasa impositiva efectiva

del 10.1% a los gobiernos estatales/locales. Se estima que se podrían generar entre \$40 mil millones y \$137 mil millones de

dólares en ingresos adicionales cada año si se les otorgara autorización de trabajo a estas personas. Una fuerza laboral menos explotable recibiría salarios más altos (y, por lo tanto,

pagaría más impuestos) y resultaría en un mayor cumplimiento tributario tanto por parte de empleadores como de empleados.

Los inmigrantes indocumentados pagaron una tasa impositiva federal efectiva de empleados superior a la de algunos de los estadounidenses más ricos y las

megacorporaciones.

Según datos fiscales publicados por ProPublica sobre las 400 personas con mayores ingresos, los inmigrantes indocumentados pagaron una tasa impositiva efectiva superior

a la de cinco de los estadounidenses más ricos. Los inmigrantes indocumentados también pagaron una tasa impositiva efectiva

superior a la de 55 megacorporaciones. Estas corporaciones tuvieron unos ingresos combinados antes de impuestos de casi \$200 mil millones de dólares, pero pagaron solo

\$3.700 millones de dólares en impuestos federales sobre la renta, un 90% menos que los inmigrantes indocumentados.

Los inmigrantes indocumentados representan aproximadamente el 5% de la fuerza laboral total, pero desempeñan un papel aún más importante en industrias clave: uno de

cada siete trabajadores de la construcción, uno de cada ocho trabajadores agrícolas y

uno de cada 14 trabajadores hospitalarios. Deportar a millones de trabajadores indocumentados reduciría la economía entre \$1.1 y

\$1.7 billones de dólares, una contracción más devastadora que la experimentada durante

la crisis financiera de 2008.

Los trabajadores inmigrantes, indocumentados o no, realizan trabajos que la mayoría de los estadounidenses no harían. Sin embargo, están siendo duramente atacados por la actual administración estadounidense, que utiliza una narrativa distorsionada, incluyendo términos como



**?Sabías que el periódico Alianza Comunitaria tiene una sección en español desde 2012?**



# Un Legado que se Desvanece

POR PAULINA DEEDS ORTIZ

El edificio en la esquina de Oak y Willis en Visalia está en silencio. La reja metálica está encadenada. Un letero descolorido por el sol aún dice Clínica Gratuita Santa Misericordia. Las ventanas están oscuras, y la banca donde los pacientes una vez esperaban bajo el peso de la fiebre y el cansancio está vacía.

Para quienes saben, esa esquina no es solo donde estuvo

una clínica. Es donde terminó un legado.

Antes de que hubiera una clínica, había una cocina. En 1985, llegaron a Visalia las Hermanas del Sagrado Corazón, una pequeña orden franciscana conocida por su ministerio entre la clase trabajadora. Se establecieron en el lado sur, olvidado por la ciudad, y alquilaron un salón parroquial deteriorado junto a una escuela cerrada. Lo llamaron La Mesa de la Misericordia.

En ese entonces, Visalia no ofrecía servicios formales para su creciente población sin hogar. Los bancos de alimentos eran raros. Las comidas calientes, aún más. Las hermanas no se quedaron de brazos cruzados. Abrieron las puertas, colocaron sillas de plástico y sirvieron lo que tenían—para quien llegara. No había hojas de registro. Ni verificación de identidad. Ni sermones.

La gente llegó.

Para 1987, habían añadido una clínica sin cita previa en el bungalow contiguo—tres salas de examen, una sala de espera y un pequeño armario lleno de gases, baumanómetros y donaciones de Tylenol. Las hermanas colaboraron con enfermeros locales, médicos jubilados y estudiantes de medicina. Los miércoles y sábados ofrecían consultas, curaciones, vacunas, pruebas de glucosa y todo lo que pudieran manejar.

Llamaron a la clínica Santa Misericordia. Sin seguros, sin

facturas. Solo se requería necesidad.

Con el crecimiento de Visalia, el vecindario alrededor de la clínica cambió. La gentrificación se coló. La ciudad impulsó la revitalización del centro. Y el trabajo de las hermanas—alimentar al hambriento, tratar al indocumentado, acoger al enfermo mental—ya no encajaba con la imagen preferida de una Visalia “más limpia”, “más segura”.

A finales de los 2000, aumentó la presión. La diócesis comenzó a formalizar su supervisión sobre los ministerios laicos. Las hermanas, nunca conocidas por su obediencia

ciega, resistieron las nuevas restricciones, como la

## Ataque a los inmigrantes

POR EDUARDO STANLEY

Desde el 20 de enero, Donald Trump ha firmado órdenes ejecutivas (OE), aprobó un

proyecto de ley del Congreso e impulsado medidas que castigan a los inmigrantes.

Su obsesión es demostrar que los inmigrantes son “criminales”, por lo que en la nueva

ley y las OE, la narrativa es antiinmigrante y carece de fundamento.

**Promoción de las auto deportaciones**

El 10 de marzo, el Departamento de Seguridad Nacional (DHS) reformó una aplicación móvil utilizada por inmigrantes para solicitar asilo (CBP One), convirtiéndola en una herramienta que permite a las personas indocumentadas que viven en Estados Unidos declarar que

salen del país voluntariamente.

En resumen, la aplicación CBP One se convirtió en CBP Home.

El gobierno de Trump está fomentando las “auto deportaciones” e incitando a la gente a hacerlo implantando un sistema de terror e incertidumbre. Los rumores sobre redadas de deportación en varias ciudades son parte del plan. Casi un millón de personas pudieron ingresar al país, normalmente por dos años, con permiso de migración bajo la CBP One a principios de 2023. La aplicación dejó de funcionar justo después de que Trump asumiera el poder en enero de 2025.

La auto deportación es una opción peligrosa para las personas indocumentadas ya que puede impedirles volver a ingresar a Estados Unidos y obtener la ciudadanía legal durante años o incluso indefinidamente, explica la organización Immigrant’s List (Immigrantslist.org).

Y agrega: “Además, el Departamento de Seguridad Nacional y su jefa, Kristi Noem,

lanzaron una campaña publicitaria nacional e internacional. Con una inversión de 200 millones de dólares, los anuncios instaron a los inmigrantes indocumentados a abandonar el país y, en el mercado internacional, les advirtieron que no intentaran entrar al país ilegalmente.

“Esta costosa campaña no solo sirve para asustar a las familias, sino que también les miente. En el anuncio, Noem afirma que es posible regresar a Estados Unidos al salir voluntariamente, pero los expertos han señalado que esto no es del todo cierto”.

En otras palabras, quienes decidan regresar voluntariamente a su país tienen que entender que volver a EE.UU, aunque sea como turistas, no será fácil. Y además, si así lo hacen, no tienen porque decirle al gobierno que se van ya que esto podría perjudicarlos si les otorgará los privilegios de la tarjeta de residencia permanente, además de ser una ruta

**Tarjeta Dorada para los Ricos**

Mientras que los trabajadores inmigrantes ven la posibilidad de obtener una tarjeta de residencia permanente (el primer paso para obtener la ciudadanía estadounidense) como algo casi imposible, los extranjeros adinerados podrían obtener una tarjeta aún mejor, y de un color diferente: la tarjeta dorada.

El presidente Trump anunció en febrero que Estados Unidos ofrecería la tarjeta dorada a

cambio de 5 millones de dólares.

“Le pondremos un precio de aproximadamente 5 millones de dólares a esa tarjeta, que

## Nosotros Somos el Legado

Mi familia se benefició de ambas instituciones. Sin la Clínica Belén, hubiéramos pasado días sin comer. Sin esas hermanas, yo no hubiera tenido alimento en el estómago ni ropa en la espalda. Sin el Centro Samaritano, mi mamá no habría podido controlar su diabetes durante años. Ellos nos mantuvieron con vida en los períodos más difíciles. Puede que los edificios estén cerrados y vacíos, pero el impacto positivo que tuvieron en esta comunidad—en mi familia y en mi—continúa. Personas como yo, somos su legado.

Propuesta de trasladar sus operaciones al norte de la ciudad—lejos de quienes servían. Cuando se negaron a ceder el control administrativo, fueron llamadas por el obispo. En menos de un año, fueron removidas.

Técnicamente, la iglesia usó un lenguaje más suave: “reasignación”, “consolidación”, “reajuste de recursos”.

Pero en la práctica, el mensaje fue claro. Las hermanas tenían que irse. Su orden fue disuelta localmente. Las últimas cuatro hermanas dejaron Visalia en 2010.

La cocina fue asumida por una organización diocesana sin fines de lucro y continuó como el Centro Belén, que eventualmente integró la Clínica Buenas Nuevas en sus operaciones. Pero el modelo cambió. La cultura

original de acceso radical comenzó a erosionarse. Tras años de lucha con el financiamiento, falta de personal y reajustes administrativos, la Clínica del Centro Belén cerró definitivamente en enero de 2024.

Su cierre no fue un caso aislado.

Apenas tres meses después, la Clínica Gratuita del Centro Samaritano—el último servicio de salud sin cita previa para personas sin seguro en Visalia—cerró el 15 de abril de 2025. Fundada en 2003, el Centro Samaritano ofrecía atención médica y dental, recetas, exámenes de laboratorio y educación en salud. Operaba completamente con

voluntarios y sirvió a miles en el Condado de Tulare durante más de dos décadas.

Pero en los últimos años se hizo más difícil reclutar profesionales médicos dispuestos a donar su tiempo. La base de financiamiento se redujo. Los años de pandemia agotaron sus reservas. En su declaración final, la junta citó

sostenible como razones del cierre.

Con el fin del Centro Samaritano, Visalia se une a un número creciente de ciudades en California sin servicios de salud completamente gratuitos. El Condado de Tulare es uno de los más pobres del estado. Más del 55% de sus residentes están inscritos en Medi-Cal. Pero tener acceso no es lo mismo que recibir atención. Aproximadamente el 15.8% de la población sigue sin seguro médico—principalmente personas indocumentadas, trabajadoras y desempleadas recientemente. Incluso quienes califfican luchan para navegar el sistema. Barreras de idioma, falta de documentación y escasez de proveedores hacen que conseguir una cita sea difícil, especialmente en zonas rurales.

Clínicas como Santa Misericordia y el Centro Samaritano llenaban esos vacíos. Sin formularios. Sin comprobantes de ingreso. Solo atención.

Su pérdida no es abstracta.

Misericordia registró más de 4,000 visitas de pacientes. La mayoría eran adultos sin seguro—trabajadores agrícolas, empleados de bajos ingresos. Gente que retrasa atención médica porque no puede darse el lujo de faltar al trabajo, mucho menos pagar una consulta. Gente que muere más joven, no porque está más enferma, sino porque es invisible. Lo que desaparece con Santa Misericordia y el Centro Samaritano no es solo un edificio o un programa. Es una forma de pensar la salud: no como mercancía, sino como

derecho humano.

La presencia era el primer paso para sanar. El legado de Santa Misericordia, de la Clínica Belén, del Centro Samaritano, merece ser recordado. No en placas ni dedicatorias, sino en acción. California todavía necesita

clínicas gratuitas. Todavía necesita espacios donde la atención no sea condicional. Y todavía necesita gente

dispuesta a servir a quienes más lo necesitan.

*Paulina Deeds Ortiz es una ex-becaria de Community Alliance. Ella es una inmigrante mexicana y actualmente está estudiando Antropología y Psicología en CSU Fresno.*

*Paulina dedica su tiempo libre a escribir poesía y pintar.*

*Continúa en página 24*

*Orden Ejecutiva 14160: Protección del Significado y el Valor de la Ciudadanía Estadounidense*

*(20 de enero)*

Según la 14.ª Enmienda de la Constitución de los Estados Unidos, todos los nacidos en

este país son ciudadanos estadounidenses. Sin embargo, la administración Trump quiere cambiar esto de la siguiente manera: “El privilegio de la ciudadanía estadounidense no se extiende automáticamente a las personas nacidas en Estados Unidos: (1) cuando la

madre de esa persona se encontraba ilegalmente en Estados Unidos y el padre no era ciudadano estadounidense ni residente permanente legal al momento de su nacimiento, o (2) cuando la presencia de la madre de esa persona en Estados Unidos al momento de su nacimiento era legal pero temporal (como, entre otros, visitar Estados Unidos bajo los

auspicios del Programa de Exención de Visas o con una visa de estudiante, trabajo o turista)

**Órdenes Ejecutivas**

Desde que Donald Trump asumió la Casa Blanca por segunda vez, básicamente ha gobernado el país mediante órdenes ejecutivas, ignorando al Congreso, a pesar de que estas son algunas de sus órdenes relacionadas con la inmigración:

este está controlado por su propio partido, el Partido Republicano.

Obtenga más información sobre este tema en el Consejo Americano de Inmigración

(americanaimmigrationcouncil.org).

procesados penalmente.

invita a las autoridades a arrestarlos y deportarlos—o no registrarse y correr el riesgo de ser

una difícil decisión: registrarse—reconociendo su estatus migratorio, lo que prácticamente enfrenta a la amenaza de un proceso penal.

El grupo más vulnerable son los inmigrantes indocumentados, quienes se enfrentarán a

como delito no registrarse o no presentar la prueba, lo que significa que los inmigrantes se de su registro. Una nueva ley, que se suma a esta disposición sobre el registro, tipificará

inmigrantes que ingresaron al país sin una visa se registren y presenten un comprobante

antigua disposición de la ley de migración, que no se aplicó, que exige que todos los

visa deberán registrarse ante el gobierno. La administración Trump está “reviviendo” una

A partir del 11 de abril, los inmigrantes que no hayan ingresado a Estados Unidos con una

**Registro de Inmigrantes**

El grupo más vulnerable son los inmigrantes indocumentados, quienes se enfrentarán a como delito no registrarse o no presentar la prueba, lo que significa que los inmigrantes se de su registro. Una nueva ley, que se suma a esta disposición sobre el registro, tipificará

inmigrantes que ingresaron al país sin una visa se registren y presenten un comprobante

antigua disposición de la ley de migración, que no se aplicó, que exige que todos los

visa deberán registrarse ante el gobierno. La administración Trump está “reviviendo” una

A partir del 11 de abril, los inmigrantes que no hayan ingresado a Estados Unidos con una

**Órdenes Ejecutivas**

Desde que Donald Trump asumió la Casa Blanca por segunda vez, básicamente ha gobernado el país mediante órdenes ejecutivas, ignorando al Congreso, a pesar de que estas son algunas de sus órdenes relacionadas con la inmigración:

este está controlado por su propio partido, el Partido Republicano.

Obtenga más información sobre este tema en el Consejo Americano de Inmigración

(americanaimmigrationcouncil.org).

procesados penalmente.

invita a las autoridades a arrestarlos y deportarlos—o no registrarse y correr el riesgo de ser

una difícil decisión: registrarse—reconociendo su estatus migratorio, lo que prácticamente enfrenta a la amenaza de un proceso penal.

El grupo más vulnerable son los inmigrantes indocumentados, quienes se enfrentarán a como delito no registrarse o no presentar la prueba, lo que significa que los inmigrantes se de su registro. Una nueva ley, que se suma a esta disposición sobre el registro, tipificará

inmigrantes que ingresaron al país sin una visa se registren y presenten un comprobante

antigua disposición de la ley de migración, que no se aplicó, que exige que todos los

visa deberán registrarse ante el gobierno. La administración Trump está “reviviendo” una

A partir del 11 de abril, los inmigrantes que no hayan ingresado a Estados Unidos con una



## Cocina Comunitaria

*Continúa de página 28*

“Nosotros decidimos hacer algo. Empezamos a trabajar con unos agricultores Hmong y la National Hmong American Farmers Association para establecer 5 puestos de venta de productos frescos en una escuela en el sureste de Fresno y esto fue bien recibido por la gente. No es que no quieran comer saludable, el problema es el acceso”, dijo Islas. “El problema es que para vender comida chatarra—chips, sodas, etc—no se requiere ningún permiso, mientras que para vender comida saludable hay requisitos. Es por esto que hace falta una cocina comunitaria, para que los vendedores puedan cocinar de acuerdo a los requisitos de las autoridades,

y también para que sea un lugar donde se entrenan y toman cursos”.

Cuitiva la Salud ya cuenta con un edificio para la futura cocina comunitaria, se trata de una vieja lavandería ubicada en el centro de Fresno. Las oficinas de Cuitiva la Salud estarán en la parte superior y ya están trabajando en la remodelación del edificio.

“El presupuesto es de 3 millones de dólares, ya recaudamos dos millones”, dice con entusiasmo Islas. “Tenemos que considerar quienes la usarán, cada persona quizá cocine comida diferente. Pensamos que unos 50 vendedores podrían usar la cocina. Y también tenemos que pensar en la logística, que no será fácil. La cocina también será un lugar de

entrenamiento”.

El sueño de Islas de crear una cocina comunitaria está cada vez más cerca de convertirse en realidad.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Eduardo Stanley es el Editor de Community Alliance.*

## Storyland y

## Mamá Ganso

**POR JAMES MENDEZ**

Storyland, donde los cuentos de hadas cobran vida,

ha estado en las noticias últimamente debido al cierre planificado del parque de atracciones Playland, que se encuentra junto a Storyland en Roeding Park. Roeding

Park es el parque más antiguo del condado de Fresno, establecido en 1903 gracias a una donación de Frederick y Marianne Roeding.

El parque de atracciones Playland abrió en 1955, seis semanas antes que Disneyland. Habría cumplido 70 años en 2025, pero estaba programado para cerrar el 30 de

marzo. Storyland abrió en 1962.

En Storyland, los niños podían ver un libro de cuentos

lleno de “Los Tres Cerditos”, un castillo, reinas, cabañas, un barco pirata y más. Laves mágicas abrían una historia que se leía en voz alta para los visitantes. Las llaves vendidas en

la década de 1960 todavía funcionan.

Debido a problemas de financiamiento y mantenimiento, tanto Playland como Storyland cerraron en marzo de 2014. Solo gracias a un enorme esfuerzo comunitario, que recaudó casi \$500,000 junto con casi 13,000 horas de voluntariado,

se logró restaurar y reabrir Storyland y Playland.

Storyland reabrió en septiembre de 2015 y Playland en 2016. Ambos cerraron en marzo de 2020 debido a la pandemia de Covid-19. Según Cindy Lee, directora ejecutiva de Storyland, Inc., el parque temático Storyland reabrió en marzo de 2021 y ha prosperado desde entonces. La misión educativa de Storyland, con un enfoque en la alfabetización y STEAM (Ciencia, Tecnología, Ingeniería—como la construcción de castillos—Artes y Matemáticas), le ha permitido obtener importantes subvenciones de

## Sins of Sor Juana

*Sins of Sor Juana*, escrita por Karen Zacarías y dirigida por Gina Sandi-Díaz, es una producción estudiantil de Fresno State organizada por la Escuela de Música, que se presentará del 2 al 10 de mayo.

La legendaria poeta mexicana Juana Inés de la Cruz escribe versos expresivos y sensuales en la corte del Virrey en el siglo XVII, una época en la que se consideraba inapropiado e incluso pecaminoso que las mujeres ejercieran su intelecto.

El Virrey siente celos de la influencia de Juana sobre su hermosa esposa, la Virreina, quien ha arreglado un matrimonio ventajoso para asegurar que Juana siempre tenga un

### Fresno Storyland

890 W. Belmont Ave., Fresno

Contacto: 559-486-2124 (reservar una excursión escolar a Storyland)

Horario:

Miércoles a viernes de 9:00 a. m. a 2:00 p. m.

Sábado y domingo de 9:00 a. m. a 4:00 p. m.

Niños (menores de 11 años) \$4, Adultos \$6, Personas mayores (mayores de 65 años) \$5

Entrada a la excursión: \$4 por estudiante y sus padres.

Un profesor entra gratis por cada clase que asista a la excursión.

Ganso por \$75.

Los profesores pueden reservar una presentación interactiva en vivo de una canción infantil interpretada por Mamá

individuos e instituciones privadas para mantener el parque.

Aunque Storyland ahora goza de estabilidad financiera, el futuro de Playland es incierto. Después de la pandemia, Halm and Sons Amusements asumió la operación de Playland y reabrió el parque en 2023, pero no logró generar

suficientes ingresos para mantenerlo abierto. La empresa decidió terminar su contrato en febrero y cerrar Playland de

**Mamá Ganso**

Joan Casper interpreta el papel de Mamá Ganso en Storyland. Casper es una mujer encantadora, llena de

energía y con una actitud positiva ante la vida.

En su papel de Mamá Ganso, lee libros a niños de entre 5

y 8 años. Entre semana, las escuelas llevan a sus alumnos a Storyland para excursiones escolares. También los padres llevan a sus hijos durante la semana y los fines de semana.

En los meses de verano, Madre Ganso pasa un fin de semana al mes leyendo cuentos a los niños bajo la sombra

de un árbol. Durante 35 años, Casper fue la bibliotecaria del

Distrito Escolar de Grass Valley, una ciudad ubicada aproximadamente a 60 millas al norte de Sacramento. Mientras trabajaba como bibliotecaria, solía distraerse y decorar la biblioteca según el libro de la semana.

Con el tiempo, comenzó a vestirse como Mamá Ganso usando distintos disfraces (vaquera, peregrina, bailarina, trabajaba en Oakdale, entre Stockton y Modesto, cuando leía el libro de la semana. En ocasiones, también

de su hijo. Poco después de llegar, escuchó sobre una vacante en Storyland. Solicitó el trabajo usando uno de los cinco disfraces de Madre Ganso que su nuera le había confeccionado. Fue contratada ese mismo día y desde entonces ha sido la Mamá Ganso de Storyland.

### El Costo de

## Cumplir con la Ley

La Asociación de Vendedores Ambulantes es una organización independiente creada hace tres años en Fresno. Su líder es Miguel López y cuenta con aproximadamente 40 miembros. En los últimos meses, la Asociación ha estado negociando con la Ciudad y el Condado de Fresno para lograr que más vendedores obtengan sus permisos para poder vender, esto implica que los carritos usados por los vendedores deberán ser aprobados. A partir del 1ro. de julio, las autoridades exigirán los permisos. Quienes no lo tengan deberán pagar una multa.

“Un carrito elotero cuesta entre \$8 y \$9 mil dólares, depende del material usado”, comentó Miguel López. “No creo que todos los vendedores puedan tener su carrito para el 1ro. de julio”, parece que están atresados en la entrega”.

López estima que debido al alto costo del carrito y a la demora en la entrega, muchos eloteros decidirán ya no vender elotes. Otros productos, como frutas frescas, solo requieren el permiso de la ciudad.

“Si están un poco caros, pero lo veo como

negocio. Y además ya no nos va a molestar la autoridad, vamos a poder circular y vender más tranquilos”, dice López. “Llevo 16 años como vendedor ambulante, y hasta aquí nunca hubo control ni orden... Entonces vienen a vender personas de otros pueblos porque ven que en Fresno no les piden nada. Como Asociación queremos que todos tengan permiso para vender, no importa de donde vengan.”

Los vendedores ambulantes enfrentan serios riesgos en su trabajo, explica López. Desde personas que no les pagan sus productos, hasta acoso y violencia física. En Fresno, en 2023 fue asesinado el vendedor Lorenzo Pérez, de 45 años, durante un robo. Este crimen generó presiones de la comunidad para que la ciudad proteja más a los trabajadores en las calles. Las negociaciones apoyó al proyecto de la cocina comunitaria son parte de la respuesta de Fresno.

López estima que este proceso es de beneficio para todos. “Tenemos derecho de vender pero también tenemos obligaciones”.

Joan Casper, vestida con su atuendo de

Mamá Ganso. Foto de *James Méndez*



*James Méndez llegó a Fresno en 1977 para realizar su residencia médica en lo que entonces se llamaba el Centro Médico del Valle. Se quedó para ejercer la medicina y criar a su familia. Actualmente es médico jubilado y activista comunitario.*

mes en junio, julio, agosto y septiembre. \*\*\*\*\*

Mamá Ganso solo visita el parque el cuarto sábado de cada En verano, Storyland abre los fines de semana, pero incluso la abrazan.

Cree que los niños deben “aprender a leer para ser ciudadanos respetables”. Se esfuerza por hacer que la experiencia de la lectura sea positiva y feliz. Mamá Ganso tiene reservadas alrededor de 48 excursiones escolares entre febrero y junio. Durante esos cuatro meses, ve a aproximadamente 3,000 estudiantes. Cada presentación dura unos 20 minutos. Puede atender entre 40 y 50 niños a la vez y realizar hasta tres o cuatro presentaciones al día. Los niños le hacen muchas preguntas como: “¿Dónde vives?”. Al final, aplauden, la animan e

que su papel es alentar a los niños a leer lo que quieran sin censura.

Como Mamá Ganso de Storyland, Casper lee cuentos, hace trucos de magia y esparce polvo de hadas por todo el parque. Ella dice: “Simplemente hago lo mío”. Considera

lugar en la corte. Creyendo que su propio matrimonio está en peligro por el compromiso de Juana, el Virrey contrata a un pícaro encantador y educado para seducir a Juana y destruir su reputación. Cuando Juana se niega a comprometer su poesía para ajustarse a lo que la Iglesia considera apropiado, corre el riesgo de perder todo lo que ama.

*Fechas y horarios:*

• 2 y 3 de mayo: 7:30 p.m. a 9:30 p.m.

• 4 de mayo: 2 p.m. a 4 p.m.

• 6 al 10 de mayo: 7:30 p.m. a 9:30 p.m.

Todas las funciones se llevarán a cabo en el Teatro Universitario de Fresno State. Boletos de \$10 a \$20





# ARTE Y CULTURA DE FRESNO

## CALENDARIO MAYO 2025

01

**Waitress** (hasta el 18 de mayo) Roger Rocka's. Una mesera y pastelera que vive en un pequeño pueblo se enfrenta a un embarazo no planeado y a un matrimonio infeliz. Encuentra conexión inesperada con un nuevo doctor en la ciudad.

02

**Silent Sky** (hasta el 22 de junio) 2nd Space Theatre. Henrietta Leavitt, una astrónoma pionera, hizo descubrimientos innovadores en el Observatorio de Harvard a principios del siglo XX, a pesar de ser mujer en un campo dominado por hombres. \$29.49

03

**Bilingual Storytime** 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Arte América. Escucha una historia en inglés y español seguida de una actividad artística juntos inspirada en el libro del día.

04

**Las comunidades leen juntas** 10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. Betty Rodríguez Regional Library. El autor Ernesto Cisneros analiza su premiado libro, *Efren Divided*.

05

**Nakology 2026** 10 p.m. Strummer's. La fiesta universitaria más grande del año regresa con temática Y2K. \$26+

06

**San Joaquin Valley Bookfest 2026** 9 a.m. Old Administration Building. Una reunión de un día para celebrar a los lectores y escritores del Valle de San Joaquín. Gratis

07

**2 Fast 2 Fiesta: A 2000s Latin Night** 9 p.m. Fulton 55. Los mayores éxitos latinos de los años 2000. \$20+

08

**Coro del Fresno City College** 7:30 p.m. Old Administration Building. Música de fin de semestre durante este concierto de primavera. \$8

09

**Nu'N Yavi Culinary: Culinary Heritage** 12 p.m.-8 p.m. Madera Courthouse Park. Comida tradicional oaxaqueña preparada por mujeres indígenas oaxaqueñas. Sabores con Amor: Celebración del Día de las Madres celebrará a las madres con comida, arte juvenil y la inauguración de un huerto.

10

**Old Time Fiddlers & Music Jam** 2 p.m.-4 p.m. Santa Fe Basque. Violinistas de antaño y jam musical. Gratis

11

**Mother's Day Brunch** 11 a.m. Arte América. Recaudación de fondos anual para celebrar a las madres en nuestra comunidad. \$85

12

**Tina: The Tina Turner Musical** (también el 13 de mayo) 7:30 p.m. William Saroyan Theatre. Experimente el poderoso viaje de un ícono musical que redefinió la música e inspiró generaciones. \$49+

13

**George Lopez Live** 8 p.m. William Saroyan Theatre. López ha sido pionero en el humor latino al abrazar su origen étnico y enfrentar los estereotipos raciales como parte de su humor. \$49+

14

**Fresno City College Jazz Concert** 7:30 p.m. FCC Theatre. Con la participación de los pequeños conjuntos de jazz y de los grandes conjuntos de jazz del Fresno City College. \$8

15

**Nurse John: The Short Staffed Tour** 7 p.m. William Saroyan Theatre. La comedia de Nurse John es como hablar con tu mejor amigo del trabajo: dejan atrás los traumas, lloran, gritan y se rien juntos durante todos los altibajos del trabajo en el sector de servicios. \$59+

16

**Inner Ear Beat Down Slams** 7 p.m.-9 p.m. River Park Art Grove. 7 p.m. micrófono abierto; 7:30 p.m. slam. Presentado por Bryan Medina.

17

**Bilingual Storytime** 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Arte América. Escucha una historia en inglés y español seguida de una actividad artística juntos inspirada en el libro del día.

18

**2 Fast 2 Fiesta: A 2000s Latin Night** 9 p.m. Fulton 55. Los mayores éxitos latinos de los años 2000. \$20+

19

**Coro del Fresno City College** 7:30 p.m. Old Administration Building. Música de fin de semestre durante este concierto de primavera. \$8

20

**Jazz at the Library** 6:30 p.m.-8 p.m. Woodward Park Library. Música de jazz en vivo.

21

**Why Not Wednesdays** 5 p.m.-9 p.m. Fulton St. (Mono to Fresno). Feria callejera que transforma la calle Fulton en un vibrante mercado emergente, con una mezcla diversa de vendedores, camiones de comida, artistas y música en vivo.

22

**Art Grooves Got Jokes** 7 p.m.-9 p.m. River Park Art Grove. 7 p.m. micrófono abierto (límite de 3 minutos para chistes, canto, poesía); 7:30 p.m. concurso de talentos de comediante.

23

**1776** (hasta el 20 de julio) Roger Rocka's. Un musical basado en los acontecimientos que condujeron a la firma de la Declaración de Independencia. \$45+

24

**The Purple Ones** 8 p.m. Fulton 55. Un insaciable homenaje a Prince. \$20+

25

**Youth Orchestras of Fresno** 4 p.m. William Saroyan Theatre. Concierto de Gala 75 Aniversario. \$25+

26

**Ringo Deadstarr** 8 p.m. Strummer's. Banda estadounidense de shoegaze. \$24

27

**New Wrinkles: That's Entertainment** (hasta el 8 de junio) FCC Theatre. Un saludo a los íconos del escenario y la pantalla. \$15

28

**Tower Rats** 7 p.m. Strummer's. Mi objetivo es complacer la liberación de la celebración. \$21

29

**Margaret Cho Live and Livid 2026** 7:30 p.m. Tower Theatre. Cho apoya firmemente las causas que son importantes para ella (antirracismo, anti bullying y derechos de los homosexuales), al mismo tiempo que desarrolla su exitoso lado creativo. \$42

30

**Envia eventos relacionados con las artes a calendar@fresnoalliance.com antes del día 15 del mes previo a su evento, o puede publicar en cualquier momento en línea en fresnoalliance.com (seleccione Calendar).**

01

**Waitress** (hasta el 18 de mayo) Roger Rocka's. Una mesera y pastelera que vive en un pequeño pueblo se enfrenta a un embarazo no planeado y a un matrimonio infeliz. Encuentra conexión inesperada con un nuevo doctor en la ciudad.

02

**Silent Sky** (hasta el 22 de junio) 2nd Space Theatre. Henrietta Leavitt, una astrónoma pionera, hizo descubrimientos innovadores en el Observatorio de Harvard a principios del siglo XX, a pesar de ser mujer en un campo dominado por hombres. \$29.49

03

**Bilingual Storytime** 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Arte América. Escucha una historia en inglés y español seguida de una actividad artística juntos inspirada en el libro del día.

04

**Las comunidades leen juntas** 10:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. Betty Rodríguez Regional Library. El autor Ernesto Cisneros analiza su premiado libro, *Efren Divided*.

05

**Nakology 2026** 10 p.m. Strummer's. La fiesta universitaria más grande del año regresa con temática Y2K. \$26+

06

**San Joaquin Valley Bookfest 2026** 9 a.m. Old Administration Building. Una reunión de un día para celebrar a los lectores y escritores del Valle de San Joaquín. Gratis

07

**2 Fast 2 Fiesta: A 2000s Latin Night** 9 p.m. Fulton 55. Los mayores éxitos latinos de los años 2000. \$20+

08

**Coro del Fresno City College** 7:30 p.m. Old Administration Building. Música de fin de semestre durante este concierto de primavera. \$8

09

**Nu'N Yavi Culinary: Culinary Heritage** 12 p.m.-8 p.m. Madera Courthouse Park. Comida tradicional oaxaqueña preparada por mujeres indígenas oaxaqueñas. Sabores con Amor: Celebración del Día de las Madres celebrará a las madres con comida, arte juvenil y la inauguración de un huerto.

10

**Old Time Fiddlers & Music Jam** 2 p.m.-4 p.m. Santa Fe Basque. Violinistas de antaño y jam musical. Gratis

11

**Mother's Day Brunch** 11 a.m. Arte América. Recaudación de fondos anual para celebrar a las madres en nuestra comunidad. \$85

12

**Tina: The Tina Turner Musical** (también el 13 de mayo) 7:30 p.m. William Saroyan Theatre. Experimente el poderoso viaje de un ícono musical que redefinió la música e inspiró generaciones. \$49+

13

**George Lopez Live** 8 p.m. William Saroyan Theatre. López ha sido pionero en el humor latino al abrazar su origen étnico y enfrentar los estereotipos raciales como parte de su humor. \$49+

14

**Fresno City College Jazz Concert** 7:30 p.m. FCC Theatre. Con la participación de los pequeños conjuntos de jazz y de los grandes conjuntos de jazz del Fresno City College. \$8

15

**Nurse John: The Short Staffed Tour** 7 p.m. William Saroyan Theatre. La comedia de Nurse John es como hablar con tu mejor amigo del trabajo: dejan atrás los traumas, lloran, gritan y se rien juntos durante todos los altibajos del trabajo en el sector de servicios. \$59+

16

**Inner Ear Beat Down Slams** 7 p.m.-9 p.m. River Park Art Grove. 7 p.m. micrófono abierto; 7:30 p.m. slam. Presentado por Bryan Medina.

17

**Bilingual Storytime** 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Arte América. Escucha una historia en inglés y español seguida de una actividad artística juntos inspirada en el libro del día.

18

**2 Fast 2 Fiesta: A 2000s Latin Night** 9 p.m. Fulton 55. Los mayores éxitos latinos de los años 2000. \$20+

19

**Coro del Fresno City College** 7:30 p.m. Old Administration Building. Música de fin de semestre durante este concierto de primavera. \$8

20

**Jazz at the Library** 6:30 p.m.-8 p.m. Woodward Park Library. Música de jazz en vivo.

21

**Why Not Wednesdays** 5 p.m.-9 p.m. Fulton St. (Mono to Fresno). Feria callejera que transforma la calle Fulton en un vibrante mercado emergente, con una mezcla diversa de vendedores, camiones de comida, artistas y música en vivo.

22

**Art Grooves Got Jokes** 7 p.m.-9 p.m. River Park Art Grove. 7 p.m. micrófono abierto (límite de 3 minutos para chistes, canto, poesía); 7:30 p.m. concurso de talentos de comediante.

23

**1776** (hasta el 20 de julio) Roger Rocka's. Un musical basado en los acontecimientos que condujeron a la firma de la Declaración de Independencia. \$45+

24

**The Purple Ones** 8 p.m. Fulton 55. Un insaciable homenaje a Prince. \$20+

25

**Youth Orchestras of Fresno** 4 p.m. William Saroyan Theatre. Concierto de Gala 75 Aniversario. \$25+

26

**Ringo Deadstarr** 8 p.m. Strummer's. Banda estadounidense de shoegaze. \$24

27

**New Wrinkles: That's Entertainment** (hasta el 8 de junio) FCC Theatre. Un saludo a los íconos del escenario y la pantalla. \$15

28

**Tower Rats** 7 p.m. Strummer's. Mi objetivo es complacer la liberación de la celebración. \$21

29

**Margaret Cho Live and Livid 2026** 7:30 p.m. Tower Theatre. Cho apoya firmemente las causas que son importantes para ella (antirracismo, anti bullying y derechos de los homosexuales), al mismo tiempo que desarrolla su exitoso lado creativo. \$42

30

**Envia eventos relacionados con las artes a calendar@fresnoalliance.com antes del día 15 del mes previo a su evento, o puede publicar en cualquier momento en línea en fresnoalliance.com (seleccione Calendar).**

|   |   |  |   |   |   |
|---|---|--|---|---|---|
| Nota: Todos los eventos se realizan en Fresno, a menos que se indique lo contrario.                             |   |  |   |   |   |
| 2nd Space Theatre • 928 E. Olive Ave. • 559-266-0660 / gcplayers.simplertix.com                                 | FCC Theatre • Fresno City College • 559-442-8221                        | John Wright Theatre • Speech Arts Building/Fresno State • 559-278-2216 | La Boulangerie • 730 W. Shaw Ave. • 559-222-0555                          | Madera Courthouse Park • 210 W. Yosemite Ave., Madera • 559-675-7703      | Royce Hall/Fresno High School • 1839 N. Echo Ave. • swedestest.com          |
| Arte Américas • 1630 Van Ness Ave. • arteamericas.org   | Fig Tree Gallery • 644 Van Ness Ave. • 559-485-0460 / figtreegallery.us | Rotary Amphitheatre • Woodward Park • 7775 N. Friant Rd.               | Tower Theatre • 815 E. Olive Ave. • 559-485-9050 / fresnotowertheatre.com | University Presbyterian Church • 1776 E. Roberts Ave. • upc@upcfresno.org | Warkentine Culture & Arts Center • Fresno Pacific University • 559-453-2267 |
| Artshop Venues • fresnoartscountcil.org/programs/arthop   | Fresno State Concert Hall • 2380 E. Keats Ave. • 559-278-2654           | Old Administration Building • Fresno City College • 559-442-8221       | River Park's Art Groove Event Center • 80 E. Via Del Oro • 559-840-8886   | St. James Episcopal Cathedral • 4147 E. Dakota Ave. • 559-439-5011        | William Saroyan Theatre • 700 M St. • 559-445-8100                          |
| Betty Rodríguez Regional Library • 3040 N. Cedar Ave. • 559-600-9245  |   |  |   |   |   |
| Son Joaquin Valley Media Alliance está financiada por la Medida F de Acceso Ampliado por el Fresno Arts Council |   |  |   |   |   |



LA VOZ DEL MOVIMIENTO PROGRESISTA DESDE 1996

LA MANZANA COMUNITARIA

Cocina Comunitaria Ayudará a Vendedores Ambulantes

POR EDUARDO STANLEY

Los vendedores ambulantes son ya parte del paisaje de las ciudades y pueblos del Valle. Su presencia es más notoria durante eventos públicos, desde deportivos y culturales hasta protestas políticas. El estilo de los carritos que empujan bajo el ardiente sol o la lluvia depende del producto que ofrecen, no es lo mismo el carrito del elotero que el del vendedor de paletas o de hot dogs.

La comida que ofrecen es algo más que nostalgia—pensamos en los elotes bañados

de queso y chile (y a veces también con mayonesa), o en los refrescantes raspados o fruta

picada. Durante el verano del Valle no sorprende que se nos antoje una paleta.

Y aunque disfrutamos de los productos que ofrecen, pocas veces pensamos en que los vendedores ambulantes son trabajadores que pasan largas horas recorriendo calles

y parques en búsqueda de clientes y que tienen una familia que alimentar. Tampoco

pensamos en dónde producen o cocinan lo que venden.

Y precisamente este aspecto es crucial para su sobrevivencia ya que no siempre cumplen con los requisitos sanitarios y permisos municipales. Esto muchas veces ocasiona que sean

multados.

“Las leyes exigen que la comida que venden los vendedores ambulantes esté preparada siguiendo precisas reglas de sanidad, esta comida podría estar preparada en una cocina

comunitaria certificada por las autoridades de sanidad”, dice Genoveva Islas, Directora

de la organización Cultiva la Salud, de Fresno, que está liderando un proyecto de cocina

comunitaria para favorecer a los vendedores ambulantes que no tienen la capacidad de

cocinar de acuerdo a los estrictos controles sanitarios. La Ciudad de Fresno ha donado

\$700.000 a Cultiva la Salud para su proyecto de cocina comunitaria.

La calidad de los alimentos que consumen sectores sociales de bajos recursos es

questionable y afecta la salud y el bienestar de las personas.

“Nosotros promovemos el bienestar de la sociedad, la salud de la comunidad. Para esto las personas necesitan alimentarse bien y ser activos. En las comunidades y vecindarios de

Adíos al Papa Francisco

POR GABRIEL LERNER

(Nota del Editor: esta nota se reproduce con permiso de HispaniCLa.com)

Jorge Mario Bergoglio, el Papa Francisco, que falleció el lunes 21 de abril a las 7:35 hora de

Italia, a los 88 años en El Vaticano, pasará a la historia como quien trabajó incansablemente

para abrir la iglesia católica ante un segmento cada vez mayor de fieles, intentando detener

el éxodo de católicos y rejuveneciendo una institución característica por su apego a las

tradiciones y lo inamovible de sus doctrinas.

Lo hizo sin tener que efectuar los cambios drásticos que otros dentro y fuera de la Iglesia

demandaban. No habilitó la posibilidad de que mujeres ingresen al sacerdocio. No cambió

el rechazo a los matrimonios entre personas del mismo sexo. Pero abazó a una y otros.

E instituyó un espíritu de cambio desde el primer momento, cuando pensando en “no

olvidemos a los pobres” y lo hizo oficial al elegir como nombre el de Francisco de Asís.

Fue el primer papa jesuita. Y su trayectoria lo llevó a las villas (barrios marginales) del Gran

Buenos Aires, adonde llegaba en autobús para, ya arzobispo, compartir el pan con los

vecinos. En aquellos barrios fue “el papa villero”.

Por otra parte, Francisco dedicó esfuerzos para concientizar al público de los peligros del

cambio climático, instando a las potencias industriales a hacer los cambios necesarios para

aminorar el proceso de contaminación.

Ha muerto el primer papa latinoamericano—y el primero en 1300 años en no ser

européo—, y quien representó tanto a su pueblo argentino—con las numerosas tomas

de él tomando mate (bebida tradicional) y enarbolando la casaca de su equipo de fútbol

preferido, San Lorenzo de Almagro—como al latinoamericano en general.

Sin embargo, también perdura la controversia que suscitó cuando se le acusó de no

haberse opuesto suficientemente a la última dictadura militar argentina, especialmente

en el contexto de la desaparición de miembros del clero en manos de los represores. Una

controversia que no tiene respuestas definitivas y no puede tenerlas por lo delicado de su

posición en aquellos años.

Pero más allá de su pasado y los cambios que ejerció y que inició dentro de la Iglesia

Católica, una institución donde los cambios son lentos y llevan décadas sino siglos, Francisco

parecería haber sido el único líder mundial con la fortaleza y el prestigio suficiente como

para enfrentar la corriente de autoritarismo que está barriendo el planeta, especialmente

en su confrontación con Donald Trump y otros en el tema de la inmigración irregular.

Con constancia y paciencia, el Papa Francisco puso en el centro de su pontificado a los

inmigrantes, los desamparados y los pobres, y se opuso a la hostilidad anti inmigrante

personificada en Trump desde que lanzara sus ataques contra estos como parte de su

primera campaña presidencial en 2016. Y hasta que en febrero de este año dirigió una

carta abierta a los obispos de Estados Unidos donde cimentó los preceptos de misericordia

y solidaridad en defensa de los inmigrantes diciendo: “Exhorto a todos los fieles de la

iglesia católica, y a todos los hombres y mujeres de buena voluntad, a no ceder ante las



El Papa Francisco en la Plaza de San Pedro, el Vaticano, en 2014. Foto cortesía Alfredo Borba/The Commons

bajos ingresos hay más restaurantes de comida chatarra, más tiendas de alcohol y menos tiendas que venden comida o productos más frescos y saludables” afirma Islas. Hace unos años, la universidad estatal de Los Angeles (UCLA) realizó un estudio en el área de Fresno y comprobó que la población local tiene 5 veces más acceso a comida chatarra que a alimentos saludables”. En Fresno, los comercios que venden o preparan comidas más saludables están ubicados en el norte de la ciudad, una zona habitada por personas de mayores ingresos que en el sur. El consumo de productos más baratos pero menos saludables es una práctica común en áreas de bajos ingresos, donde las opciones son mucho más limitadas. La gente crea hábitos, y éstos afectan la salud y hay más enfermedades.



Genoveva Islas, Directora de Cultiva la Salud, durante la entrevista con Community Alliance. Foto de Peter Malden

*Gabriel Lerner es fundador y co-editor de HispaniCLa. Editor en jefe del diario La Opinión en Los Angeles hasta enero de 2021 y su actual Editor Emérito. Nació en Buenos Aires, Argentina, vivió en Israel y reside en Los Angeles, California. Es periodista, bloguero, poeta, novelista y cuentista. Fue director editorial de Huffington Post Voces entre 2011 y 2014 y editor de noticias, también para La Opinión. Anteriormente, corresponsal de radio.*

\*\*\*\*\*

sustentar su ejemplo y seguir apoyando a los que nada tienen, menos la esperanza. que podría revertir sus esfuerzos y propiciar una postura nuevamente conservadora, o bien humo blanco en la Plaza de San Pedro y la declaración de “habemus Papa”. Un sucesor de elegir a un sucesor, lo que podría llevar muchos días hasta culminar con el tradicional al retiroceso de su influencia global. En 15 a 20 días, los cardenales comenzarán el proceso institución inherentemente conservadora, ni que los cambios ejercidos por él respondían Se ha ido un defensor de los inmigrantes, sin perder de vista que mantuvo en pie una semana, e incluso en la Casa Blanca las banderas se izaron a media asta en señal de duelo. congaja y esperanza. En países como Brasil y la Argentina se decretó un duelo de una religiones y otros credos. Los gobernantes de la tierra expresaron sus sentimientos de Las reacciones de dolor desbordan los límites del catolicismo y engloban a otras y refugiados”. Porque “deportar migrantes”, escribió el Papa, “hiere la dignidad humana”.

narrativas que discriminan y hacen sufrir innecesariamente a nuestros hermanos migrantes