FREE VOL. 30 NO. 11 | NOVEMBER 2026

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

THE VOICE OF THE PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT SINCE 1996



EN ESPAÑOL
PÁGINAS 17–20

A Tribute to Dolores Huerta: Labor Leader, Mother, Legend

FROM THE *COMMUNITY ALLIANCE* STAFF

On October 28, a member of the Huerta family reached out to *Community Alliance* co-founder and long time labor worker Pam Whalen to inform her that Dolores, the legendary labor leader, had died earlier that day.

Huerta's family shared the following message on social media:

"We are deeply saddened to announce that our beloved mother, Dolores Huerta, has passed away today at the age of 96. As you can imagine, this is an incredibly difficult time for us, and we ask for privacy as we grieve this incredible loss to our family. We know that many of you around the world share in our mourning, and we will be following up on plans to recognize and celebrate her incredible life and legacy,"

Below are statements from *Community Alliance* team members:

Dolores challenged us to recognize our own power. She never let us off the hook. She dedicated decades of her life to mentoring organizers in the San Joaquin Valley, which is a different place because of her. We thank her for her generous support for the *Community Alliance* newspaper. ¡Sí se puede! *Pam Whalen, co-founder and board president of Community Alliance and longtime friend and colleague of Dolores*

Dolores Huerta was a legend, point blank, period. I had the privilege of meeting her when I was 15 through my own activism work. She was a figure that I had learned about growing up, and she was someone who I was in awe of when we met. I am not typically one to get star-struck, but she was an exception. Reading about her and what she went through, and then meeting the person, was an incredible experience for me and reminded me that the figures that we see as so powerful are still human at the end of the day. I hope that one day I can have an impact on someone that is even a fraction of the impact she had on me. *Enrique Little, Editor*

When I think of Dolores, I cannot help but think of my great grandmother who passed away at the beginning of this year. She was 95 and her name was also Dolores. Two women who spanned the same stretch of time, who inspired me in different ways, both gone in the same year. I did not know Dolores Huerta. I did, however, have the honor of walking alongside her at the Fresno Women's March in 2019. I thought I knew my granny until the end when I met her as a woman and not just that kind, docile grandmother who beamed every time she saw my siblings and me and wrapped all of our gifts in the Sunday funnies. In her last year, she shared unthinkable challenges she faced as a woman, challenges specific to living in a patriarchal society. As I'm sure you know, this year Dolores Huerta shared her truth as well... I think of how heavy that must have been. How, for decades, they carried secrets that were not their doing, only letting go at the end. No person should ever have to experience that and I thank both of them for releasing the burden onto the world so that more people will have the courage to do the same. Las Dolores me da fuerza para siempre decir mi verdad. *mars santos, Executive Director*

Huerta's work could merit its own issue—she inspired us all. We would like to dedicate this issue to her memory and her mission. Rest in power to the late great Dolores Huerta.



Dolores with the SEIU, blocking the Fresno County Board of Supervisors in 2019. *Photo by Peter Maiden*

El 28 de octubre, un integrante de la familia Huerta se comunicó con Pam Whalen, cofundadora de Community Alliance y con una larga trayectoria en el movimiento laboral, para informarle que Dolores, la legendaria líder sindical, había fallecido ese mismo día.

La familia de Huerta compartió el siguiente mensaje en redes sociales: "Con profunda tristeza anunciamos que nuestra querida madre, Dolores Huerta, falleció hoy a los 96 años. Como se imaginarán, este es un momento increíblemente difícil para nosotros y pedimos privacidad mientras vivimos el duelo por esta enorme pérdida para nuestra familia. Sabemos que muchos de ustedes alrededor del mundo comparten nuestro luto y más adelante les daremos a conocer los planes para reconocer y celebrar su increíble vida y legado".

A continuación compartimos los mensajes de integrantes del equipo de Community Alliance:

Dolores nos retó a reconocer nuestro propio poder. Nunca nos dejó zafarnos. Dedicó décadas de su vida a formar y acompañar a organizadores en el Valle de San Joaquín, que hoy es un lugar distinto gracias a ella. Le agradecemos su generoso apoyo al periódico Community Alliance. ¡Sí se puede! *Pam Whalen, cofundadora y presidenta de la mesa directiva de Community Alliance, amiga y colega de Dolores desde hace muchos años*



She was a supporter of the paper from the start, having worked with the co-founders on labor and immigration issues for years prior to its origin. *Photo from the* Community Alliance *archive.*

Dolores Huerta fue una leyenda y punto. Tuve el privilegio de conocerla cuando tenía 15 años, gracias a mi propio trabajo como activista. Era una figura de la que había aprendido mientras crecía y cuando nos conocimos me dejó impresionado. No suelo ser de los que se deslumbran ante una celebridad, pero ella fue la excepción. Leer sobre ella y todo lo que vivió, y luego conocerla en persona, fue una experiencia increíble para mí y me recordó que las figuras que vemos como tan poderosas, al final del día, siguen siendo humanas. Espero que algún día pueda tener en alguien un impacto que sea aunque sea una fracción del que ella tuvo en mí. *Enrique Little, editor*

Cuando pienso en Dolores, no puedo evitar pensar en mi bisabuela, quien falleció a principios de este año. Tenía 95 años y también se llamaba Dolores. Dos mujeres que vivieron la misma época, que me inspiraron de maneras distintas y que se fueron el mismo año. Yo no conocí a Dolores Huerta. Sin embargo, sí tuve el honor de caminar a su lado en la Marcha de las Mujeres de Fresno en 2019. Creía que conocía a mi abuelita, hasta que al final de su vida la conocí como mujer y no solo como esa abuela dulce y dócil que se iluminaba cada vez que nos veía a mí y a mis hermanos y que envolvía todos nuestros regalos con los monitos del periódico del domingo. En su último año, compartió los retos inimaginables que enfrentó como mujer, retos propios de vivir en una sociedad patriarcal. Como seguramente saben, este año Dolores Huerta también compartió su verdad... Pienso en lo pesado que debió haber sido. En cómo, durante décadas, cargaron con secretos que no eran culpa suya y solo los soltaron al final. Nadie debería pasar jamás por algo así y les agradezco a ambas por soltar esa carga al mundo, para que más personas tengan el valor de hacer lo mismo. Las Dolores me da fuerza para siempre decir mi verdad. *mars santos, directore ejecutive*

La obra de Huerta bien podría merecer un número completo—nos inspiró a todos. Queremos dedicar este número a su memoria y a su misión. Que descanse en poder la gran Dolores Huerta.



Speaking at a groundbreaking ceremony for a park to be named in her honor, on June 30, 2025. As of the time of publication, the park at Dakota and Milburn Avenues is in active construction and scheduled to open in early 2027. *Photo by Chris Schneider*

San Joaquin Valley Media Alliance
P.O. Box 5077
Fresno, CA 93755

Change service requested

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
FRESNO, CA
PERMIT NO. 475

@FRESNOALLIANCE.NEWS

/COMMUNITYALLIANCENEWSPAPER

The High Cost of a Tow After an ICE Arrest

BY JUAN ESPARZA LOERA

Tow truck operator Ramiro Basurto loses as much as $700—not including his time and the cost of diesel, now about $8.49 a gallon—every time he retrieves an abandoned vehicle belonging to someone detained by federal immigration officials.

But those costs did not stop Basurto, originally from Mexico, from offering free towing to anyone detained after news broke of a surge in immigration arrests across the Central Valley.

"I do it because I'm one of them," said Basurto, adding he tows up to four vehicles a day at no cost to the owners. "I'm the son of an immigrant. I come from *abajo* (below). So when you come from humble beginnings, you look around, and you know what it's like."

Pointing to the latest wave of detentions by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), which began Oct. 5, he continued, "When I saw what was happening ... I decided I'm going to do my part and give back to my people. I'm not going to abandon them."

Valley residents like Basurto wasted no time jumping in to help those affected by what is expected to be a 45-day immigration enforcement operation targeting large parts of California just weeks ahead of the midterm elections.

Thus far, more than 100 people—field workers, gardeners, construction workers and others—have been rounded up in this latest action by ICE.

Undocumented residents make up 12% (or about 124,000) of Fresno County's population. Data show, meanwhile, that the vast majority of those arrested by ICE since the start of the second Trump administration have no criminal record.



Ramiro Basurto, owner of Buena Vista Towing, is offering free service to people whose cars were left behind after federal immigration officials detained their owners. *Photo by Juan Esparza Loera*



Sanger-area farmer Reina Jiménez is offering vegetables to people affected by federal immigration enforcement action in the Fresno region. *Image from Jiménez's Facebook page.*

A 'no-brainer'

A Fresno housewife who bakes coconut-filled empanadas immediately offered to handle grocery shopping and delivery for those too scared to venture out. She also picks up children from school for parents worried about being detained.

A woman in Kerman, about 15 miles west of Fresno, who sells tamales and hot drinks to laborers headed to the fields in the predawn hours, organized a group to make 500 meals of chicken, rice, beans, and corn tortillas for hungry residents.

A Fresno trainer/entrepreneur drives up and down the region and quickly informs his ample social media audience of verified ICE activity. His Facebook posts, which include links to organizations that can offer help ranging from food to legal advice, have generated more than 11 million views.

"Of course I was surprised to see the solidarity we all have as a community, but I never imagined the impact my (Facebook) page would have," said Gus Gutiérrez, known as "Coach Gus" by his 44,000 Facebook followers.

Gutiérrez would like to see other social media users with large followings get involved in helping those who fear they may be arrested by immigration officers, even if they are here legally. The community, he said, has filled a void left by government officials who have either been slow to speak out in support of the undocumented community or have limited themselves in what they can do.

Organizations like Centro La Familia, Faith in the Valley, the United Farm Workers Foundation and CIVIIC have offered services including legal help and food.

"This is something very important for me because I was undocumented for 25 years," said Gutiérrez about jumping into action. "It was a no-brainer. I didn't have to think twice."

He figures he's out and about taking his kids to school or running errands, so he's traveled as far south as Visalia, north to Stockton, east to Reedley, and west to Mendota. Gutiérrez gets tips from followers about everything from a suspicious vehicle without license plates spotted in a neighborhood to a GoFundMe account or a scheduled food distribution.

Gutiérrez wants immigration reform to pass. "I know firsthand what it means to live in the shadows, with that constant fear and the uncertainty of not knowing what might happen tomorrow," he said.

More than just a tow

Basurto established his towing company, Buena Vista Towing, in 2019. He named it after his hometown in Guerrero, a Mexican state. Sometimes, he tows vehicles on a promise that the client will pay.

"Some people are too poor to afford much," he said. Their struggle is part of a broader affordability crisis affecting the country and a central issue this election season.

Last weekend, Basurto stopped at a Costco in Fresno, purchased 40 dozen eggs and offered them for free. He wants to offer more, but his income has limitations. One of his sons helped with the towing company but then went back to another job because business slowed.

Still, Basurto doesn't hesitate in his decisions. "That's how my father taught us. My father had a small store, and people sometimes didn't have enough money, and my father would give it away at little cost," said Basurto. "He was a role model for me."

Basurto has a couple of friends who help with money for fuel. "I would love to do more," he said while waiting in a fast-food parking lot in Central Fresno for a service call.

Basurto said he feels for farmworkers because he once toiled in the fields.

"To tell you the truth, I am blessed."

Filling a need

Helping those in need is nothing new for Alvarado, the Kerman woman who helped raise $10,000 through the sale of 4,000 tamales two years ago to help the families of seven farmworkers who died in an early-morning car accident on the way to work.

After handing out more than 500 meals last week, she plans a bigger giveaway on Oct. 20 for families too afraid to venture out for work or shopping.

"I don't have a grand business, but I have a grand God in my business," Alvarado said, enlisting volunteers to help with the cooking. "I think about those moments I lived through, and I wouldn't want to hear someone tell me they didn't have enough to feed their children."

She worked in the fields when she first arrived in Kerman in 2022. She heard almost immediately after ICE activity was reported that people were going hungry. Alvarado, despite her legal status, is afraid to venture out for fear immigration agents will harass her.

"I'm very happy because it's nice when people from your own community take their own people into account," she said.

Alvarado said it's up to the community to pitch in and help during the immigration crackdown because the need can't wait for elected officials to address it. "People need to feed their children."

Help can't wait

Erika Emprendedora does grocery shopping for about four families a day for free so they avoid the risk of running into immigration authorities.

"I thought about the people who don't speak the language or have trouble with their cell phones," said Erika, adding the task is demanding because she also has her own family to care for. Nevertheless, she still finds time to update her 12,000 Facebook followers on where ICE officers have been spotted.

Many others are pitching in. The owner of a small Madera market offers free grocery delivery and is organizing a food giveaway. He advises people to send their children or someone with legal status to pick up the food. The market entrance is guarded to keep immigration agents out.

Kerman Mayor María Pacheco, meanwhile, recently chased ICE agents out of her city. Her actions have since gone viral on social media, and comedian George Lopez promoted them. Another woman is delivering fresh vegetables from her small farm near Sanger.

They all agree the help can't wait.

*****

Juan Esparza Loera is a longtime Fresno photojournalist and former editor of Vida en el Valle.



From the Editor



Hello, loyal readers and supporters! Thank you once again for picking up our paper. At the time of release, Election Day is right around the corner. In previous letters, I have expressed my own cynicism about elections. In my piece in this issue about the Area 1 race, I close with the idea that no one candidate is enough to fix the problem. In my piece about the Cesar Chavez scandal (which can be found along with other excellent work on our website via the QR code in this paper), I close with the idea that the movement was not just one figure but thousands of workers behind him who made it possible. I stand by this. Voting alone will not save us. I recognize its importance, particularly at the local level, where change has the most impact on our day-to-day lives, but some people believe change begins and ends at the ballot box. I wholeheartedly disagree with that. Struggle is ongoing; it is not limited to Election Day; it is every single day. We are in a class war that becomes more apparent every day. Voting is but one tool; one could argue that it is merely a concession. The great progress that has happened in this country has happened not through voting, but by ordinary citizens exerting enormous pressure and community power on those who would use the state to exert their own. That is the true spirit of Community Alliance. So yes, please do go out and vote, but don't stop there. Read about the causes in our paper and go out and do what you can for them. As the editor and a fellow resident of the Central Valley, I implore you to think outside the ballot box when you think of what is to be done to truly fight back against the ever growing pressure. Thank you, and please do enjoy this issue.

Homer's Haiku

Origins of Tai Chi Chuan Haiku
Spring Fight Of Snake–Crane
Creation Of Tai Chi Chuan
Slow Practice For Health

Miles Davis 100th Birthday Haiku
Miles Davis Spring's Horn
Revolutionary Life
Happy Birthday!

Happy Birthday Everett LeRoi Jones
Fall—What Time Is It?
Dutchman In A Subway Car
All—"It's Nation Time!"

100th Birthday For John Coltrane
Fall Centennial
Happy Birthday, John Coltrane
Man With The Cool Sax

Sonny Rollins Haiku
Sax Music From Bridge
Talented Black Musician
Rest In Peace Jazz Man

A'ja Wilson 2026 WNBA MVP Haiku
Fall's A'ja Wilson
Five-Time WNBA GOAT!
History Was Made

I.C.E's Housekeepers; or the "Goons" in Grey

BY MARS SANTOS

"Did we just experience a traumatic event?"
"I would definitely say it was a baptism ritual for sure getting pepper sprayed for your first time."
"It's a rite of passage, I think. Definitely. Good job guys. You are officially antifascist."

This was the beginning of a conversation with the Aldrete Brothers, who, for over a week, along with others from the newly formed Fresno People's PAC, have gotten out of bed as early as 4:30 a.m. to practice their First Amendment right to protest the recent immigration enforcement "crackdown" affecting communities all across California.

Armed with coffee to keep them alert and warm during the Central Valley's recent cooldown, one or both brothers, Noah and Alfred, arrive at the Downtown Fresno ICE facility by 5:30 AM, a now-daily ritual for the pair.

"It's been an interesting week and a half with every day kind of ramping up more enforcement there," Alfred shared in an exclusive interview with *Community Alliance*, just hours after he was pepper sprayed by security personnel escorting the officers.

By the time he and Noah arrived at Sequoia Brewing Co. in Tower to discuss what happened, his red, swollen eyes had begun to calm, replaced by a distant daze as he reflected on the last week leading up to the incident.

"They went from having maybe five, six guards in the gray uniforms to eight, 10. They used to come outside unguarded. Now they're escorted by these fucking detention officers that work for ICE."

The officers he referred to belong to a security services company called G4S Secure Solutions. Their official title according to their Department of Homeland Security contract is "housekeeping guards." Masked and clad in grey, they began accompanying the ICE officers on October 12.

Monday
On their first day, G4S guards started pointing strobe lights and lasers at protesters, a tactic used to deter people from filming their activity.

Noah, observing the escalating hostility from ICE agents prior to the incident, shared



On of the G4S guards Alfred and Noah Aldrete say assaulted them on the week of October 12. *Screenshot of video courtesy of Fresno Resistance*

that "they became more aggressive and tried to come up to you and try to intimidate you, get in your personal space.

"When we went home, I was like, 'That's fucking crazy, Fred. Things are changing, bro. I feel it. They're flashing us with strobe lights."

Tuesday
The next day, when Noah refused to move out of a vehicle's path, a G4S guard hit Noah with a van. The "assault" confirmed to him that "their tactics were changing."

Multiple guards were present during the incident. Approximately eight of them escorted the vehicles that morning, and during the standoff, the brothers stood their ground in the public street with their hands raised, asserting their First Amendment rights.

In a video from the scene, you can see the security guard drive the federal vehicle directly into Noah, stopping right at the point of impact.

No one sustained serious injuries, and according to Noah, the confrontation and aftermath lasted about two minutes until a supervisor intervened and ordered the driver to back up.

The ICE agents retreated after the confrontation, which Noah described as a "small, small, small, small, small, small victory."

Wednesday
On Wednesday, the brothers arrived at the ICE facility equipped with bullhorns and strobe lights. When eight housekeepers emerged to escort a van, they used their bullhorns to heckle them.

At one point, the Aldretes began singing the theme from Ghostbusters when Alfred looked over and noticed "dude's in Noah's groove," referring to one of the guards.

According to Noah, he warned the guard, saying, "Don't put your fucking hands on me." However, the agent pushed him while another knocked Alfred's phone from his hand and threw him down.

"He's forcing himself in my personal space. I stood my ground. He forced himself, almost walking into my bullhorn and flashlight. I guess to draw some excuse, like I did something to hit him," said Noah as he relived the events.

"I see him push Noah into the car. And while he's pushing Noah, the other homeboy (G4S guard) grabs me and just knocks the phone out of my hand and at the same time dips me, throws me down."

The group recorded most of the interaction until the moment when the phone is knocked out of Alfred's hand, after which only audio was recorded.

"You can hear everything going on. The dude whose car it was came out and says, 'Hey man, what the? That's my car.' He just got out of work, happens to see what's going on, gets out, he's also recording. Happens to be the car that Noah goes on top of in the middle of the street."

Continues on page 4

G4S: The Lore

- In September 2025, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) awarded G4S Secure Solutions a California-based, two-year, $29 million contract, $23 million of which was allocated for "ground transportation services in support of enforcement and removal operation (ERO) in the San Francisco (SFR) Area of Responsibility (AOR)." The contract defines the SFR AOR as California's 11th congressional district. Fresno falls outside of this designation. At the time of publication, it is unclear whether this indicates a breach of contract.

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
Enrique Little
editor@fresnoalliance.com
Yo también hablo español

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
mars santos, M.Ed.
newspaper@fresnoalliance.com

NONPROFIT BOARD
Bob McCloskey
James Mendez
Norberto Gonzalez
Mohammad F. Shaikh, M.D.
Pam Whalen

LAYOUT DESIGNER
mars santos

DISTRIBUTION MANAGER/ PHOTO EDITOR
Peter Maiden
maidenfoto1@gmail.com

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

EDITOR EMERITUS
Mike Rhodes

TO SUBSCRIBE
Send $60
(progressive movement builder), $40 (regular) or $15 (accessible) 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 fresnoalliance.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 C*ommunity 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.

I.C.E.'s Housekeepers

Continued from page 3

According to Alfred, once the guards realized there were bystanders, they released them and retreated.

"You can see the gears in his head like, 'Oh fuck, we just fucked up. Dude sunk like Homer Simpson into the shrubs. Gone. And the rest of his cronies kind of slowly backed up like the cockroaches that they are."

After the garage doors reopened, Alfred stood in the street with his back to a van, refusing to move. An agent approached and sprayed him point-blank with pepper spray twice. Noah, to Alfred's left, partially dodged the spray but still got an eyeful.

Both men dropped to the ground—Alfred in a "dead body position" and Noah in a "half bend yoga pose", to continue their protest. The van then reversed around them and departed, and the agents retreated again.

All the while, two Fresno PD vehicles were parked nearby, having been called by a parking lot owner who had previously "harassed" the Aldretes, according to the brothers.

After the incident, Noah approached the officers to report what happened. They refused to engage with him, "did the shuffle" and drove off.

When they returned home around 7:20 AM, they began contacting lawyers and attempting to file police reports. Alfred encountered significant pushback from dispatchers and supervisors who initially refused to take a report, saying it was a "Homeland Security problem."

"The argument that I was getting into with the goddamn supervisor, Nathan, is, 'Look, at this point, I'm not even asking you to go up and arrest anybody.

"I want to make a statement so I can have it for legal purposes. That law enforcement came, took my statement, looked at our injuries and documented it so we can have it for court if we need to go.

"He continued to double down and say, 'That's not our problem. You need to take that up with Homeland Security.'"

Eventually, after speaking to councilmember Miguel Arias, Officer Gregory Bracamonte arrived to take a statement and have CSI document their injuries.

"He took my and Noah's statements thoroughly, professionally and to the full extent. He had CSI come out and document our injuries like I requested, like Noah requested, and gave us the case number so we can file all the information as far as evidence over to take this to the next step.

"I think right now what I'm really more upset about is that—let's just say that this was Miguel Arias helping us out, talking to Mindy Casto like he said he was. What if it was somebody else who didn't have that connection? Who didn't know him? This shit would just be swept under the rug and that's not okay."

Thursday

At 11:45 a.m. Thursday, Noah shared this update with *Community Alliance* via text message:

"This morning we went to the detention center and it almost was a ghost town. We had two vans that backed out early in the morning before 5:30 and now, and for pretty much a majority of the day since 6:00 a.m., there was little to no activity. They should have been clocking in. We only saw three guys get escorted in from the back into the building so they could clock in. Which is a big change from yesterday. Yesterday there seemed to be way more traffic with ICE agents and vans and the mindset seemed to be more aggressive yesterday."

According to members of the Fresno People's PAC, this indicates that "Fresno is Winning."

Update Since Original Online Publication

After the incident on Thursday, October 15 and as of October 27, the number of G4S housekeeping guards has decreased, assumed to have been relocated as one of them was spotted in Sacramento.

"They have definitely changed up their ways of engaging the public. We have not seen them come out in full force like they did when they assaulted us," Alfred shared with us via text.

"We haven't seen most of those G-Force scum since the assault and the only one we have seen on a constant basis is the tall black G4 guard who we have nicknamed Sergeant Ghostbuster."

To access the videos and citations referenced in this article, visit fresnoalliance.com

*****

mars santos, M.Ed., is an educator, writer, photographer and community organizer based in Fresno County. They serve as executive director of the Community Alliance *newspaper. Contact them at newspaper@fresnoalliance.com*

More G4S Lore

- G4S is a security services company that describes itself as "the world's leading global, integrated security company specialising in the delivery of security and related services." The 's' in specializing is no typo—the company's origins date all the way back to Denmark in 1901, and its current headquarters are in London, England. In April 2021, Allied Universal, a U.S.-based private security company founded 10 years ago with a self reported annual revenue of approximately $23 billion, acquired G4S.
- G4S Secure Solutions, the United States subsidiary of G4S, was founded in 1954 as the Wackenhut Corporation. They have a decades-long history of controversies including alleged mass surveillance of suspected communists during the McCarthy era and international ties with counter-resistance groups. Additionally, five of the six men who group raped and murdered Janet Chandler worked for Wackenhut as security guards. Of the men prosecuted, the main conspirator held a supervisory position.
- G4S has been criticized for its substandard criminal history and psychological screening process. The Pulse Night Club mass murderer worked for G4S Secure Solutions, and, according to employee records, he passed their screening in 2007. However, the psychologist named in the paperwork denied ever meeting the assailant and had ceased working for the company the year prior to the mass murder.
- According to the DHS and G4S contract summary, the five top-paid executives earned $1.4 million collectively annually. The highest-paid, Tracy Fuller of Texas, is listed as having earned $481,834. In a previous California contract that ended in July 2024, her annual compensation was listed at over $11 million.

Racism, the UN and the US

BY LENI VILLAGOMEZ REEVES

The first World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination took place in 1978. All of the "Western delegations"—which at that time meant the US, Canada, Australia and the European countries not aligned with the Soviet Union, and sometimes the countries in Latin America controlled by governments subservient to the US—withdrew. This conference was heavily focused on South African apartheid and also supported Indigenous rights and the rights of migrants and refugees. The military and economic cooperation of Israel with the South African apartheid government was condemned, and the conference "recalls with deep regret the cruel tragedy which befell the Palestinian people 30 years ago and which it continues to endure today—manifested in its being prevented from exercising its right to self-determination on the soil of its homeland, in the dispersal of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, the prevention of their return to their homes and the establishment therein of settlers from abroad, and in the practice of diverse forms of racial discrimination against Palestinians affecting all aspects of their daily lives in a manner which prevents their enjoyment of their elementary human rights on a basis of equality." It called for the elimination of all discrimination based on race, descent, color, national or ethnic origin, and also on property qualifications, literacy and language in the exercise of political, cultural, economic and social rights.

At the second conference in 1983, only the US, Israel and apartheid South Africa withdrew, and the final declaration was adopted 101 in favor and 12 against.

Durban—the Third UN Conference Against Racism—was a landmark. It took place in 2001, and the apartheid government had fallen in 1994. No doubt economic sanctions called for by those members of the UN not too intimidated by the US or implicated in racism and neocolonialism contributed. But, as Nelson Mandela himself said, the apartheid regime forced the liberation movement to take up arms, and the defeat of the racist army at Cuito Cuanavale, due to the presence of Cuban troops, marked the divide in the struggle for the liberation of southern Africa.

Only the US and Israel withdrew. During the George W. Bush administration, US withdrawal from international agreements was common, so that was no surprise. Furthermore, the US has never shown serious interest in combating racism, nor in discussing reparations for slavery or apologies for colonialism. The "Western Group," which is Western Europe, the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, was obstructionist, proposing irrelevant changes to unimportant texts. Some European delegations decided to declare that they did not accept the concept of "race," as if the lack of reality of race somehow would make racism unreal also.

The declaration dealt with Palestine as follows: "We are concerned about the plight of the Palestinian people under foreign occupation. We recognize the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to the establishment of an independent State and we recognize the right to security for all States in the region, including Israel, and call upon all States to support the peace process and bring it to an early conclusion."

Thousands of representatives participated in the Durban Conference. The Durban Declaration and Programme of Action was a success in that it clearly articulated what needed to be done.

Now we are at "Durban, 25 years later": a high-level meeting to mark the anniversary and look at implementation and reporting. It is about the elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, as well as the importance of its universal ratification and effective implementation. The meeting and the declaration produced from it for a UN General Assembly vote attempted to:

> "Acknowledge with deep concern the rise in discrimination, hate speech, stigmatization, racism, systemic racism, stereotypes, racial profiling, violence, xenophobia and intolerance, both in person and online, directed against, inter alia, Africans and people of African descent, Asians and people of Asian descent, Indigenous Peoples, Roma and persons belonging to other racial, ethnic, linguistic or religious minorities; ..."
>
> "Reaffirm the collective recognition of the profound and lasting impacts of the abhorrent regimes of slavery and colonialism and the persistence of racial discrimination and neo-colonialism on Africans and people of African descent, and underline the importance of addressing historical wrongs affecting Africans and people of African descent in a manner that promotes justice, human rights, dignity and healing..."

The UN General Assembly adopted the resolution on October 12, 2026, by a vote of 95 in favor and five against—Argentina, Australia, Canada, Israel and Micronesia. 37 countries abstained, including much of Western Europe, and about 50 countries "did not vote at all," including the United States, the UK, and Germany.

Getting rid of racism? Israel says, "Hell no."

The US and Europe say, "Nah, not interested." They really mean "Hell no" also.

*****

Leni Villagomez Reeves is a local physician and activist. Contact her at lenivreeves@gmail.com.

Global Issues



The United Nations General Assembly Building.
Photo courtesy of Yerpo/Wikimedia Commons.

The Social-Political History of Black Music

BY MALIK SIMBA

In 1937, Lead Belly and his wife, Martha, were refused hotel accommodation because of the Jim Crow color bar in Washington, D.C. In response, Huddie Ledbetter (Lead Belly) wrote the song "The Bourgeois Blues."

The sample lyrics are "Lord I am in a bourgeois town/ I got the bourgeois blues/ gonna spread the news all around." Subsequently, Ledbetter was invited to sing the song and others at political rallies hosted by the Communist Party of the USA.

On the heels of Lead Belly's song, the Jewish union man Abel Meeropol wrote Billie Holiday's famous standard "Strange Fruit," which was based on the 1930 Marion, Indiana, lynching of Thomas Shipp and Abram Smith. The woeful introductory lyrics are as follows:

Southern trees bear a strange fruit,
Blood on the leaves and blood at the root,
Black bodies swingin' in the southern breeze,
Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees

This poetic song so irked J. Edgar Hoover, head of the FBI, that he had Holiday arrested and handcuffed as she lay dying in the hospital from kidney failure in 1959.

The left activist Paul Robeson noted that the music of Black folk expresses various forms of resistance to oppression. Songs such as "Go Down Moses," "Follow the Drinking Gourd" and even the popular song "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" all have secret messages, as does the song "Wade in the Water," which told slaves that Harriet Tubman was coming to help them escape to freedom via a river.

These songs demonstrate that one's social condition of oppression leads to the oppressed class creating a culture of resistance. The music form as shown by Lead Belly's song is a classic confirmation of this understanding.

Therefore, by the 1960s, the Black music form of resistance corresponded to the explosive Civil Rights Movement with such songs as "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around" and "Keep Your Eyes on the Prize."

However, the civil rights songs spurred rhythm and blues singers to also write songs of resistance, such as Sam Cooke's 1964 song "A Change Is Gonna Come."

A major political protest-song writer in this period was Curtis Mayfield, with "Keep On Pushing" in 1964 and, in 1970, "We the People Who Are Darker Than Blue." Black music lyrics were created within the octane-charged civil rights political moment.

Stokely Carmichael's war whoop of Black Power moved him from being a nonviolent civil rights advocate to joining the Black Panther Party, which called itself a "Marxist-Leninist party."

Parallel to this occurrence was the Detroit Communist husband-and-wife team of James Boggs and Grace Lee Chin Boggs, who created the Organization for Black Power.

Of course, the fiery rhetoric of Malcolm X steered this generation to further militancy. On a side note, Grace Lee Chin, a woman of Chinese American descent, was a profound Detroit community organizer. When she passed at 101 years of age, President Obama, a community organizer himself, said, "Her passion for helping others will continue to inspire generations to come."

At this time in 1968, Detroit's social conditions created the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement (DRUM). DRUM's labor organizing in struggle produced a wide variety of street music and poetry highlighting the union's struggles, such as MC5 (Motor City Five) and the music group White Panther Party, whose leader was the jazz poet John Sinclair.

The social conditions of oppression inspired a wide array of artists, such as the East Village poet Bama, who released his album Ghettos of the Mind in 1972 with his hit "Justice Isn't Blind."

Bama inspired the neo-political emerging music of hip-hop, with Pete Rock & CL Smooth sampling Bama's poetry in their 1992 release Mecca and the Soul Brother.

However, the breakthrough synthesis of the dire conditions of the inner city and its poetic music form came with the 1970 release of Gil Scott-Heron's single cut "The Revolution Will Not Be Televised." Scott-Heron's poetic music inspired the newly emerging rap or hip-hop artists.

These new young poets called Scott-Heron the Godfather of Rap, but Scott-Heron referred to himself as a "bluesologist," which for him combined the social history of slave/folk music, blues and jazz, rhythm and blues and so forth.

To this understanding, one can directly connect Scott-Heron with the Harlem poetry music group The Last Poets.

This group started to record as early as 1968 and took their inspiration from the South African poet Keorapetse Kgositsile, who was a member of the revolutionary African National Congress and believed that poetry does buttress armed struggle with the creation of a cultural Black aesthetic that conveyed to "my Harlem brothers of Lenox Avenue, field hollers [of slave expressions], the blues, a train (Coltrane) riff, Marvin Gaye or Mbaganaga".

The poetic music group The Last Poets was composed of Gylan Kain, David Nelson, Jalaluddin Mansur Nuriddin, Umar Bin Hassan, Abiodun Oyewole and the Afro–Puerto Rican Felipe Luciano.

In one critic's assessment, "The Last Poets laid the foundation of Hip-Hop." Luciano, after serving two years in prison, joined the Puerto Rican radical organization The Young Lords and became a lead vocalist and writer for The Last Poets around 2010.

Felipe Luciano's most famous poem song was "Jibaro, My Pretty Nigger." Jibaro refers to the "salt of the earth" or workers who labor in the agricultural fields under exploitative conditions. The Last Poets' other hits were entitled "White Man's Got a God Complex," "Niggers Are Scared of Revolution," "Related to What" and "New York, New York."

The poem "When the Revolution Comes" has these lyrics:

When the revolution comes...
Some of us will probably catch it on television with chicken hanging from our mouths and
You will know it's a revolution because there will be no commercials
Black cultural centers will be forts supplying the revolutionaries with food and arm,
When the revolution comes...
Jesus Christ is gonna be standing on the corner of Lenox Avenue and 125th trying to catch
the first gypsy cab out of Harlem
When the revolution comes...
But until then niggas will party and bullshit and party and bullshit and party and bullshit and some may even die before the revolution comes.

I will digress to explain why Black artists use the N-word and their disagreement on its use and its meaning. In all social movements, there is an obvious dialectic of motion, conflict and change between the oppressor and the oppressed. However, within each social movement, there is a dialectic or clash within the movement itself.

A classic clash is between the older generation who fought in the "revolution" and the youth who are taught stories about how the older generation sacrificed all so that the youth would inherit a better day of sunshine. The older African American generation, who fought in the civil rights struggles and felt the sting of that word, abhors the use of the N-word

Randall Kennedy in his 2002 book *Nigger: The Strange Career of a Troublesome Word* and H. Rap Brown's autobiography *Die Nigger Die!* explain the historical context of the word.

In the poetic words of The Last Poets, "niggers should die so Black folk can take over." In the most direct dialectic of violent clash is Nikki Giovanni's poetic refrain "nigger can you kill a honkie...or kill the nigger in you."

These lyrics mirror Frantz Fanon's psychiatric insight into the mind of the oppressed, who can only be made healthy by committing political murder of the oppressor. To really free oneself, blood will and must be shed, à la Nat Turner's or John Brown's gallows insight on the coming of the bloody American Civil War.

Some argue that the N-word should be purged from Black culture altogether, while today's hip-hop youth think that by changing the spelling, i.e., niggas, it will change its meaning.

Therefore, the 1987 rap group N.W.A, or Niggaz Wit Attitudes, appeared to be progressive in their desire for social change, but alas, they were just like many who made Black music in this generation. Their aim was to get rich or die trying.

For instance, Ice Cube, who was a member of N.W.A, became a movie actor starring in wholesome all-American family vacation movies, and the rapper Ice-T, whose voice is highlighted in the rap hit "Cop Killer," became a heroic cop on the long-running TV show "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit."



Lead Belly with an accordian. *Photo Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons*

This brings us back to the 1903 book by W.E.B. Du Bois entitled *The Souls of Black Folk*. In these insightful belles-lettres, Du Bois said that Black music is the greatest gift to American culture, for Black poetry/music reveals the sins of White folk and the hurt of Black pain and suffering caused by white sinful racism for white profit.

The dialectic is well documented in rap music and its stepchild, gangsta rap music. The mental harm that racism inflicts and how it is internalized creates violence by those afflicted against those near to them, which often shapes the social relations and social conditions of the hood.

Tupac Shakur embraced the ghetto's contradictions by creating "Thug Life", or "the hate you give and share with youth comes back tenfold."

Black Marxist scholar Steve Ferguson's critique of Black culture calls it embourgeoisement, or get rich but don't die, embodied in persons such as Jay-Z and his wife, Beyoncé.

The 2005 film Hustle & Flow is a mere reboot of the classic pimp movie Super Fly. Both films glorify the behavior of the lumpenproletariat individual.

To hustle drugs, prostitution and violence was all synthesized in the 1991 film *New Jack City*, which helped elevate the music of the same name, new jack. In the film *Hustle & Flow*, the music hit was "It's Hard Out Here for a Pimp." Here is a sampling of the extreme misogyn:

"You know it's hard out here being a pimp (you ain't know nigga)/ When he tryin' to get this money for the rent/ Because a whole lot of bitches talkin shit."

In the film Super Fly, one of the hit songs was "Pusherman," which has these lyrics: "I'm your mama/ I'm your daddy/ I'm that nigga in the alley/ I'm your doctor when in need/ Want some coke? Have some weed."

Both films elevated the villainous ghetto individual who will do anything to get petit bourgeois rich, as one rapper did by renaming himself Nipsey Hussle. Yet the music form never changes the dire social conditions of those at the almost intrinsic mudsill.

The anger, social isolation, social chaos and violence of Black folk at the bottom of the well are all summed up in the song by the hip-hop group Geto Boys in their hit "Mind Playing Tricks on Me."

Their song expresses the paranoid, homicidal and suicidal deep feelings in the minds of individuals who find it "impossible to cope" because they live on the cliff's edge of society and hope not to be pushed over into the oblivion, which is encapsulated in the 1982 Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five lyrics "Don't push me cause I'm close to the edge, trying not to lose my head."



Malik Simba

Sadly, for far too many African American youth who have been left behind in the "jungles" of West Fresno, South Central, Buttermilk Bottom, South Side Chicago and Harlem by the post-civil rights era, that is the message with no answers, except for "a luta continua."

*****

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

PATIENCE MILROD
LAWYER/LICENCIADA EN LEYES
985 NORTH VAN NESS AVENUE FRESNO, CALIFORNIA 93728
559.246.7239 PM@PATIENCEMILROD.COM

PLUMBING DRAINS
LAWN SPRINKLERS
BOXER PLUMBING
Cell: 559-553-5733
10% Discount for Seniors
hirealbert@yahoo.com
www.boxerplumbing.com
Lic # 761865



The full panel at the School Board forum, from left to right: Dr. Daren Miller, Rizpah Bellard, Genoveva Islas, Mirna Garcia, Karen Steed, Dr. Deshunna Ricks, Valerie Davis, Miguel Arias. *Photo by Enrique Little*

Where a Juvenile Hall Once Stood, Area 1 Candidates Make Their Case

BY ENRIQUE LITTLE

On October 10, I went to Farber Educational Campus with a recorder in my handbag and a bit of election season cynicism. Many election forums can seem similar.

This location is far from typical. Farber, Fresno Unified's roughly $65 million alternative education campus, sits on the former Fresno County Juvenile Hall, which closed in 2006 and was torn down in 2019. Walking in, I felt that this space had not yet completely forgotten its past. Somewhere under the brand-new paint and career pathway banners this old land still seemed to be listening, wondering what the grownups would say about kids now. On the other hand, I also saw a monument to progress. Ever since I was a teenager, I have advocated against the school-to-prison pipeline, and this was a visceral representation of my goals, especially since the demolition lined up with my own senior year of high school.

Attendance was light, with rows of empty chairs, and Rizpah Bellard said she wished more community members could have made it. However, the folks who came weren't there by chance: parents of students at each grade level; a mom whose son ran the microphones; a man who introduced himself as a stakeholder in the 93706 ZIP code; and, most importantly, the youngsters who put on the show.

Parents and the Jakara Movement, a nonprofit centered on civic youth participation, hosted the forum, and students created every panel question. "These are not questions that have come from adults," a moderator noted. It is one thing for a candidate to read a platform to reporters. It is quite different to tell an actual student, whom they will be serving if elected, what exactly they intend to do in office.

Five candidates are competing for the vacant Area 1 seat, covering the Edison High School area, in the Nov. 3 election: Rizpah Bellard, Deshunna Ricks, Daren Miller, City Councilmember Miguel Arias, and Michelle Escobar Longoria. The first four participated in the Area 1 panel and the afternoon town hall and met with me one-on-one. Ms. Longoria was not present that day.

The rancher on the porch

Bellard is a rancher, as noted by her trademark cowboy hat; I've seen her sporting it at various community events. She and her father run cattle and sell ground beef to institutions such as the Central California Food Bank. She also houses unhoused adults, has substituted at schools across the district, and now teaches agriculture as a career technical education teacher.

Bellard stated that her candidacy began in the summer of 2024, when children on her block were not in summer school. She began tutoring them and ultimately had 20 to 22 students on her front porch. When the seat became vacant, "I said, why not me?"

Bellard is not from the area; she states this openly. However, she actually sees this fact as an advantage. "Not being from this area actually gives me a wider perspective," she said. "I'm not downtrodden by what was." Her opponents, she suggested, might carry "a little bit more baggage" from their past work within local institutions. Bellard identified herself as "more solution-based," adding, "I'm coming in very optimistic, very hopeful, very forward-focused."

Her first act as a trustee would be a listening session in English and Spanish, held off campus: "at a church, at a community center, on the block." From constituents, she wants engagement: "I don't want to be the only one showing up to stuff and speaking on their behalf."

Lived experience as qualification

Ricks grew up in West Fresno. An Edison High School graduate, she spent nearly 12 years working for Fresno Unified, most of them as a counselor. She now runs a nonprofit serving students and families and teaches at Fresno City College.

When asked what sets her apart, Ricks began with where she started: "I have that lens of being in an impoverished neighborhood where there was nothing." She continued, "I come with a lived experience of being in foster care for 11 years and aging out of the system." She was raised by a single grandmother caring for eight grandchildren and later raised her own son as a single parent. She holds master's degrees in social work and in family and human development and a doctorate in education. She said that the lenses she brings are "student-centered and service-centered, and also social justice."

Asked what she would expect of others if elected, Ricks pushed back on the premise that the platform is hers alone. "My vision is not just me. It's the vision that I've heard from parents," she said, naming higher literacy scores and holistic supports for students. "It is a community vision, right? Done in collaboration." Her expectation of herself is plain: "to do what I said that I was going to do."

On the panel, her lens became an unflinching argument for equity. "Our trustees need to put the money where the gaps are. Point blank, period," she stated. When the town hall turned to the disproportionate suspension of African American students, Ricks proposed mandatory cultural competency training and holding staff to the standards expected of students. "There is no reason why our educators can use the N-word on our campuses and not be held accountable," she stated.

"I don't have to wait for a seat to do the work," Ricks added.

The principal and the fire department

Miller worked as a counselor, vice principal and principal for 34 years and has officiated high school sports for 35. Most of his answers were rooted in what he has seen at school sites.

Miller sees Fresno Unified as much about culture as finance. "It is so toxic at the administrative level," he said on the panel. He pointed to this year's dispute over $2 million for field trips, out of a roughly $2 billion budget, as an issue that functional relations between the Fresno Teachers Association and the district would have resolved quietly.

In our interview, Miller used a family-oriented image. "Don't just come see me when the house is on fire," he told me. He believes Superintendent Misty Her should "not be afraid to do things differently," beginning with transitional kindergarten through second-grade campuses devoted exclusively to reading skills. His advice: "Don't throw the baby out with the bathwater, but don't be afraid to throw the water out and put some new water in it." His case is experience—"not just that I'm an old dude," he said, but his age includes decades of work in schools.

At the town hall, Miller recalled things that happened to him at 12 that "shouldn't have been happening to me because I was a kid. But they treated me as a young adult."

The councilmember who filed late

Arias represents District 3 on the City Council. He formerly represented Area 5 on the State Center Community College District board and, before the council, held senior roles at Fresno Unified, including chief information officer.

Arias' focus is fiscal. "We don't have a money problem at Fresno Unified. We have a spending problem," he stated. "If your mom gives you twenty dollars for the week and you go to Starbucks every single day and always buy a coffee for five bucks, you have a spending problem." Cuts, he argued, should come from administration and district offices, not children and families. "You can't put this back on kids and families," he said. "You've got to deal with the adults."

He described the difference between himself and his opponents as "purely experience," noting he was the only candidate who had managed a multibillion-dollar budget. He additionally cited the West Fresno community college campus he championed on the college board.

"We are the highest compensated school district in the state of California," Arias told me, yet "two-thirds of our kids cannot perform at grade level in math, reading and language." This was a red flag he mentioned in some of his panel answers as well, drawing that back to the fiscal ethos of his campaign platform.

The sharpest exchange came when the man from 93706 asked why Arias had waited until the last possible day to file, essentially asking whether the seat was a step in Arias' long political career. Arias pointed to his Edison-area record and the week of the filing deadline: news of bus route changes, problems with field trips, and a syllabus for his son's high school English class that counted 40 percent as passing. "That was the final straw for me," he said. He also said a union had decided to spend $200,000 to elect its preferred candidate.

Bellard responded directly to this. She said she wished the teachers union had actually put that kind of money behind her, because then "I wouldn't have to be doing as much door knocking." She also rejected his criticism of Advance Peace. Arias had said he was "not a fan of Advance Peace coming to our schools," arguing that violence intervention belongs to the city.

What the room held

Following lunch, parents asked follow-up questions that can't be answered in under two minutes.

The students' questions about field trips, school closings, chronic absence, and suspensions were not random complaints. These are but symptoms, symptoms that reflect systemic problems the new board will inherit. Enrollment has declined, and as Miller said, "Everything that's tied to the money in education is built off of attendance." Discipline falls disproportionately on African American students. Listening to the students, it was hard to disregard the history of this site, where young people were once detained.

The four candidates offered differing theories of change. Bellard brings an optimistic perspective from outside the area. Ricks brings equity grounded in lived experience. Miller would use his experience as a practitioner to generate systemic change. Arias would bring fiscal discipline backed by a long political career. Each expressed a valid need. However, no candidate can be the solution on their own.

As I left Farber, I was struck by a word so many campaigns used: "transformation." This campus is evidence that an institution can transform. But that takes years and does not erase what came before. Whoever is elected in November faces the same long haul. It is one thing to make promises at a forum on a Saturday morning in a half-full room. It is another to fulfill them during a budget vote, a school closure hearing, or a student's suspension appeal. I earnestly hope to see if the winner can shape their vision to meet the many needs of Area 1 families, or if those families will be asked to fit the winner's vision. The students who wrote the questions will still be in these schools when we learn the answers. They will be coming home to the parents who attended. They need to hold the next person in this office accountable for every answer given.

*****

Enrique Little is the editor of Community Alliance. *Contact them at editor@fresnoalliance.com.*

Helping to Preserve Fresno's Pictorial History
HOWARD K. WATKINS
Fresno's Photo Laureate
www.watkinsphotoarchive.com

(559) 355-7040
howardkwatkins@gmail.com

Supes Offer Furious Shaver Springs Residents a Drop in the Bucket

BY RACHEL YOUDELMAN

At its October 6 meeting, the Fresno County Board of Supervisors approved a "community outreach" expenditure of $100,000 for Waterworks District 40 in Shaver Springs to relieve the area's water crisis. For months, residents have been appearing at Board meetings, urging the county to address the area's severely contaminated water. At long last, the matter appeared on a meeting agenda.

While professing concern, District 5 Supervisor Nathan Magsig, in whose district the area lies, minimized residents' specific complaints and offered only limited district funds to address them.

Special Districts Manager Chris Bump gave a presentation on the matter, reporting that the region has a "history of naturally occurring contaminants," thereby appearing to take some of the sting out of the residents' urgent complaints by giving the impression that this was nothing new.

Bump reviewed funding for the water district, including remaining funds from state grants, but how this money was to be used was not specified. Anticipated state funding could subsidize individual water bills and—depending on funds available—a water-treatment plant feasibility study. Bump's language was notably conditional and equivocal: funds were "anticipated" or "depended on availability."

Magsig offered $100,000 in special district funds, but it was unclear what the money would be used for. He emphasized that if the county pays for something the state subsidizes, those subsidies could be jeopardized, implicitly shifting responsibility away from the county.

District 1 Supervisor Brian Pacheco, visibly agitated, contested the offer of county funds. He said that though water problems were new to District 5, his district, including communities such as El Porvenir, has struggled with them for years. He argued that state and county policy prohibited the use of county money in a County Service Area (CSA)—just what Magsig was proposing to do with his district's funds. Pacheco's constituents had received no such county assistance. A hard-won $11 million grant from the state for District 1 is financing new well construction, a long-term solution, and is not yet complete.

Pacheco pointedly thanked Magsig for the videos, shown at the previous meeting, of Magsig drinking Shaver Springs water from tank spigots, ostensibly "showing that the water is safe." Even Pacheco minimized the seriousness of Magsig's constituents' complaints—he felt that the problem was in the distribution system. Nevertheless, he wanted "people in my district to be treated the same as everybody else." He asked County Counsel Doug Sloan to clarify whether a legal distinction between a waterworks district and a CSA could permit the expenditure. "I want an answer!" he demanded.

Sloan replied that "these districts" are intended to be self-supporting, but he found no law "prohibiting additional funds." Pacheco read aloud the county policy: "It's right there in black and white: county expenditures are prohibited for county service areas." Sloan dismissed it as "county internal policy." This was money for a waterworks district, and "there may be a distinction" between that and a CSA, Sloan said, adding that "ultimately, this is a Board policy call."

Pacheco scoffed and repeated that "it's kinda there in black and white: 'expenditures for county service areas are prohibited by law'—how else do you interpret that?" Sloan answered that previous county counsel may have had different opinions. With an exasperated laugh, Pacheco said, "That's why we have attorneys!"

Giving the appearance of wanting to avoid conflict, Pacheco lavished praise on Magsig for "doing everything you can to help your district" before reiterating that he wanted rules to be administered equally to all residents. "I will not let the people of my district be told 'no,' and now, all of a sudden, that we can do that—that's not right," he said.

Magsig justified his $100,000 pledge of district funds with a shell-game explanation: the money was not from the general fund. There was a sum of $100,000 for each county district for "special projects," so he saw no conflict with the policy Pacheco cited. Magsig asked County Administrative Officer (CAO) Paul Nerland if the crisis in Shaver Springs was an "emergency." Nerland said it did not meet the legal criteria, nor had the state issued a "do not drink" order. Sloan concurred. Effectively, this strategy reinforced the minimizing of constituent concerns.

Public testimony, however, was explicit. Shaver Springs resident Kristi Del Toro claimed that there was indeed a "do not drink" order in place and called Magsig's publicly aired videos of his water-tasting a "ridiculous PR stunt." She accused Magsig of stalling because of the imminent election (he is a candidate for state Senate). (Note: Though there is no formal "do not drink" order, the district is under state compliance orders based on the heavy contaminants in the water; residents and others concur there is little distinction.)

Shaver Springs resident Jennifer Taber, who has appeared multiple times before the Board, agreed with Pacheco's position on equitable treatment of county residents. She suggested that her thyroid cancer was caused by water contaminants. Another woman lamented purchasing property in Shaver Springs, only to be stuck with the water problem.

The supes resumed their minimizing of constituent concerns. While Magsig acknowledged that residents' frustrations were "absolutely warranted," he undercut that acknowledgment by reiterating that providing too much financial assistance could "jeopardize state funding."

Chair Garry Bredefeld (District 2) asked about a long-term plan and cited the $11 million state grant received by District 1. Pacheco asked if a state grant application was pending. Bump said that a feasibility study was the first step in the time-consuming, costly process of constructing new wells or a water-treatment facility. Pacheco recommended using Magsig's $100,000 to expedite a feasibility study for the water-treatment plant.

Regarding the woman who purchased property in Shaver Springs, the supes determined that the matter was between seller and purchaser and otherwise showed no sympathy for her predicament.

Bredefeld: Hostile to City of Fresno, Threatens to Appropriate SEDA

During the "reports and comments" section of the meeting, Bredefeld abruptly declared that the city of Fresno "is not interested in growing." In vague terms but with apparent malice, he disparaged the city: "The city likes to sue the county" and they "don't like to resolve issues"—an ironic statement from one who threatens litigation regularly and only recently lost in court over Measure S appearing on the ballot.

He was imprecise about what he had in mind other than "growth" and did not explicitly mention the Southeast Development Area (SEDA), though it appears that is what he meant. He wanted to "look at the general plan," said the city of Fresno "won't like it" and said that it "could result in litigation." He asserted that Fresno has "closed its borders" and that Madera and other places were now getting all the sales and property tax revenues. Framing the matter as a simplistic conflict of "growth" and "death" between himself and the city of Fresno, he demanded—without the consensus of other Board members—that the CAO and the county counsel produce a study to bolster his case for appropriating the development plan from the city.

*****

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

Board of Supervisors

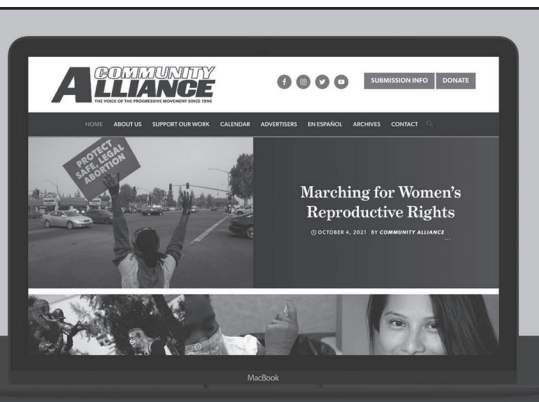


Shaver Springs resident Jennifer Taber addresses the Board. *Screenshot from meeting livestream*

VISIT OUR WEBSITE!

All of our content is available online for you to read

https://fresnoalliance.com/



TACOS Marquitos
Antojitos Mexicanos

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

PEACEfresno
Action for social justice and alterr

Join us every Saturday 4-5:30pm NEW TIME
@ Shaw Ave & Fresno St

NO WAR! NO ICE! NO GENOCIDE!

This 2026 year marks the 25th anniversary of Peace Fresno! We thank our members and friends for all your contributions. As our work to build a peaceful, just, and equitable world continues, so does our need for your support; please visit to **www.peacefresno.org/donate** and help us continue our 25-year legacy of peace work.

www.peacefresno.org/donate

Join us for our Annual Retreat and Potluck!
We will discuss ideas for our future actions and events!
SUN 12/13 10am **Fresno Center for Nonviolence**
1584 N Van Ness Ave @ McKinley

To receive our emails:
president@peacefresno.org
www.peacefresno.org
559-513-0199

A LAMP HAS BEEN LIT

FRESNO CENTER FOR NONVIOLENCE

Dedicated to Peace and Social Justice since 1992

Catch our radio program, *Stir it Up*, on KFCF 88.1 FM
Every 2nd Wednesday at 3PM

Please consider supporting our work with a donation
Scan the QR code to contribute today →

1584 N. VAN NESS AVE FRESNO, CA
CENTERFORNONVIOLENCE.ORG

Peace & Social Justice Calendar November 2026

Sponsored by the Fresno Center for Nonviolence

Weekly

No War, No ICE, Free Palestine! (Saturdays) 4 p.m.-5:30 p.m. Shaw Ave. and Fresno St. For more info, contact Peace Fresno danyaseen@comcast.net.

My Homie's Kitchen Family Meal (Tuesdays) 5 p.m.–7 p.m. My Homie's Kitchen, 744 P St. #101, Fresno. Connect as a community through free, full course, Native-ingredient meals. For more info, contact 559–300–9337.

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

Fresno Bridge Brigade (Fridays) 7 a.m.–9 a.m. Shaw Ave. & Highway 41, Fresno. For more info, contact pattycapp@gmail.com.

Kings County Bridge Brigade (Fridays) 7:15 a.m.–8:15 a.m. 19th Ave./ Highway 198 interchange, Hanford/ Lemoore. For more info, contact karlacalbear@gmail.com

WED 4

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

"Women in Black" Protest 11:30 a.m.–1 p.m. 2500 Tulare St., Fresno. WILPF protest for justice and against war.

KFCF 88.1 FM: Stir It Up! 3 p.m.–3:30 p.m. Fresno Center for Nonviolence hosts the 2nd Wednesday edition of Stir it Up! For more info, visit kfcf.org.

Mixer with the LGBTQ+ and Ally Committee 4 p.m.–6 p.m. Sequoia Brewing, 777 E. Olive Ave., Fresno. Fresno Chamber of Commerce affinity group to strengthen inclusion, visibility and connection in the business community. For more info, contact info@fresnochamber.com.

THURS 5

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

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

Reedley Peace Center Protest/Visibility Event 9 a.m.–9:30 a.m. Corner of Buttonwillow and Manning avenues, Reedley. For more info, contact reedleypeacecenter.com.

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

SUN 8

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

MON 9

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

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

TUES 10

Kings County Democratic Central Committee 6 p.m. Democratic Party HQ, 621-A N. Irwin St., Hanford. For more info, contact 559-858-0852.

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

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

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

WED 11

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

THURS 12

KFCF 88.1 FM: Valley Rising 3 p.m.–3:30 p.m. Central Valley Partnership radio show. For more info, visit kfcf.org.

Womxn's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) 6:30 p.m. Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N. Van Ness Ave., Fresno. Online/in person. For more info, contact taca_03@ymail.com.

Free Food Distribution 10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. Hinton Community Center. 2385 S. Fairview Ave., Fresno. Hosted by the Hinton Center Board and the Fresno Food Bank. For more info, contact 559-287-1308.

TUES 17

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

Protest Rep. Vince Fong noon–2 p.m. Corner of Herndon and Clovis avenues, Clovis. For more info, contact pattycapp@gmail.com.

WED 18

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

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

THURS 19

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

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

FRI 20

KFCF 88.1 FM: It's a Queer Thang 5 p.m.–6 p.m. Podcast covering local and national LGBTQ+ issues and events. Hosted by Chris Jarvis and Kaylia Metcalfe Armstrong. For more info, visit kfcf.org.

SAT 21

Reedley Peace Center Protest/Visibility Event 9 a.m.–9:30 a.m. Corner of Buttonwillow and Manning avenues, Reedley. Bring your signs with whatever is on your mind this week. For more info, contact reedleypeacecenter.com.

Fresno County Democratic Women's Club 11 a.m.–1 p.m. Marie Callender's Restaurant Garden Room, 1781 E. Shaw Ave., Fresno. Also via Zoom. For more info, contact claval@comcast.net.

THURS 26 (HOLIDAY; CONTACT PEACE FRESNO FOR DATE CHANGE)

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

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

Central Valley Indivisible 6 p.m.–8 p.m. The Big Red Church, 2131 N. Van Ness Ave., Fresno. Meet like-minded people and take action. For more info, contact pattycapp@gmail.com.

John Robert Lewis Democratic Club 7 p.m. Wesley UMC, 1343 E. Barstow, Fresno. Via Zoom. For more info, contact ibedam@gmail.com.

THURS 26 (HOLIDAY; CONTACT PEACE FRESNO FOR DATE CHANGE)

Peace Fresno 6:30 p.m. Monthly meeting to plan antiwar strategies. For more info, contact president@peacefresno.org.

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

Facts About the Flu and COVID for 2026–2027

BY JAMES MENDEZ

The 2026–2027 flu season has arrived early in California. Per the California Department of Public Health, as of October 1, 2026, there is moderate influenza activity in the Central Valley.

Every year, the World Health Organization (WHO) identifies the influenza and COVID-19 viruses that are circulating worldwide. Annual vaccines are developed based on the viruses identified.

After WHO recommends which viruses are spreading, it takes six to eight months to develop a vaccine.

In real-world observational studies, each vaccine's effectiveness is usually about 40%–60%, depending on how closely it matches the viruses actively spreading that season.

Neither the COVID-19 vaccine nor the flu vaccine prevents all cases of illness, but even when mismatched, the vaccines lessen the chance of getting ill, decrease the severity of illness, decrease hospitalizations and protect against life-threatening complications.

Annual United States flu-related deaths from 2000 to 2025 have typically ranged from 6,300 to 52,000 deaths per year. The variation depends on the severity of the circulating virus strains and the vaccination rates.

The 2024–2025 flu season was one of the more severe seasons, with about 45,000 total deaths due to influenza. The 2024–2025 season had 293 pediatric deaths from influenza, the highest in any season since the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) began tracking in 2004.

In the 2025–2026 influenza season, the CDC reported a total of 191 pediatric deaths. In both seasons, 90% of the children who died were unvaccinated. At least part of the increase in the number of adult and child deaths was due to the lower vaccination rates.

Vaccination rates have fallen across the US from an "estimated 52% in 2021 to less than 44% during the 2025–2026 flu season." Public health analysts have stated the lower vaccination rate is due to public skepticism created by disinformation from Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. (RFK Jr.) and the Trump administration regarding the benefits of vaccines.

Per its website, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is a cabinet-level executive branch department of the US federal government. Its mission is to "enhance the health, well-being, and social services of all Americans." It is responsible for the nation's health, medical research and social services.

One of HHS's most important divisions is the CDC. Other HHS divisions include the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

The CDC was once one of the world's most respected scientific institutions.

Due to comments made by RFK Jr., an anti-vaccine activist, a propagator of anti-vaccine disinformation and a conspiracy theorist, trust in the CDC has eroded. It is now only a shell of the esteemed institution it once was.



James Mendez's arm as he is vaccinated. Mendez family photo

Under RFK Jr.'s direction of the HHS, requested CDC funding and staffing decreased, and political appointees replaced the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP).

In 2025, under RFK Jr.'s direction, the HHS initiated a massive restructuring that sought to eliminate roughly

Continues on page 14



COMMUNITY ALLIANCE
THE VOICE OF THE PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT SINCE 1996

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY MEDIA ALLIANCE

Fresno City College
Social Justice Center

SAVE THE DATE

PAGE AGAINST THE REGIME

ANNUAL DINNER FUNDRAISER

Saturday, December 5
5PM | Dinner at 6PM
Fresno City College

Join us for dinner catered by local chef Rudy with piano accompaniment by Sako followed by local leader updates on the state of the community.

Location: Room 251 in The Historic Old Administration Building at Fresno City College

Take this time to strengthen community through conversation, introduce yourself to someone you don't know or build on existing relationships!

Purchase tickets online using the QR code above or send a $55 check or cash per ticket to PO Box 5077, Fresno CA 93755

STAY HEALTHY THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Community Health Worker Service

Working one-on-one to connect you to the care you need

- Mental Health Support
- Preventative Care
- Food Security Resources
- Health Education and Advocacy
- Health Coverage Enrollment
- Connecting to Resources
- Social Service Referrals
- Job Searching
- and more...

Avoid the Flu! Get Vaccinated

Flu season is here. Did you know the flu can lead to serious complications - even death. Getting your flu shot can help protect yourself and your community.

Myth

1. I don't need the flu shot because I'm healthy.
2. The flu shot gives you the flu.
3. I got the flu after the shot, so it didn't work.
4. I got a flu shot last year, I don't need one this year.



Fact

1. Even if you're healthy, you can get the flu and spread it.
2. Flu vaccines do not cause illness.
3. No vaccine is 100% effective, but they help reduce your risk.
4. You need a flu shot every year.

TO REGISTER FOR FREE VACCINE CLINIC SCAN THE QR CODE OR CALL THE OFFICE

P.A.T.H.W.A.Y

A FATHERHOOD PROGRAM

Recruiting partners of Black birthing women with a child/children ages 0-2 years for a 6-week program designed to equip fathers with the tools and education needed to thrive.

Currently recruiting for next cohort starting, Nov. 7th, 2026

CONTACT Rick Darrough, MSW
559-213-9928 rdarrough@wfresnofrc.org
to preregister

$600 Stipend

700 Van Ness Ave Suite 201, Fresno, CA 93721
(559) 374 - 5750 | www.wfresnofrc.org

WEST FRESNO FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

Upcoming Events

Food Distribution
New Kingdom Church **1PM - 3PM**
1825 S Delno Ave, Fresno CA
11/5/26 | 11/12/26
11/19/26 | 11/24/26

Family Matters
11/19/26 5pm-6pm
***must have zoom app downloaded to join**
http://us06web.zoom.us/j/87959396882
Online Educational Session
Register Here!

Family Reading Night
Kirk Elementary School
2000 E Belgravia Ave, Fresno CA
11/12/26 5:30PM - 7PM
contact Nubia (559) 938-1521

Wellness Wednesday
Annadale Commons **10AM - 12PM**
1515 E Annadale Ave, Fresno CA
11/4/26 - Arts & Mental Health
11/18/26 - Healthy Nutrition for the Holidays



SWEET POTATO PROJECT FARM STAND!

(Just in time for the holidays)



SUPPORT THE SWEET POTATO PROJECT II AND PURCHASE SWEET POTATOES, GROWN BY THE YOUTH IN YOUR COMMUNITY!

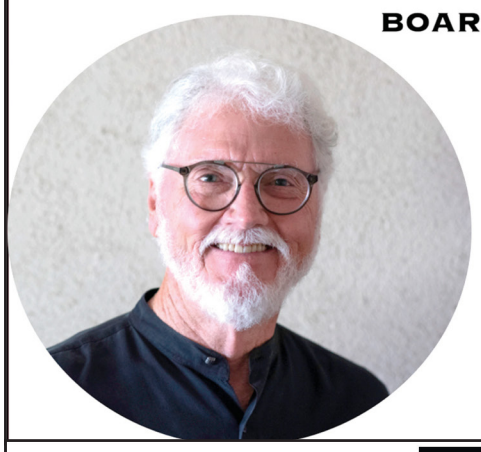
MON-WED 10AM-12PM (NOVEMBER 2-23)

LOCATION: 700 VAN NESS AVE FRESNO CA 93721, 1ST FLOOR

PRICES: $1/LBS
$35 FOR 40LBS BOX OR $32 FOR 2 OR MORE BOXES

Sweet Potato Project II is an agribusiness program aiming to prevent or reduce school dropout, gang involvement, and substance abuse among youth ages 12–18.

STRATEGY • VISION
PAUL E. PIERCE



BOARD/STAFF DEVELOPMENT
•
PRODUCTIVE MEETINGS
•
STRATEGIC PLANNING

PAUL@PAULEPIERCE.COM
559 246 7236

KFCF 88.1 FM Fresno
Music & News, Arts & Views.

DEMOCRACY NOW! 6 AM & 9 AM Mon-Fri
INDEPENDENT GLOBAL NEWS

HIGH COUNTRY CELTIC RADIO
Saturdays at 4 PM

PROJECT CENSORED
The News That Didn't Make The News
Fridays 1 PM

Cookin' in The Soul Kitchen
KFCF 88.1 FM FRESNO
Saturdays 2 – 4 PM



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

The Downtown Fresno route is open.

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

Contact Peter, Distribution Manager, by email:

maidenfoto1@gmail.com

COLIBRI FUND

IMMIGRANT REFUGEE coalition

The Colibri Fund is a community response fund dedicated to supporting individuals and families in pursuit of liberty, freedom, and self-determination. Named for the hummingbird — a creature of extraordinary agility, tireless energy, and boundless spirit — the Colibri Fund channels that same energy into collective action, removing obstacles, restoring agency, and upholding each person's right to move through life on their own terms, within a community that protects and respects the rights of all.

Just as the hummingbird moves through the world with purpose and resilience, hovering in moments of stillness and darting forward with unstoppable momentum, the Colibri Fund exists to help people do the same — navigating life's challenges while remaining rooted in joy, dignity, and spiritual connection.

Through collective care and community response, we guard each other's rights and fuel each other's pursuit of happiness and self-determination.

We rise together. We protect one another. We lift one another toward liberty.

Because liberty and justice are not just a destination — they are a way of moving through the world.

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

Give Financially Donate Supplies Volunteer

CASH DONATIONS NEEDED

Visit:
fresnobhc.org/donate
*Make sure to designate your donation to the Colibri Fund.

Personal Hygiene Items
Soap, deodorant, cleaning rights, toothpaste, and similar travel-sized items

Non-Perishable Snacks and Bottled Water

Clothing
New or gently used men's and women's clothing in all sizes

Basic First Aid Supplies

Backpacks
New or gently used

Your donation helps provide food, emergency shelter, transportation, communication support, and essential resources to community members in pursuit of freedom and liberty.

Drop off supplies or donations Monday - Friday, 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM at:

Fresno Building Healthy Communities
367 N First St.
Fresno, CA 93702

Contact us:
(559) 256-8722

Learn more:
www.fresnobhc.org

THE CONTENT IN THIS SECTION IS PAID FOR BY FRESNO BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Fresno No Kings Protesters Decry ICE

BY BOB MCCLOSKEY

On Saturday, October 17, over a thousand Fresnans joined over 9 million protesters at over 2,500 events across America, according to Really American, a grassroots political organization and independent media network. Locally and nationally, the Trump administration's immigration policies and practices were among the biggest protest issues.

It's not surprising that the issue looms large. According to thetrace.org and Wikipedia (public tracking), there have been at least 43 shootings by immigration agents resulting in 11 deaths, the latest being the July murder of 52-year-old Lorenzo Salgado Araujo in Houston, Texas. To date, no ICE or Border Patrol agents have been charged or prosecuted for these crimes.

In addition, many immigrants have died in ICE custody, such as Emiliano Andrade-Covarrubias, a 56-year-old man from Mexico who was found dead inside the Rio Grande Processing Center in Laredo, Texas, on Saturday, October 17, according to *The Texas Tribune*. Andrade-Covarrubias's daughter says the federal government has not yet contacted the family to deliver the news of her father's death. Instead, she heard about his death through the medical examiner performing his autopsy. Andrade-Covarrubias is the seventh immigrant to die in ICE custody in Texas this year and the 62nd immigrant to die in ICE custody in the U.S. since Donald Trump returned to office.

At the Fresno event, protesters of all ages held signs calling for the abolition of ICE and in support of immigrants. The *Alliance* asked attendees what issues they were there for and what they thought about Trump's policies and ICE.

Irlena, 34 and a Fresno resident, said, "I'm protesting everything, the entire administration. There are pedophiles in charge; they're kidnapping people, they're killing people, they're trafficking kids. The Democrats need to impeach the president and roll back ICE." Her friend Kaylee said, "Abolish ICE; they're essentially a terrorist organization. They're abducting people without reason. I feel like every law meant to keep this kind of thing from happening is out of place. I don't know what the Democrats can do legally; I just want them to do it. Are they even going to follow the rules if that happens?"

Ashley Dreiling, a young woman from Fresno, when asked about the administration's attack on immigrants, said, "It's uncalled for; these people pay taxes, they support our communities through resources. I feel like the media has been definitely like, oh, they just take—they provide way more than that. And we're really seeing the effects of it trickle down to the economy."

Lovie, a young man from Fresno, said, "I just don't like how America is standing right now. Trump's gas prices are still going up; it's not normal, and the war, it's still going on in Iran. And what ICE is doing is very, very wrong; they're terrorizing our people, it's scary, and kids can't go to school. It's scary to the point where kids are also in danger as well."

Leon Turner Jr., a 77-year-old Vietnam War veteran, said his number-one issue is the policies of the Trump administration "increasing the weight upon citizens. I believe in America, but the policies he's enacting now are just wrong. The gerrymandering, abolishing the Voting Rights Act. Racism used to be undercover, kind of subtle, but when Trump came in and started implementing his views, it became like a badge of honor; people aren't afraid to say that they're racist anymore. And I don't like the way he's going about ICE. He needs to be impeached."

Sheldon Jaffe, 75, from San Francisco was at the demonstration and said, "We don't want kings anywhere in America, and because, you know, Donald Trump is a fascist. I'm going to say it, a would-be fascist. My number-one issue is tyranny. My number-one issue is ending this slide into a totalitarian state that we have been given, slipping into. I mean,



The No Kings demonstration stretched down Shaw Avenue from the overpass over Highway 41 to First Street. *Photo by Peter Maiden*



A protester on Shaw Avenue makes himself clear. *Photo by Peter Maiden*



The theme of the No Kings protest on October 17 was the November 3 vote. *Photo by Peter Maiden*

people who are surrendering, who don't need to surrender, the *Washington Post* didn't need to surrender, Jeff Bezos, let's put it this way, what's the point of having fucking money if you don't say fuck you?"

Linda Tubach, a retired high school teacher from Yokuts Valley, said, "I'm here to say vote early to regain Congress so we can stop Trump's crimes, the continuing genocide in Gaza, the unprovoked war on Iran, the incarceration and killing of migrants, the war on our government services, on our national parks; I could go on. If we win the House and Senate, the Democrats can make real change, but only if we, the people, hold them accountable. Just electing them is not enough."

Ezra, 21 and a Fresno resident, said, "There's a lot of ICE activity right now in California, in the Central Valley in general. Kind of what's on top of my mind right now is it's an authoritarian state, but it's been that way from the beginning. Since, you know, we committed genocide against the Native Americans, the first second we got here. So I think this is a consequence of how this government has been formed. We need a workers' revolution to really change. I would love for them, the Democrats, to abolish ICE. I would love for them to have more welcome programs, universal healthcare, but that's not gonna happen. I think we need to kind of work the party to make it happen."

*****

Bob McCloskey is an activist and reporter. Contact bobmccloskey06@gmail.

THE BIG RED CHURCH UCC
Every Sunday
10 AM: Worship Service
bigredchurch.org 2131 N. Van Ness Blvd.

SIERRA CLUB
TEHIPITE CHAPTER

Greenland: Ice melt and biological productivity at the edge of the Greenland ice sheet

November 19, 2026 at 7 PM at the Woodward Park Regional Library

Dr. Mike Wood will take us on a journey from the steep valley walls of Yosemite and the broader Sierra Nevada range to the fjords of Greenland. We'll survey the 100's of glaciers that calve icebergs from the ice sheet and consider how and why they have changed over the past several decades.

Next, we'll explore how icebergs and melt from these glaciers are changing marine productivity in the coastal waters and what this means for the people and larger marine mammals that call Greenland home.

Free and open to the general public.

Sponsored by the Tehipite Chapter of the Sierra Club



"Progress is Always Possible": The Politics of Good Health

BY STEVEN ROESCH

Book Review

How can we lead healthy lives?

Devi Sridhar—a University of Edinburgh professor and a leading authority on global health—offers lots of suggestions in her 2025 book *How Not to Die (Too Soon)*.

One critical piece of the puzzle: regular exercise.

As Sridhar notes, people who don't get enough exercise "have a twenty to thirty percent increased risk of death" compared with their active peers. Even a small amount of physical activity—say, half an hour each day—reaps significant benefits.

And habitual exercise mitigates symptoms of depression far better than pills or cognitive behavioral therapy.

Then there's what we eat.

Sridhar urges us to restrict how much ultra-processed food we consume, given that the additives in such products increase the likelihood of weight gain and even obesity.

Instead, we should prioritize unprocessed foods such as vegetables, fruit and grains, as well as simply processed items like olive oil and cheese.

When it comes to keeping our weight in check, we should avoid eating until we feel full and instead eat only until we feel 80% full. Using smaller plates can help make this part of our regular routine.

But such helpful hints about personal behavior make up a mere slice of *How Not to Die (Too Soon)*. Most of her book approaches the issue of good health from a very different perspective. We've been fooled, and we fool ourselves, she argues, if we think we can be healthy just by making enlightened individual choices.

Far more important are the choices that nations make in addressing their citizens' well-being. Thoughtful, science-based government legislation and regulation are a must.

Sridhar spotlights several countries that have produced exceptional public health results.

Among them is Japan, whose citizens are some of the healthiest on the planet. Life expectancy there is the highest among the world's high-income countries: 84.4 years. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it also registered one of the lowest death rates.

Denmark's another winner in the public health field. The life expectancy of Danes stands at 81.6 years, and a mere 16% of Danish adults are obese. Considering the size of its population, the country registered 3.5 times fewer COVID-19 deaths than the European average. Some policy initiatives that contributed to this success include "strong containment and early access to widespread testing."

And Finland also merits attention. Two years ago, life expectancy there was 82.5 years. Finland also had the lowest rates of COVID cases and deaths in the European Union, in part because its health care system can be accessed by all who live there.

On the other hand, the United States gets low marks for its health care outcomes. One cause of its poor performance is the staggering cost of medical care that many Americans encounter.

Sometimes it's so high that families with limited financial resources might think twice about getting medical treatment.

Sridhar cites cases where $629 was charged for a Band-Aid and an X-ray cost a whopping $1,200. Such circumstances had especially serious consequences during the COVID pandemic, when many chose to delay or avoid visits to health care professionals.

A 2020 survey showed that 69% of adults who had no insurance said they had delayed or passed on medical treatment because of its cost.

Sridhar's portrait of America's poor performance finds corroboration in the Commonwealth Fund's recent study of health care in 20 affluent nations.

As *The Guardian* reported in May 2026, the analysis probes four sectors: coverage, affordability, the delivery of medical care and equity. In each category, the U.S. either fails outright or nearly flunks.

America has the lowest number of primary care physicians per capita among the nations that were examined. Almost a third of the population has no regular place to seek medical care, and 27 million Americans have no medical coverage.

According to the CDC, life expectancy in the U.S. was only 79 years in 2024.

And the coming years look even grimmer at this point.

Independent researchers have concluded that recent and proposed changes at the federal level will cause 17 million more Americans to lose health insurance over the next eight years.

How do conditions look closer to home—in California and here in Fresno County?

The online news site *CalMatters* has recently published an illuminating series of articles about health issues. One that stands out involves the lack of adequate vision care for many children.

The April 2026 article reports that a substantial number of children on Medi-Cal in California haven't been getting timely eye exams.

Between 2022 and 2024, only 16% of school-age children on Medi-Cal in the Golden State saw an eye doctor for a first-time eye exam, a follow-up checkup or glasses. That is down from 19% eight years earlier.

As a result, eye problems are becoming more widespread among the young.

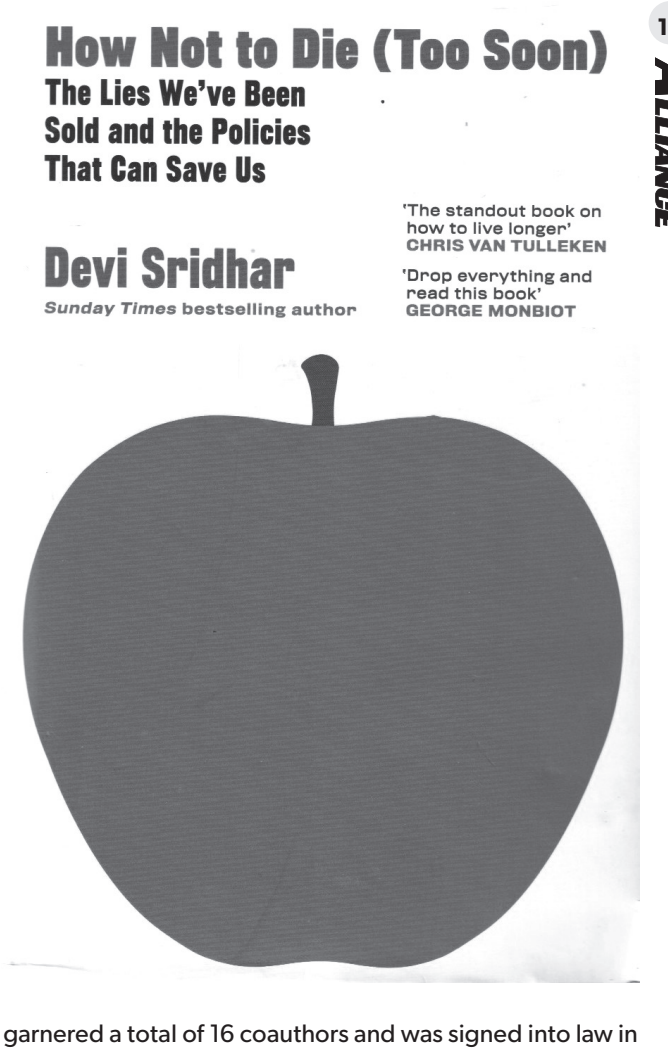
The article recounts the case of one preschooler who was labeled as inattentive and disruptive. In fact, he couldn't see the words on the board, something that became apparent only a year later when a physician discovered that he had myopic degeneration. Others, however, don't get their eyes checked until they've fallen much further behind academically.

A report commissioned by the California Optometric Association determined that almost all California counties—47 out of 58—saw decreases in the percentage of children receiving eye care between 2015–2016 and 2022–2024.

The drop in Fresno County was 14.9%.

A bill sponsored by the optometric association and authored by Assemblymember Patrick Ahrens (D-Cupertino) requires the state to set up vision benefit quality measures and make performance data public. The bill's intention is to locate where children don't have adequate access to eye care services and to make sure that Medi-Cal providers are improving services.

Ahrens's bill, AB 2756, received bipartisan support, garnered a total of 16 coauthors and was signed into law in September.



Based on what she's seen around the globe, Sridhar firmly believes that countries with poor public health systems can make significant improvements. Nations that have chalked up successes have already shown which measures are effective, and other countries can build on the strategies they've used.

As she puts it, "Progress is always possible. Anywhere in the world."

Given the urgent need for fundamental changes in the U.S., one hopes that her bullishness about far-reaching reforms is warranted.

*****

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

National Women's Political Caucus™
RECRUIT. TRAIN. ELECT.
FRESNO
National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC) is a multi-partisan, multi-racial, prochoice grassroots organization dedicated to increasing women's participation in the political process and creating a true women's political power base to achieve equality for all women. Dinner meetings are the 1st Tuesday of each month at 5:30 pm social and dinner at 6:00 pm. For location, please check our website: nwpcfresno.org.
PO Box 5553
Fresno, CA 93755-5553
nwpcfresno.org
Contact: Cathy Brass 559-225-5433 (home) or 559-288-8973 (cell)
Women are the largest untapped reservoir of talent in the world. — Hillary Clinton
In memory of our past president, Carol Bequette



Good driver?
GREAT RATE!
MERCURY INSURANCE GROUP
STATE COMPENSATION INSURANCE FUND
Allied Insurance
PROGRESSIVE
AUTO • HOME • BUSINESS
RMI
Worker's Comp
Life Insurance
LICENSE #0608912 / 0C13433
RIOMESAINSURANCE.COM
292-2490
3134 Willow Ave., Suite 102 • Clovis, CA 93612

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@kevinglittle.com
www.kevinglittle.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.

Fresno's Cats Need More Than Kindness—They Need a Community

BY KELSEY LESTER

You might recognize me as the controversial cat thief on TikTok or as that random alt baddie who keeps showing up in your neighborhood with a Havahart humane trap (or two).

But allow me to formally introduce myself: My name is Kelsey, and I'm the founder of KVLT Kitties Animal Rescue. Behind the tattoos, traps and controversial internet commentary is a commitment that's pretty straightforward: cats deserve safety, care and someone willing to show up and keep *fighting* for them.

That means showing up for the frightened ones. The sick ones. The "not as cute" ones. The ones born into a world that treats them like vermin. And the ones who may never want to live on your couch but still deserve basic vet visits—just as humans deserve universal health care.

It also means working toward a future where fewer cats need rescuing in the first place.

Plenty of cats. Room for all of us.

There are plenty of people in Fresno who are doing incredible rescue work, and there's no shortage of feral and community cats who need *all of us*. We need each other, too.

Rescue works so much better when we all work together. We all have our strengths and our limits. For example, we use Fresno TNR and Kyle Kirkland's CVFix to access affordable spay/neuter and vaccination services (and you can, too!). By learning about trap-neuter-return (TNR) and getting the cats in your neighborhood desexed, you can prevent another needless litter from being born and needing rescue in the first place.

At KVLT Kitties, we are building on that work by giving cats a safe place to land and a chance to find their forever homes. Soon, we'll be partnering with PetSmart Charities and holding adoption events, which means we'll need volunteers to help introduce our sweet little residents to their potential new families.

And there are plenty of ways to help behind the scenes. Know web design? Please, help a girl out. Good at social media? We have cats who deserve an audience. Have room to foster? A temporary home can make space for another cat who needs help at the rescue!

We also need regular, reliable volunteers for the deeply unglamorous work like scooping poop, scrubbing litter boxes and washing bowls. The cute kitten photos are real…but so is all the laundry.

We believe showing up matters. Medications still need to be administered after an emergency post stops circulating. Enclosures need cleaning after the cute kitten video disappears from your feed. The mundane daily tasks are just as important whether or not anyone is watching.

That is what KVLT Kitties stands for: compassion *with* action, knowledge *with* a willingness to speak up for those without voices of their own and a community that keeps showing up for the cats *and* each other.

Help can take many forms. Not everyone can adopt. Not everyone can foster. But *everyone* can help by sharing an adoption post, contributing supplies or asking about volunteer work.

For those who can provide hands-on help, a useful first step is to ask a rescue what it needs most and what commitment the role requires. Consistent help with everyday tasks can make a *huge* difference to a smaller rescue like KVLT Kitties.

This fall, you can be one small part of that effort by doing something as simple as cleaning out your closet (and encouraging a friend or family member to do the same!).

Through December 2, KVLT Kitties Animal Rescue is collecting gently used items through a FUNDrive fundraiser, aiming to raise $1,000 for rescue supplies we desperately need.

The invitation is simple: Clean out a closet and help support local cats.

Through FUNDrive, donated goods are purchased by a thrift store to generate funds for the participating organization. Clothing you no longer wear, towels taking up shelf space and books you're ready to pass along can help support the work happening here in Fresno.

The October 2–December 2 collection includes gently used clothing, shoes, handbags and accessories; household textiles such as bedding, blankets and towels; small household goods; and books and media. (Books and media should be boxed separately. Encyclopedias and textbooks are excluded from the fundraiser.)

KVLT Kitties has already received donations of 30-gallon trash bags. You can pick some up at:

- The Monarch Artistry, 850 San Jose Ave., Suite 110, Clovis

or

- KVLT Kitties, 4150 N. Sherman St., Fresno, during our monthly garage sale on October 24 and 25. You can also drop off donations here through December 2 on Sundays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Mondays from 5 to 9 p.m.

For collection arrangements, accepted items, volunteer opportunities or other ways to help, contact Kelsey Lester by calling or texting (650) 556-6013 or by emailing kelsey@kvltkittiesanimalrescue.org. Follow KVLT Kitties on Instagram at @kvlt_kitties to stay up to date and see cute cat posts every day!

There's more than one way to show up, Fresno! Let's do this!

*****

Kelsey Lester is the founder of KVLT Kitties Animal Rescue in Fresno.

Animal Activism



Kelsey Lester, founder of KVLT Kitties Animal Rescue, pictured with Molotov, or Mal, a female cat available for adoption. *Photo courtesy of Kelsey Lester*

KVLT Kitties Animal Rescue
KVLT KITTIES ANIMAL RESCUE
Our Goal: $1000
200 Large Bags (~20 lbs. per bag)
111 Medium Boxes (Household goods, ~20lbs. per box)
10 Medium Boxes (Books/Media, ~30lbs. per box)
Community Collection Days
Oct 2 - Dec 2
FUNDrive® Coordinator
Kelsey Lester
KELSEY@kvltkittiesanimalrescue.org
(650) 556-6013

Flu Facts

Continued from page 8

20,000 to 25,000 HHS jobs, including 2,400 CDC employees.

RFK Jr.'s history of disseminating disinformation dates back to at least 2005. He has continued his practice of disinformation regarding indications, risks and benefits of vaccines.

In contrast, a number of evidence-based organizations like the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) have repeatedly stated, "Immunization is the best protection available against respiratory viruses such as COVID-19, influenza and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)."

In a January 2026 interview with CBS News chief White House correspondent Nancy Cordes, RFK Jr. made the false claim that Cochrane Collaboration reviews showed "no scientific evidence that the flu vaccine prevents serious illness, hospitalizations or death in children" and that fewer children getting the flu vaccine might be a "better thing."

Numerous studies show the clear benefits of flu shots and COVID-19 vaccinations in reducing serious illness (including hospitalization) and death from those infections.

Through his statements and actions, RFK Jr. has undermined the CDC's recommendations. Even so, the American public can still follow the trusted, evidence-based recommendations for flu and COVID-19 vaccines from major medical agencies and organizations.

*****

Jim 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.

Flu Vaccine Recommendations

Current flu vaccine recommendations from all the major evidence-based medical agencies and organizations (the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the Infectious Diseases Society of America) are summarized in the following September 2, 2026, statement from the AAFP:

Influenza:

- Annual flu vaccination is recommended for everyone age 6 months and older without medical contraindications. (Author's emphasis.) All recipients should be given a vaccine approved for their age group.
- Adults 65 years and older should preferentially receive an enhanced influenza vaccine (high dose, adjuvanted or recombinant or mRNA) when available but should not delay vaccination to obtain one.
- COVID-19:
- The AAFP recommends all adults 19 years and older should receive a COVID-19 vaccine. (Author's emphasis.)
- It is especially i*mportant to get a COVID-19 vaccine if you are:*
- *65 years and older;*
- *At increased risk for severe COVID-19 infection; and*
- *Have never received a COVID-19 vaccine.*
- *Adults 65 years and older should receive a second dose of the updated COVID-19 vaccine 6 months after the initial dose to help maintain protection as immunity wanes over time.*
- *The AAFP recommends all children ages 6-23 months be vaccinated against COVID-19 and using a risk-based single dose approach for children and teens 2-18 years. We support ongoing immunization access for any family wanting to be vaccinated against COVID-19. This recommendation is aligned with the AAP (2026).*
- *The AAFP recommends COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy during any trimester and including during lactation. This is consistent with our 2025 recommendation and aligned with ACOG (2026).*

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***

Lotus-Like
PSYCHOTHERAPY & WELLNESS CENTER
Phone: (559) 428-3060 **| Fax:** (559) 475-8052
Website: www.lotusliketherapy.com **| Email**: admin@lotusliketherapy.com
Individual Therapy | Couples Counseling | Family Therapy
We work with ages 5-99 | Bilingual services available
Clients receive access to free weekly yoga classes, art workshops, and groups as part of our focus on holistic mental health
Insurances Accepted
Medi-Cal (State, Anthem, MHN, CalViva), Anthem Blue Shield/Blue Cross PPO/HMO, Cigna, Aetna - Commercial, Sliding Scale & Cash
Serving the Fresno/Clovis Area & Via Telehealth
FIG GARDEN 1141 W Shaw Ave #200 & #203 Fresno, CA 93711
DOWNTOWN FRESNO 171 N Van Ness Fresno, CA 93701
CLOVIS 911 Poillasky Ave Clovis, CA 93612
a social justice oriented and affirming therapy practice

FRESNO ARTS & CULTURE

NOVEMBER 2026 CALENDAR

WEEKLY

Fort Washington Farmers Market (Sundays) 10 a.m.–2 p.m. Fort Washington Shopping Center. Local products.
Jazz Jam Sessions with Bobby Griffin (Sundays) 4 p.m.–7 p.m. California Catering. Live music. $10
Acoustic Honkey Tonk Jam (Mondays) 4 p.m.–6 p.m. Santa Fe Basque. Hosted by E.Z. Marc.
Open Mic Night (Tuesdays) 7 p.m. Locked In Sports Bar. 6 p.m. signups, 7 p.m. performances.
Open Mic Night (Tuesdays) 7:30 p.m.–2 a.m. Strummer's. 7:30 p.m. comedy, 9:30 p.m. karaoke. Free
River Park Farmers Market (Tuesdays) 5 p.m.–9 p.m. River Park. California certified-fresh market.
Kenny Hall's Friends (Wednesdays) 5 p.m.–7 p.m. Santa Fe Basque. Old-time music song circle.
Pass the Aux (Wednesdays) 8:30 p.m.–11:30 p.m. Strummer's. Open-format DJ night. Free
Vineyard Farmers Market (Wednesdays) 3 p.m.–6 p.m. 100 W. Shaw Ave. Valuing the land that produces our bounty.
Arte, Pero Later (Thursdays) 6 p.m.–8 p.m. Arte Américas. From live music to a bilingual book club.
Karaoke Night (Thursdays) 9 p.m.–1 a.m. Club One Casino. Free
Vineyard Farmers Market (Saturdays) 7 a.m.–noon. 100 W. Shaw Ave. Valuing the land that produces our bounty.

MULTI-DATE THEATER, ART & FILM

2nd Space Theatre: Little Women — A Victorian Christmas Card (Nov 5–Dec 20) A holiday-season adaptation of Louisa May Alcott's novel. Thu 7:30 p.m.; Fri–Sat 8 p.m.; Sun 2 p.m. Tickets $29.49.
Roger Rocka's Dinner Theatre: Come From Away (Sept 25–Nov 15) A hit musical based on the true story of airline passengers stranded in Newfoundland after 9/11. Dinner and show $79; show only $45.
Roger Rocka's Dinner Theatre: Shrek the Musical (Nov 20–Jan 17, 2027) A lovable ogre brings laughter and music to this family-friendly musical. Dinner and show $79; show only $45.
Broadway in Fresno: Water for Elephants (Nov 3–4) A young man joins a traveling circus and discovers love and purpose. 7:30 p.m.; 8+; tickets $54+, Saroyan Theatre
Fresno Art Museum (Aug 1–Jan 10, 2027) Exhibitions feature American craft, Marc Trujillo's paintings, Donna Sternberg's retrospective and Christopher Denise's original artwork. Thu–Sun, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.
Fig Tree Gallery: James Entz — "Aqueous Terrain" (November) Explore artwork inspired by the changing qualities of water. Fri–Sun, noon–4 p.m.; free admission.
Armenian Museum of Fresno: "Landscape Memories" (Nov 5–Jan 7, 2027) Discover immersive artwork by Hazel Antaramian-Hofman celebrating Armenian Cultural Month. Opening reception Nov 5, 5–8 p.m.; free.
Fresno State Phebe Conley Art Gallery: "The Poetry of Origami / The Spectacle of Stereoscopy" (Oct 26–Nov 13) View Robert Maldonado's graduate exhibition. Mon–Fri, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.; free admission, $5 guest parking.
Historic Crest Theatre: Weekend Movies Classic films, cult favorites and independent premieres are screened every weekend. Fri doors 7 p.m.; Sat doors 6 p.m.; Sun doors 5 p.m. Movies start at 8 p.m. Friday and 7 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Admission $5, cash only.

THURS 5

ArtHop 5–8 p.m. Exhibitions, galleries and art vendors throughout Downtown and the Tower District. Free.

FRI 6

Dear You: Emo DJ Night 9 p.m. Emo and pop-punk classics at **Strummers**. All ages. Tickets from $8.

SAT 7

Taco Truck Throwdown 5 p.m. Headlined by Waka Flocka Flame, Too $hort and more. Tickets from $10.
Noche de Perreo 8 p.m. Jowell & Randy perform classic reggaeton, dembow and Latin urban music at **Rainbow Ballroom**. All ages. Tickets from $60.

SUN 8

Philip Lorenz International Keyboard Concerts: Janice Carissa 3 p.m. Pianist Janice Carissa performs classical works by Bach, Granados, Alkan, Tanzil, Messiaen and Ravel. Tickets $40. **Fresno State Concert Hall**

WED 11

Why Not Wednesday? 5–9 p.m. Discover vendors, food trucks, local artists and live music along Fulton Street.

FRI 13

Los Hooligans 9 p.m. Blends traditional ska, brass, vintage swing and global grooves. 21+. $10. **Howlin' Wolf**
The Mainliners with Brujoz and Nu Viles 6 p.m. California punk rock show. All ages. Tickets from $26. **Strummers**

SAT 14

Give Em Hell Kid; Godzilla Radio; Nyte Gaze; California License 7 p.m. Enjoy an alternative and rock concert. All ages. Tickets $21. **Strummers**
Noche de Vampiros DJ Murdock 198X 9 p.m.–2 a.m. Dark alternative favorites from The Cure, Depeche Mode, Caifanes and more. Ages 21+. Tickets $13. **Fulton 55**
Revolución de Amor — Maná Tribute 8 p.m. Live Latin rock tribute. All ages. $35. **Tower Theatre**
Tig Notaro: Out of Nowhere Tour 7:30 p.m. Stand-up comedy. Tickets $35. **Warnors Theatre**
Seasons of Stories Book Club 1–3 p.m. Literature inspired by Japanese culture at **Shinzen Friendship Garden**. Free.

SUN 15

Fresno Community Chorus: Bach's St. Matthew Passion 2:30 p.m. The Fresno Master Chorale and acclaimed soloists perform Bach. $26. **Paul Shaghoian Concert Hall**
Fillmore Slim: Players' Ball — Secret History of the Blues 5–8 p.m. The legendary San Francisco blues vocalist and guitarist brings his music and cultural history to Fresno. Ages 21+. Tickets $20. **Howlin' Wolf**
Prayers: No Tengo Calma Tour with Devora, Hallows and Chriz Amaya 7:30 p.m. Dark electronic, alternative and hip-hop-influenced. All ages. Tickets $39. **Strummers**
Pop Evil with Lines of Loyalty and Bedlam 7 p.m. Hard rock and alternative metal. All ages. $32. **Tower Theatre**
Sunday Night Blues Jam 6–9 p.m.Featuring the Richie Blue Band at **Club One Casino**. Free.

MON 16

Art Grooves Got Jokes 6:30–8:15 p.m. Comedy open mic with a contest at **River Park Art Groove Event Center**.

TUES 17

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

WED 18

Soft Vein; Vick Vapors; Dead Energy 8 p.m. Experience darkwave, electronic and post-punk music at **Fulton 55**. Ages 21+. Tickets from $17.85.
René Vaca & That Mexican OT 7:30 p.m. Comedian René Vaca and Texas rapper That Mexican OT combine comedy and live hip-hop at **Save Mart Center**. Tickets from $51.

THURS 19

Jake Shimabukuro: Holidays in Hawai'i 8 p.m. Hawaiian music blended with jazz, rock, classical and blues influences at **Tower Theatre**. All ages. Tickets $47.
Getting Reel: A DIY Short Film Festival Discover independent short films spanning narrative, documentary, animation and Central Valley stories at **Goldstein's.**

FRI 20

ETN with Blade Trip 8 p.m. Interactive live music party featuring emo trap, hip-hop and electronic sounds at **Strummers**. All ages. Tickets $12.
Coyote Everywhere 8 p.m.–midnight. Experience a live hip-hop and contemporary urban music show at **Fulton 55**. Ages 21+. Tickets $27.
DJ Side Quest 8 p.m. Dance to high-energy electronic music and bassline tracks at **Rainbow Ballroom**. All ages. Tickets from $20.

SAT 21

Acordeones y Corridos Tour 7 p.m. Enjoy regional Mexican, norteño and corridos featuring an all-star lineup of performers at **Save Mart Center**. Tickets from $65.

SUN 22

Surely Tempo with Carver Commodore 8 p.m. Live alternative and indie rock show **Strummers.** All ages. $26
Bored Teachers: "Is It Friday Yet?!" Comedy Tour 3 p.m. Enjoy stand-up comedy inspired by the highs and lows of teaching at **Warnors Theatre**. All ages. Tickets $47.

TUES 24

Fear Factory with Darkest Hour and Brotality 7 p.m. Experience industrial metal and heavy metal at **Strummers**. All ages. Tickets $38.
Fresno City College Symphony Orchestra: Winter's Awakening 7 p.m. Works by Brian Balmages, Peter Tchaikovsky and Jean Sibelius at **Fresno City College Theatre**. General admission $8; seniors $6; students $5.

WED 25

Bodysnatcher: Hell Is Here, Hell Is Home Tour with Gideon, Psycho-Frame and Volatile Ways 7 p.m. Experience an intense night of metalcore, hardcore and heavy music at **Strummers**. All ages. Tickets $42.

FRI 27

The Exploited with Toxic Energy 8 p.m. Live punk and hardcore show at **Strummers**. All ages. Tickets $34.
Forever Tour 7 p.m. R&B, soul, freestyle and hip-hop favorites featuring Barbara Mason, Lisa Lisa, Next, The Whispers and more at **Save Mart Center**. $39+

SAT 28

The Music of Hey Arnold! Live! 8 p.m. Live soundtrack music blending jazz, hip-hop, blues, R&B and funk at **Tower Theatre**. All ages. Tickets $42.

SUN 29

Becky Robinson's Holiday Spectacular 7 p.m. Enjoy a holiday-themed stand-up comedy and variety show at **Tower Theatre**. All ages. Tickets $39.

VENUES

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

Arte Américas • 1630 Van Ness Ave. • arteamericas.org	Fulton 55 • 875 Divisadero St. • info@fulton55.com / fulton55.com	River Park's Art Groove Event Center • 80 E. Via Del Oro • 559-840-8886	Tower Theatre • 815 E. Olive Ave. • fresnotowertheatre.com
California Catering • 1603 E St. • 559-222-4202	Kingsburg Historical Park • Kingsburg, CA	San Pablo Park • 511 N. San Pablo Ave. • 559-779-2755	University Presbyterian Church • 1776 E. Roberts Ave. • upc@upcfresno.org
Club One Casino • 3950 N. Cedar Ave. • clubonecasino.com	La Boulangerie • 730 W. Shaw Ave. • 559-222-0555	Santa Fe Basque Restaurant • 3110 N. Maroa Ave. • 559-226-7499	Vibez Lounge • 724 E. Olive Ave. • vibezlounge.com/
Dulce UpFront • 2026 N. Van Ness Blvd. • 559-202-3099	Locked In Sports Bar • 3045 W. Bullard Ave. • 559-369-7684	Save Mart Center • 2650 E. Shaw Ave. • savemartcenter.com	Vineyard Farmers Market • 100 W. Shaw Ave.
Fort Washington Shopping Center • 447 Fort Washington Rd. • 559-490-3600	Rainbow Ballroom • 1725 Broadway St. • 559-354-1017	Shinzen Friendship Garden • 114 W. Audubon Dr. • 559-478-4848	Vista Theater • 1298 N. Wishon Ave. • 559-222-7464
Fresno Art Museum • 2233 N. First St. • 559-441-4221 / fresnoartmuseum.org	River Center • 11605 Old Friant Rd. • 559-248-8480	Strummer's Bar & Grill • 833 E. Fern Ave. • 559-485-5356	Warnors Theatre • 1400 Fulton St. • warnorscenter.org

Fresno WILPF

Womxn's International League for Peace & Freedom

The People's Tribunal: What is International Law? How does it apply in Gaza?

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom - US, with the American Friends Service Committee and Veterans For Peace, held an October 10 event online and in Seattle, with a People's Tribunal holding the US government accountable for its complicity in the genocide in Gaza. Modeled after a grand jury hearing, the tribunal asked a jury of community members to determine whether there is sufficient evidence of complicity to warrant the indictment of government officials and state actors. The event aimed to deepen public understanding through facts, testimony, and dialogue; to hold elected officials accountable for complicity in the genocide; and to mobilize people across the US to use their voices, consumer choices, and civic participation to advance accountability and human rights.

For me, one of the most telling moments was the testimony of Jonathon Kuttab, an international human rights lawyer, who explained some of the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted by the UN in 1948, the same year in which the Nakba, or forcible displacement of over half the Palestinian population, occurred. The United States signed this in 1948 and (finally) ratified it on November 25 1988. Israel is a signatory also. UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, Article I: The Contracting Parties confirm that genocide, whether committed in time of peace or in time of war, is a crime under international law which they undertake to prevent and to punish.

The Tribunal and the facts of the matter left no doubt of the complicity and guilt of US officials under this Convention. In Fresno, there were two watch events where we shared the information with each other and the community. WILPF members met at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence and at the home of one of our members. The event at the FCNV had two screens, one inside and one outside with displays that extended to the sidewalk attracting community interest and participation. This included food and crafts as well as displays of solidarity with the people of Gaza made personal by recent Fresno WILPF chair Cam Fanning's Gaza stay with International Solidarity Movement. ISM is a Palestinian-led movement committed to resisting the long- entrenched and systematic oppression and dispossession of the Palestinian population, using non-violent, direct-action methods and principles. ISM supports the Palestinian popular resistance by being present immediately alongside Palestinians wherever Palestinians are subject to consistent harassment or attacks from soldiers and "settlers."

-----Leni Villagomez Reeves



Watch event in Clovis. Photo credit: Sandra Iyall



Watch event at the FCNV. Photo credit: Cam Fanning

A Peace Pole is Unveiled

On September 21, 2026, the International Day of Peace, our Fresno Branch co-sponsored, along with Back from the Brink, Brady Greater Fresno, Fresno Center for Nonviolence, Peace Fresno, the Unitarian Universalist Church and Veterans for Peace, the installation of a Peace Pole at the Big Red Church. Peace Poles are an international project to display the message, "May Peace Prevail On Earth." The Fresno Pole included eight different languages: English, ASL, Arabic, Armenian, Hmong, Punjabi, Spanish, and Hebrew. We share the goal of reminding all to "cultivate peace in thought, word and action. . ."



Fresno Branch members Gerry Bill, Dr. Su Kapoor, Joan Poss, Carol Goiburn, Silvia Ybarra, Sandra Iyall and Dr. Jean Kennedy were present for the unveiling

Retreat News!

WILPF Fresno held a Retreat, meeting, and election all in one on October 3. After a performance by the Raging Grannies who are still going strong despite the loss of keyboard player Jean Hays - we all miss her so much - each committee gave or sent a report, we elected new officers, discussed fundraising, created an advisory Budget Committee, and worked on a calendar of events. Sounds like a lot for one day? We even had time to eat, do a raffle and "little-known facts about people you know" competition, and hear about the difficult situation in Cuba for mothers and babies under the tightened US blockade, and how we can help. (Check the Global Health Partners Global Health Partners Neonatal-MaternalHealth Campaign (https://ghpartners.org) We ended up with our sources of optimism.

New officers are Sandra Iyall, Chair; Kyla Mitchell, Co-chair; Rich Rollin & Jan Slagter, Treasurers; Carol Goiburn, Recording Secretary; Nancy Hatcher, Corresponding Secretary. Membership chairs elected were Dr Jean Kennedy for outreach; Nancy Hatcher for events; and Sandra Iyall for directory. The volunteers for Budget Committee were Silvia Ybarra, Jan Slagter, & Rich Rollin. Also volunteering were Kyla Mitchell, Aline Reed and Leni Villagomez Reeves for the WILPF Page in the Community Alliance newspaper, and Patty Bennett and Dr Jean Kennedy for Stir It Up WILPF on KFCF 88.1 at 3 pm on the 4th Wednesday of each month. Tune In!



WILPF members at the retreat. Photo by Rosemarie Guglielmino

New Member Impressions: Retreat

I am a new WILPF member. A dear sister friend of mine was nice enough to pay my dues. I appreciate her so much. Now, the retreat was an experience. I saw quite a few women, powerful, interesting women and one remarkable man. There were two young women there. Good, I thought. Then, I learned the average age of a WILPF member is sixty-one. 61!? Wowser!

I watched the Raging Grannies perform and that was cool. My kind of crowd. Then, I listened to report after report after report. Especially, sobering was that the local chapter's funding is freestanding from the National and International chapters AND that those chapters are in trouble financially. Whoa. The most worrying thing for me was the absence of CF. After spending several weeks on the ground in Gaza, she returned with a fire about Palestine. The old guarding Fresno WILPF shut her down and shut her out. She left the chapter. I am confused. Again, as a new member, I hope things stabilize and that younger women who hate war and desire peace will sign on to Fresno WILPF. I also hope those Legacy WILPF members will step aside and let the young lead. How else will they learn!?

Respectfully Submitted, Aline Reed

Planning for Human Rights Day 2026

Members of our Fresno Branch are encouraged to join the efforts of the Human Rights Coalition of the Central Valley as they host the annual commemoration of Human Rights Day on December 10, 2026 at Fresno State's Satellite Student Union. The program will highlight current policies and practices which violate human rights, such as our current wars, ICE raids and detention centers and voting rights. The planning meetings are held monthly at 7 p.m. via Zoom. Contact Sandra Iyall or Bernadette D. Vazquez, Co-Chair of HRCCV 559-270-7041.

Join us st our next WILPF meeting! 2nd Thursday of the month (Nov. 12th) at 6:30 at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence at 1584 N Van Ness Ave and on Zoom. This meeting is open to all. Watch your email for announcements. To be added to the listserv, email kyla.noelle@gmail.com.

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP NOW! HERE'S HOW:
Send dues to WILPF Fresno P.O. Box 5114, Fresno, CA 93755
***WILPF-US membership is $40/year. WILPF-Fresno sponsors a low-income rate of $20. ***
For membership questions, email nhatcher46@gmail.com

Stir It Up on KFCF: Wed. Nov. 25 at 3 PM
(4th Wednesday of each month) We miss Jean Hays! Dr Jean Kennedy and Janet Slagter highlight people and events important to our WILPF community.

WOMEN IN BLACK
For Justice. Against War.

Women in Black is a worldwide network of women committed to peace, justice, and active opposition to war, militarism, and violence. Wearing black in some cultures signifies mourning, and feminist actions dressed in black convert women's traditional passive mourning for the dead in war into a powerful refusal of the logic of war.
Join us on Nov. 4th from 11:30am-1pm at the Federal Courthouse at 2500 Tulare St.

Los conserjes de ICE; o los "matones" de uniforme gris

POR MARS SANTOS

"¿Acabamos de vivir un evento traumático?"

"Yo diría que definitivamente fue casi como un ritual de bautizo, que te echen gas pimienta por primera vez".

"Es un rito de iniciación, creo yo. Definitivamente. Bien hecho, muchachos. Ya son oficialmente antifascistas".

Así comenzó una conversación con los hermanos Aldrete, quienes durante más de una semana, junto con otros integrantes del recién formado Fresno People's PAC (comité de acción política), se han levantado desde las 4:30 a.m. para ejercer su derecho, protegido por la Primera Enmienda, a protestar contra la reciente "ofensiva" de control migratorio que afecta a comunidades de todo California.

Armados con café para mantenerse alertas y calientitos durante el reciente descenso de temperaturas en el Valle Central, uno o ambos hermanos, Noah y Alfred, llegan a las instalaciones de ICE en el centro de Fresno a más tardar a las 5:30 a.m., un ritual que ahora es diario para los dos.

"Ha sido una semana y media interesante, con cada día como que aumentando más la vigilancia ahí", contó Alfred en una entrevista exclusiva con *Community Alliance*, apenas unas horas después de que el personal de seguridad que escoltaba a los agentes le echara gas pimienta.

Para cuando él y Noah llegaron a Sequoia Brewing Co., en el Tower District, para platicar lo sucedido, sus ojos rojos e hinchados ya habían empezado a calmarse, y en su lugar quedó una mirada distante mientras reflexionaba sobre la última semana previa al incidente.

"Pasaron de tener tal vez cinco, seis guardias con los uniformes grises a ocho, 10. Antes salían sin escolta. Ahora los escoltan estos pinches oficiales de detención que trabajan para ICE".

Los oficiales a los que se refería pertenecen a una empresa de servicios de seguridad llamada G4S Secure Solutions. Su título oficial, según su contrato con el Departamento de Seguridad Nacional, es "housekeeping guards" (guardias de servicios de mantenimiento). Enmascarados y vestidos de gris, comenzaron a acompañar a los agentes de ICE el 12 de octubre.

Lunes

En su primer día, los guardias de G4S empezaron a apuntar luces estroboscópicas y láseres a los manifestantes, una táctica que se usa para disuadir a la gente de grabar sus actividades.

Noah, quien observó la creciente hostilidad de los agentes de ICE antes del incidente, contó que "se pusieron más agresivos y trataban de acercarse a ti e intimidarte, meterse en tu espacio personal.

"Cuando llegamos a la casa, le dije: 'Esto está bien pinche loco, Fred. Las cosas están cambiando, carnal. Lo siento. Nos están echando luces estroboscópicas'".

Martes

Al día siguiente, cuando Noah se negó a quitarse del camino de un vehículo, un guardia de G4S lo golpeó con una camioneta. La "agresión" le confirmó que "sus tácticas estaban cambiando".

Había varios guardias presentes durante el incidente. Aproximadamente ocho de ellos escoltaron los vehículos esa mañana y, durante el enfrentamiento, los hermanos se mantuvieron firmes en la vía pública con las manos en alto, haciendo valer sus derechos de la Primera Enmienda.

En un video del lugar se ve cómo el guardia de seguridad maneja el vehículo federal directo hacia Noah y se detiene justo en el punto del impacto.

Nadie sufrió lesiones graves y, según Noah, el enfrentamiento y lo que siguió duraron unos dos minutos, hasta que un supervisor intervino y le ordenó al conductor que se echara para atrás.

Los agentes de ICE se retiraron después del enfrentamiento, que Noah describió como una "pequeña, pequeña, pequeña, pequeña, pequeña, pequeña victoria".

Miércoles

El miércoles, los hermanos llegaron a las instalaciones de ICE equipados con megáfonos y luces estroboscópicas. Cuando ocho de los conserjes salieron a escoltar una camioneta, los hermanos usaron sus megáfonos para abuchearlos.

En un momento dado, los Aldrete empezaron a cantar el tema de *Los Cazafantasmas* cuando Alfred volteó y notó que "el bato ya se le está encimando a Noah", refiriéndose a uno de los guardias.

Según Noah, le advirtió al guardia: "No me pongas tus pinches manos encima". Sin embargo, el agente lo empujó, mientras otro le tumbó el teléfono de la mano a Alfred y lo tiró al suelo.

"Se está metiendo a la fuerza en mi espacio personal. Yo me mantuve firme. Se me vino encima, casi chocando con mi megáfono y mi lámpara. Supongo que para sacar algún pretexto, como si yo hubiera hecho algo para pegarle", dijo Noah mientras revivía los hechos.

"Veo que empuja a Noah contra el carro. Y mientras está empujando a Noah, el otro compa (guardia de G4S) me agarra y nomás me tumba el teléfono de la mano y al mismo tiempo me agacha, me tira al suelo".

El grupo grabó la mayor parte del enfrentamiento hasta el momento en que le tumban el teléfono de la mano a Alfred; después de eso, solo se grabó el audio.

"Se oye todo lo que está pasando. El bato dueño del carro salió y dice: 'Oye, ¿qué chin…? Ese es mi carro'. Acababa de salir del trabajo, le tocó ver lo que estaba pasando, se baja, él también está grabando. Resulta que es el carro encima del cual Noah termina en medio de la calle".

Según Alfred, cuando los guardias se dieron cuenta de que había testigos, los soltaron y se retiraron.

"Se le veían los engranes dando vueltas en la cabeza, como: 'Ay, chingado, ya la cagamos'. El bato se hundió entre los arbustos como Homero Simpson. Desapareció. Y el resto de sus secuaces como que fueron retrocediendo poco a poco, como las cucarachas que son".

Después de que las puertas del garaje se volvieron a abrir, Alfred se paró en la calle de espaldas a una camioneta y se negó a moverse. Un agente se le acercó y le echó gas pimienta a quemarropa dos veces. Noah, a la izquierda de Alfred, esquivó parcialmente el gas, pero aun así le cayó en los ojos.

Ambos se tiraron al suelo—Alfred en "posición de cadáver" y Noah en una "postura de yoga medio doblado"—para continuar su protesta. La camioneta se echó en reversa rodeándolos y se fue, y los agentes se retiraron otra vez.

Mientras tanto, dos patrullas del Departamento de Policía de Fresno estaban estacionadas cerca; las había llamado el dueño de un estacionamiento que antes había acosado a los Aldrete, según los hermanos.

Más de la leyenda negra de G4S

- En septiembre de 2025, el Departamento de Seguridad Nacional (DHS, por sus siglas en inglés) le otorgó a G4S Secure Solutions un contrato de dos años por 29 millones de dólares con sede en California, de los cuales 23 millones se destinaron a "servicios de transporte terrestre en apoyo a las operaciones de control y deportación (ERO, por sus siglas en inglés) en el Área de Responsabilidad (AOR) de San Francisco (SFR)". El contrato define el AOR de SFR como el 11.º distrito congresional de California. Fresno queda fuera de él. Al cierre de esta edición, no está claro si esto implica un incumplimiento de contrato.
- G4S es una empresa de servicios de seguridad que se describe a sí misma como "the world's leading global, integrated security company specialising in the delivery of security and related services" (la principal empresa de seguridad global e integrada del mundo, especializada en la prestación de servicios de seguridad y afines). La "s" en specialising no es error de dedo—los orígenes de la compañía se remontan nada menos que a Dinamarca en 1901, y su sede actual está en Londres, Inglaterra. En abril de 2021, Allied Universal, una empresa de seguridad privada con sede en Estados Unidos fundada hace 10 años y que, según su sitio web, tiene ingresos anuales de aproximadamente 23 mil millones de dólares, la adquirió.
- G4S Secure Solutions, la filial estadounidense de G4S, fue fundada en 1954 como Wackenhut Corporation. Tiene un historial de controversias de décadas, que incluye la presunta vigilancia masiva de supuestos comunistas durante la era de McCarthy y vínculos internacionales con grupos contrainsurgentes. Además, cinco de los seis hombres que violaron en grupo y asesinaron a Janet Chandler trabajaban para Wackenhut como guardias de seguridad. De los hombres procesados, el principal autor ocupaba un puesto de supervisor.
- G4S ha sido criticada por su deficiente proceso de revisión de antecedentes penales y de evaluación psicológica. El autor de la masacre en el club nocturno Pulse trabajaba para G4S Secure Solutions y, según los registros de empleo, aprobó su evaluación en 2007. Sin embargo, el psicólogo que aparece en los documentos negó haber conocido al agresor y había dejado de trabajar para la compañía un año antes de la masacre.
- Según el resumen del contrato entre el DHS y G4S, los cinco ejecutivos mejor pagados ganaron en conjunto 1.4 millones de dólares al año. La mejor pagada, Tracy Fuller, de Texas, aparece con ingresos de 481,834 dólares. En un contrato anterior en California que terminó en julio de 2024, su compensación anual figuraba en más de 11 millones de dólares.

Después del incidente, Noah se acercó a los policías para reportar lo sucedido. Se negaron a atenderlo, "le sacaron la vuelta" y se fueron.

Cuando regresaron a su casa alrededor de las 7:20 a.m., empezaron a contactar abogados y a tratar de levantar denuncias ante la policía. Alfred se topó con mucha resistencia de operadores de emergencias y supervisores, que al principio se negaron a tomar la denuncia, diciendo que era un "problema de Seguridad Nacional".

"La discusión que estaba teniendo con el pinche supervisor, Nathan, es: 'Mire, a estas alturas ni siquiera le estoy pidiendo que vaya a arrestar a nadie.

"Quiero hacer una declaración para tenerla con fines legales. Que las autoridades vinieron, tomaron mi declaración, vieron nuestras lesiones y lo documentaron para que lo tengamos para la corte si tenemos que ir.



El rostro de un matón de ICE que agredió a un amigo del periódico. *Foto courtesía de Fresno Resistance*

"Él siguió en sus trece y dijo: 'Ese no es nuestro problema. Tienen que verlo con Seguridad Nacional'".

Finalmente, después de hablar con el concejal Miguel Arias, el oficial Gregory Bracamonte llegó para tomarles la declaración y hacer que la unidad de investigación de la escena del crimen (CSI) documentara sus lesiones.

"Tomó mi declaración y la de Noah a fondo, de manera profesional y completa. Hizo que vinieran los de CSI a documentar nuestras lesiones como yo lo pedí, como Noah lo pidió, y nos dio el número de caso para que podamos entregar toda la información en cuanto a pruebas y llevar esto al siguiente paso.

"Creo que lo que más me molesta ahorita es que—digamos que esto fue porque Miguel Arias nos estaba ayudando, hablando con Mindy Casto como dijo que lo iba a hacer. ¿Y si hubiera sido otra persona que no tuviera esa conexión? ¿Que no lo conociera? Esta chingadera nomás la iban a barrer debajo del tapete, y eso no está bien".

Jueves

A las 11:45 a.m. del jueves, Noah compartió esta actualización con *Community Alliance* por mensaje de texto:

"Esta mañana fuimos al centro de detención y casi estaba como pueblo fantasma. Hubo dos camionetas que salieron en reversa temprano en la mañana, antes de las 5:30, y ahora, y durante prácticamente la mayor parte del día desde las 6:00 a.m., hubo poca o nada de actividad. Ya deberían haber estado checando entrada. Solo vimos a tres batos que escoltaron desde atrás hacia el edificio para que checaran entrada. Lo cual es un cambio grande comparado con ayer. Ayer parecía haber mucho más movimiento de agentes de ICE y camionetas, y la actitud parecía más agresiva ayer".

Según integrantes del Fresno People's PAC, esto indica que "Fresno va ganando".

*****

mars santos, M.Ed., radica en el condado de Fresno, donde se dedica a la educación, la escritura, la fotografía y la organización comunitaria. Ocupa la dirección ejecutiva del periódico Community Alliance. *Se le puede contactar en newspaper@fresnoalliance.com.*

PROPORCIONA FEEDBACK. ENVÍA UN CORREO EDITOR@ FRESNOALLIANCE.COM.

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

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, medioambientales 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
Enrique Little
editor@fresnoalliance.com
(También hablo español)

DIRECTORE EJECUTIVE
mars santos, M.Ed.
newspaper@fresnoalliance.com

MESA DIRECTIVA, SECCIÓN NO LUCRATIVA
Bob McCloskey
James Mendez
Norberto Gonzalez
Mohammad F. Shaikh, M.D.
Pam Whalen

COMPAGINADORA
mars santos

DISTRIBUCIÓN/ EDITOR FOTOGRAFÍA
Peter Maiden
maidenfoto1@gmail.com

PUBLICIDAD
I. smiley G. Calderón
714-290-6651 (texto)
smileycalderon@gmail.com
(También hablo español)

EDITOR EMÉRITO
Mike Rhodes

SUBSCRIPCIÓN
Envie $60 (constructor del movimiento progresista),$40 (regular) or $15 (accesible) 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 envie 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).

From the Editor



¡Hola, queridos lectores y simpatizantes! Gracias una vez más por tomar un ejemplar de nuestro periódico. Al momento de esta edición, el día de las elecciones está a la vuelta de la esquina. En cartas anteriores he expresado mi propio cinismo respecto a las elecciones. En mi artículo de esta edición sobre la contienda del Área 1, cierro con la idea de que ningún candidato por sí solo basta para resolver el problema. En mi artículo sobre el escándalo de César Chávez (que pueden encontrar junto con otros trabajos excelentes en nuestro sitio web a través del código QR que aparece en este periódico), cierro con la idea de que el movimiento no fue una sola figura, sino los miles de trabajadores detrás de él que lo hicieron posible. Lo sostengo. Votar por sí solo no nos va a salvar. Reconozco su importancia, sobre todo a nivel local, donde el cambio tiene más impacto en nuestra vida diaria, pero hay quienes creen que el cambio empieza y termina en las urnas. Estoy totalmente en desacuerdo con eso. La lucha es constante; no se limita al día de las elecciones; es todos los días. Estamos en una guerra de clases que se hace más evidente cada día. Votar es apenas una herramienta; se podría argumentar que es solo una concesión. Los grandes avances que ha tenido este país no se lograron votando, sino gracias a ciudadanos comunes que ejercieron una enorme presión y poder comunitario sobre quienes usarían el Estado para imponer el suyo. Ese es el verdadero espíritu de Community Alliance. Así que sí, por favor, salgan a votar, pero no se queden ahí. Lean sobre las causas en nuestro periódico y salgan a hacer lo que puedan por ellas. Como editor y como vecino del Valle Central, les ruego que piensen más allá de las urnas cuando se pregunten qué hacer para defenderse de verdad contra una presión que no deja de crecer. Gracias, y por favor disfruten esta edición.

Los candidatos

Continúa de página 1

verano. Empezó a darles clases de regularización y llegó a tener entre 20 y 22 estudiantes en el porche de su casa. Cuando quedó vacante el puesto, "me dije: ¿por qué no yo?".

Bellard no es de la zona, y lo dice abiertamente. Sin embargo, ella ve esto como una ventaja. "No ser de esta zona en realidad me da una perspectiva más amplia", dijo. "No me agobia lo que fue". Sus oponentes, sugirió, podrían cargar "un poco más de lastre" de su trabajo anterior dentro de las instituciones locales. Bellard se describió como "más enfocada en soluciones" y agregó: "Llego con mucho optimismo, con mucha esperanza, muy enfocada en el futuro".

Su primera acción como integrante de la mesa directiva sería una sesión para escuchar a la comunidad, en inglés y en español, fuera de los planteles: "en una iglesia, en un centro comunitario, en la cuadra". De sus electores quiere participación: "No quiero ser la única que se presenta a las cosas y habla en su nombre".

La experiencia vivida como credencial

Ricks creció en el oeste de Fresno. Egresada de la preparatoria Edison, trabajó casi 12 años para Fresno Unified, la mayoría como consejera escolar. Hoy dirige una organización sin fines de lucro que atiende a estudiantes y familias, y da clases en Fresno City College.

Cuando le pregunté qué la distingue, Ricks empezó por sus orígenes: "Tengo esa mirada de haber vivido en un barrio empobrecido donde no había nada". Y continuó: "Vengo con la experiencia vivida de haber estado 11 años en el sistema de hogares de crianza temporal y de haber salido del sistema al cumplir la mayoría de edad". La crió una abuela sola que cuidaba a ocho nietos, y después ella crió a su propio hijo como madre soltera. Tiene maestrías en trabajo social y en desarrollo familiar y humano, y un doctorado en educación. Dijo que las perspectivas que aporta están "centradas en los estudiantes y en el servicio, y también en la justicia social".

Cuando le pregunté qué esperaría de los demás si resulta electa, Ricks cuestionó la idea de que la plataforma fuera solo suya. "Mi visión no es solo mía. Es la visión que he escuchado de los padres", dijo, y mencionó mejores resultados en lectoescritura y apoyos integrales para los estudiantes. "Es una visión de la comunidad, ¿verdad? Hecha en colaboración". Lo que espera de sí misma es sencillo: "hacer lo que dije que iba a hacer".

En el panel, su perspectiva se convirtió en un argumento firme a favor de la equidad. "Nuestros integrantes de la mesa directiva tienen que poner el dinero donde están las brechas. Así de claro, punto", afirmó. Cuando el foro comunitario abordó las suspensiones desproporcionadas de estudiantes afroamericanos, Ricks propuso una capacitación obligatoria en competencia cultural y exigirle al personal los mismos estándares que se esperan de los estudiantes. "No hay ninguna razón para que nuestros educadores puedan usar la palabra con N en nuestros planteles y no rindan cuentas", afirmó.

"No tengo que esperar un puesto para hacer el trabajo", agregó Ricks.

El director y el departamento de bomberos

Miller trabajó como consejero, subdirector y director durante 34 años, y ha sido árbitro de deportes de preparatoria durante 35. La mayoría de sus respuestas se basaron en lo que ha visto en los planteles.

Miller ve a Fresno Unified como un asunto tanto de cultura como de finanzas. "Es muy tóxico a nivel administrativo", dijo en el panel. Señaló la disputa de este año por 2 millones de dólares para excursiones escolares, dentro de un presupuesto de unos 2 mil millones, como un asunto que una relación funcional entre la Fresno Teachers Association (el sindicato de maestros) y el distrito habría resuelto discretamente.

En nuestra entrevista, Miller usó una imagen familiar. "No vengas a verme solo cuando la casa se esté quemando", me dijo. Cree que la superintendente Misty Her "no debe tener miedo de hacer las cosas de otra manera", empezando por planteles de kínder de transición a segundo grado dedicados exclusivamente a las habilidades de lectura. Su consejo: "No tires al niño junto con el agua de la bañera, pero no tengas miedo de tirar el agua y ponerle agua nueva". Su argumento es la experiencia—"no nomás que soy un señor grande", dijo, sino que su edad incluye décadas de trabajo en las escuelas.

En el foro comunitario, Miller recordó cosas que le pasaron a los 12 años que "no me deberían haber estado pasando porque era un niño. Pero me trataban como a un joven adulto".

El concejal que se registró tarde

Arias representa al Distrito 3 en el Concejo Municipal. Anteriormente representó al Área 5 en la mesa directiva del State Center Community College District y, antes de llegar al concejo, ocupó cargos de alto nivel en Fresno Unified, entre ellos el de director de informática.

El enfoque de Arias es fiscal. "En Fresno Unified no tenemos un problema de dinero. Tenemos un problema de gasto", afirmó. "Si tu mamá te da 20 dólares para la semana y vas a Starbucks todos los días y siempre te compras un café de cinco dólares, tienes un problema de gasto". Los recortes, argumentó, deben venir de la administración y de las oficinas del distrito, no de los niños y las familias. "No se les puede cargar esto a los niños y a las familias", dijo. "Hay que encargarse de los adultos".

Describió la diferencia entre él y sus oponentes como "pura experiencia" y señaló que era el único candidato que había manejado un presupuesto de miles de millones de dólares. También mencionó el plantel de colegio comunitario en el oeste de Fresno que impulsó desde la mesa directiva del distrito de colegios.

"Somos el distrito escolar con los sueldos más altos en el estado de California", me dijo Arias, y sin embargo "dos terceras partes de nuestros niños no pueden rendir al nivel de su grado en matemáticas, lectura y lenguaje". Esta fue una señal de alarma que también mencionó en algunas de sus respuestas en el panel, y la vinculó con la filosofía fiscal de su plataforma de campaña.

El intercambio más tenso se dio cuando el hombre del 93706 le preguntó a Arias por qué había esperado hasta el último día posible para registrarse, básicamente preguntando si el puesto era un escalón más en su larga carrera política. Arias señaló su historial en la zona de Edison y lo que pasó la semana del plazo de registro: noticias de cambios en las rutas de autobús, problemas con las excursiones escolares y un plan de estudios de la clase de inglés de preparatoria de su hijo que consideraba aprobatorio un 40%. "Esa fue la gota que derramó el vaso para mí", dijo. También dijo que un sindicato había decidido gastar 200,000 dólares para elegir a su candidato preferido.

Bellard le respondió directamente. Dijo que ojalá el sindicato de maestros de verdad hubiera puesto ese tipo de dinero detrás de ella, porque así "no tendría que estar tocando tantas puertas". También rechazó su crítica a Advance Peace, un programa de prevención de la violencia. Arias había dicho que "no le entusiasma que Advance Peace llegue a nuestras escuelas", argumentando que la intervención contra la violencia le corresponde a la ciudad.

Lo que dejó el salón

Después de la comida, los padres hicieron preguntas de seguimiento que no se pueden contestar en menos de dos minutos.

Las preguntas de los estudiantes sobre las excursiones escolares, el cierre de escuelas, el ausentismo crónico y las suspensiones no eran quejas al azar. Son solo síntomas, síntomas que reflejan problemas sistémicos que heredará la nueva mesa directiva. La inscripción ha bajado y, como dijo Miller, "todo lo que está ligado al dinero en la educación se basa en la asistencia". La disciplina recae de manera desproporcionada en los estudiantes afroamericanos. Al escuchar a los estudiantes, era difícil ignorar la historia de este lugar, donde antes se encerraba a jóvenes.

Los cuatro candidatos ofrecieron distintas teorías de cambio. Bellard aporta una perspectiva optimista desde fuera de la zona. Ricks aporta equidad basada en la experiencia vivida. Miller usaría su experiencia en las aulas y los planteles para generar un cambio sistémico. Arias aportaría disciplina fiscal respaldada por una larga carrera política. Cada uno expresó una necesidad válida. Sin embargo, ningún candidato puede ser la solución por sí solo.

Al salir de Farber, me llamó la atención una palabra que usaron tantas campañas: "transformación". Este plantel es prueba de que una institución se puede transformar. Pero eso toma años y no borra lo que hubo antes. Quien resulte electo en noviembre enfrentará el mismo camino largo. Una cosa es hacer promesas en un foro un sábado por la mañana en un salón medio lleno. Otra es cumplirlas durante una votación del presupuesto, una audiencia sobre el cierre de una escuela o la apelación de la suspensión de un estudiante. Espero sinceramente ver si quien gane puede adaptar su visión para responder a las muchas necesidades de las familias del Área 1, o si a esas familias se les pedirá que se ajusten a la visión de quien gane. Los estudiantes que redactaron las preguntas seguirán en estas escuelas cuando conozcamos las respuestas. Volverán a casa con los padres que asistieron. Necesitan exigirle cuentas a la próxima persona que ocupe este cargo por cada respuesta que dio.

*****

Enrique Little es editor de Alianza Comunitaria. *Escríbale a editor@fresnoalliance.com*

El Alto Costa

Continúa de página 20

Organizaciones como Centro La Familia, Faith in the Valley, la United Farm Workers Foundation y CIVIIC han ofrecido servicios que incluyen ayuda legal y alimentos.

"Esto es algo muy importante para mí porque fui indocumentado durante 25 años", dijo Gutiérrez sobre su decisión de entrarle a la ayuda. "Ni lo pensé. No tuve que pensarlo dos veces".

Él calcula que de todos modos anda en la calle llevando a sus hijos a la escuela o haciendo mandados, así que ha viajado tan al sur como Visalia, al norte hasta Stockton, al este hasta Reedley y al oeste hasta Mendota. Gutiérrez recibe avisos de sus seguidores sobre todo tipo de cosas, desde un vehículo sospechoso sin placas visto en una colonia hasta una cuenta de GoFundMe o una repartición de alimentos programada.

Gutiérrez quiere que se apruebe una reforma migratoria. "Sé en carne propia lo que significa vivir en las sombras, con ese miedo constante y la incertidumbre de no saber qué puede pasar mañana", dijo.

Más que una simple grúa

Basurto fundó su compañía de grúas, Buena Vista Towing, en 2019. Le puso ese nombre por su pueblo natal en Guerrero, un estado de México. A veces remolca vehículos con la promesa de que el cliente le pagará después.

"Hay gente que es demasiado pobre para pagar mucho", dijo. Sus dificultades forman parte de una crisis de asequibilidad más amplia que afecta al país y que es un tema central en esta temporada electoral.

El fin de semana pasado, Basurto pasó a un Costco en Fresno, compró 40 docenas de huevos y los regaló. Quiere ofrecer más, pero sus ingresos tienen límites. Uno de sus hijos le ayudaba con la compañía de grúas, pero luego regresó a otro trabajo porque el negocio bajó.

Aun así, Basurto no titubea en sus decisiones. "Así nos enseñó mi papá. Mi papá tenía una tiendita, y a veces la gente no traía suficiente dinero, y mi papá les daba las cosas a bajo costo", dijo Basurto. "Él fue un ejemplo para mí".

Basurto tiene un par de amigos que le ayudan con dinero para el combustible. "Me encantaría hacer más", dijo mientras esperaba una llamada de servicio en el estacionamiento de un restaurante de comida rápida en el centro de Fresno.

Basurto dijo que se identifica con los trabajadores del campo porque él también trabajó en el campo.

"A decir verdad, soy bendecido".

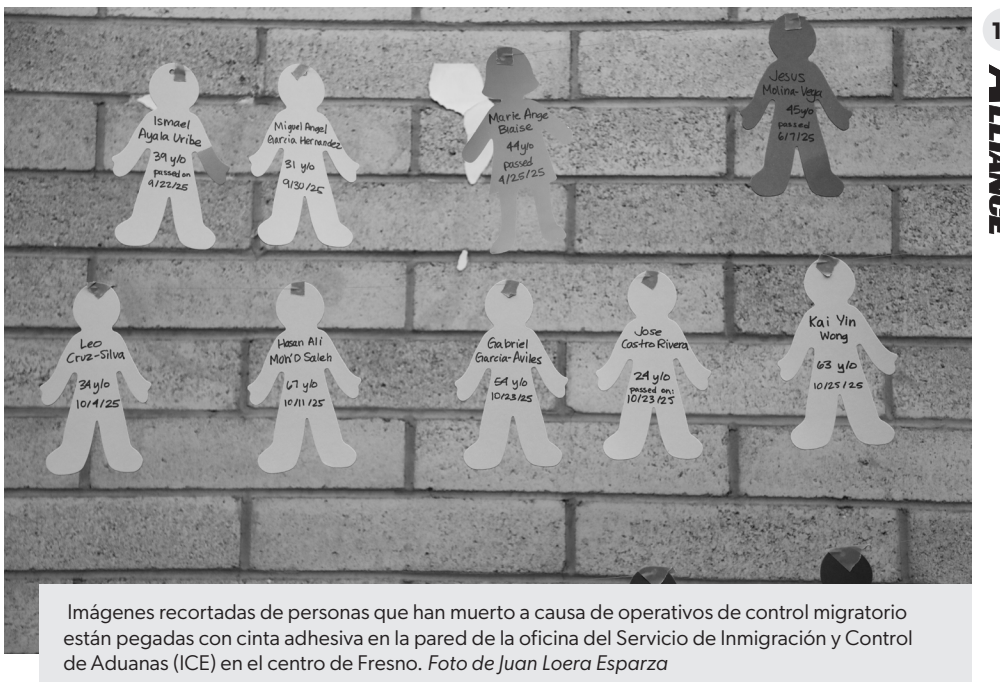
Atendiendo una necesidad

Ayudar a quienes lo necesitan no es nada nuevo para Alvarado, la mujer de Kerman que hace dos años ayudó a reunir 10,000 dólares con la venta de 4,000 tamales para apoyar a las familias de siete trabajadores agrícolas que murieron en un accidente automovilístico de madrugada cuando iban rumbo al trabajo.

Después de repartir más de 500 comidas la semana pasada, planea una repartición más grande el 20 de octubre para las familias que tienen demasiado miedo de salir a trabajar o a hacer el mandado.

"No tengo un gran negocio, pero tengo un Dios grande en mi negocio", dijo Alvarado, quien reclutó a voluntarios para ayudar a cocinar. "Pienso en esos momentos que yo viví, y no quisiera oír que alguien me diga que no tuvo para darles de comer a sus hijos".

Trabajó en el campo cuando llegó a Kerman en 2022. Casi inmediatamente después de que se reportó actividad de ICE, se enteró de que la gente estaba pasando hambre. Alvarado, a pesar de tener estatus



Imágenes recortadas de personas que han muerto a causa de operativos de control migratorio están pegadas con cinta adhesiva en la pared de la oficina del Servicio de Inmigración y Control de Aduanas (ICE) en el centro de Fresno. *Foto de Juan Loera Esparza*

legal, tiene miedo de salir porque teme que los agentes de inmigración la acosen.

"Estoy muy contenta porque es bonito cuando la gente de tu propia comunidad toma en cuenta a los suyos", dijo.

Alvarado dijo que le toca a la comunidad poner de su parte y ayudar durante la ofensiva migratoria porque la necesidad no puede esperar a que los funcionarios electos la atiendan. "La gente necesita darles de comer a sus hijos".

La ayuda no puede esperar

Erika Emprendedora hace el mandado gratis para unas cuatro familias al día para que eviten el riesgo de toparse con las autoridades de inmigración.

"Pensé en las personas que no hablan el idioma o que batallan con sus celulares", dijo Erika, quien agregó que la tarea es pesada porque también tiene a su propia familia que atender. Aun así, todavía se da tiempo para informar a sus 12,000 seguidores en Facebook dónde se ha visto a agentes de ICE.

Muchos otros están poniendo su granito de arena. El dueño de un pequeño mercado en Madera ofrece entrega gratuita del mandado y está organizando una repartición de alimentos. Les aconseja a las personas que manden a sus hijos o a alguien con estatus legal a recoger la comida. La entrada del mercado está vigilada para impedir el paso a los agentes de inmigración.

Por su parte, la alcaldesa de Kerman, María Pacheco, recientemente sacó de su ciudad a agentes de ICE. Sus acciones se hicieron virales en redes sociales y el comediante George Lopez las difundió. Otra mujer está repartiendo verduras frescas de su pequeña granja cerca de Sanger.

Todos coinciden en que la ayuda no puede esperar.

*****

Juan Esparza Loera es fotoperiodista de Fresno con muchos años de trayectoria y exeditor de Vida en el Valle.

Cuidado de salud

Datos sobre la influenza y el COVID

POR JAMES MENDEZ

La temporada de influenza 2026–2027 llegó temprano a California. Según el Departamento de Salud Pública de California, al 1 de octubre de 2026 hay actividad moderada de influenza en el Valle Central.

Cada año, la Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS) identifica los virus de la influenza y del COVID-19 que están circulando en el mundo. Las vacunas anuales se desarrollan con base en los virus identificados. Después de que la OMS indica qué virus se están propagando, desarrollar una vacuna toma de seis a ocho meses. En estudios observacionales en condiciones reales, la eficacia de cada vacuna suele ser de entre 40% y 60%, según qué tan bien coincida con los virus que circulan activamente esa temporada. Ni la vacuna contra el COVID-19 ni la vacuna contra la influenza previenen todos los casos de enfermedad, pero incluso cuando no coinciden del todo, las vacunas reducen la probabilidad de enfermarse, disminuyen la gravedad de la enfermedad, reducen las hospitalizaciones y protegen contra complicaciones que ponen en riesgo la vida.

Entre 2000 y 2025, las muertes anuales relacionadas con la influenza en Estados Unidos por lo general oscilaron entre 6,300 y 52,000 por año. La variación depende de la gravedad de las cepas del virus en circulación y de las tasas de vacunación. La temporada de influenza 2024–2025 fue una de las más graves, con unas 45,000 muertes en total a causa de la influenza. La temporada 2024–2025 tuvo 293 muertes pediátricas por influenza, la cifra más alta de cualquier temporada desde que los Centros para el Control y la Prevención de Enfermedades (CDC, por sus siglas en inglés) comenzaron a llevar el registro en 2004. En la temporada de influenza 2025–2026, los CDC reportaron un total de 191 muertes pediátricas. En ambas temporadas, el 90% de los niños que murieron no estaban vacunados. Al menos parte del aumento en el número de muertes de adultos y niños se debió a las tasas de vacunación más bajas. Las tasas de vacunación han bajado en todo Estados Unidos, de un "estimado de 52% en 2021 a menos de 44% durante la temporada de influenza 2025–2026". Analistas de salud pública han afirmado que la menor tasa de vacunación se debe al escepticismo del público generado por la desinformación del secretario de Salud y Servicios Humanos, Robert F. Kennedy Jr. (RFK Jr.), y del gobierno de Trump sobre los beneficios de las vacunas.

Según su sitio web, el Departamento de Salud y Servicios Humanos (HHS, por sus siglas en inglés) es un departamento del poder ejecutivo con rango de gabinete del gobierno federal de Estados Unidos. Su misión es "mejorar la salud, el bienestar y los servicios sociales de todos los estadounidenses". Es responsable de la salud de la nación, la investigación médica y los servicios sociales. Una de las divisiones más importantes del HHS son los CDC. Otras divisiones del HHS incluyen la Administración de Alimentos y Medicamentos (FDA, por sus siglas en inglés), los Institutos Nacionales de Salud (NIH, por sus siglas en inglés) y los Centros de Servicios de Medicare y Medicaid (CMS, por sus siglas en inglés).

Los CDC fueron alguna vez una de las instituciones científicas más respetadas del mundo. Debido a los comentarios de RFK Jr., activista antivacunas, propagador de desinformación antivacunas y teórico de la conspiración, la confianza en los CDC se ha deteriorado. Hoy no son más que un cascarón de la prestigiosa institución que fueron. Bajo la dirección de RFK Jr. al frente del HHS, el financiamiento y el personal solicitados para los CDC disminuyeron, y personas designadas por motivos políticos reemplazaron al Comité Asesor sobre Prácticas de Inmunización (ACIP, por sus siglas en inglés). En 2025, bajo la dirección de RFK Jr., el HHS inició una reestructuración masiva que buscaba eliminar entre 20,000 y 25,000 empleos del HHS, entre ellos 2,400 de los CDC.

El historial de RFK Jr. de difundir desinformación se remonta por lo menos a 2005. Ha seguido difundiendo desinformación sobre las indicaciones, los riesgos y los beneficios de las vacunas. En contraste, varias organizaciones basadas en evidencia, como el Departamento de Salud Pública de California (CDPH, por sus siglas en inglés), han afirmado repetidamente que "la vacunación es la mejor protección disponible contra virus respiratorios como el COVID-19, la influenza y el virus sincitial respiratorio (VSR)".

En una entrevista de enero de 2026 con Nancy Cordes, corresponsal principal de CBS News en la Casa Blanca, RFK Jr. afirmó falsamente que revisiones de la Colaboración Cochrane mostraban que "no hay evidencia científica de que la vacuna contra la influenza prevenga enfermedades graves, hospitalizaciones o muertes en niños" y que el hecho de que menos niños recibieran la vacuna contra la influenza podría ser "algo mejor". Numerosos estudios muestran los claros beneficios de la vacuna contra la influenza y de las vacunas contra el COVID-19 para reducir enfermedades graves (incluidas las hospitalizaciones) y muertes por esas infecciones. Con sus declaraciones y acciones, RFK Jr. ha socavado las recomendaciones de los CDC. Aun así, el público estadounidense todavía puede seguir las recomendaciones confiables y basadas en evidencia de las principales agencias y organizaciones médicas sobre las vacunas contra la influenza y el COVID-19.

*****

Jim Mendez llegó a Fresno en 1977 para hacer su residencia médica en lo que entonces se llamaba Valley Medical Center. Se quedó para ejercer la medicina y formar una familia. Hoy es médico jubilado y activista comunitario.

Las recomendaciones sobre la vacuna

Las recomendaciones actuales sobre la vacuna contra la influenza de todas las principales agencias y organizaciones médicas basadas en evidencia (la Asociación Médica Estadounidense, la Academia Estadounidense de Médicos de Familia [AAFP, por sus siglas en inglés], la Academia Estadounidense de Pediatría, el Colegio Estadounidense de Obstetras y Ginecólogos y la Sociedad de Enfermedades Infecciosas de Estados Unidos) se resumen en la siguiente declaración de la AAFP del 2 de septiembre de 2026:

Influenza:

Se recomienda la vacunación anual contra la influenza para todas las personas de 6 meses de edad en adelante que no tengan contraindicaciones médicas. (Énfasis del autor.) Todas las personas vacunadas deben recibir una vacuna aprobada para su grupo de edad.

Los adultos de 65 años en adelante deben recibir de preferencia una vacuna mejorada contra la influenza (de dosis alta, con adyuvante, recombinante o de ARNm) cuando esté disponible, pero no deben retrasar la vacunación para conseguirla.

COVID-19:

La AAFP recomienda que todos los adultos de 19 años en adelante reciban una vacuna contra el COVID-19. (Énfasis del autor.)

Es especialmente importante vacunarse contra el COVID-19 si usted:

Tiene 65 años o más;

Tiene mayor riesgo de una infección grave de COVID-19; y

Nunca ha recibido una vacuna contra el COVID-19.

Los adultos de 65 años en adelante deben recibir una segunda dosis de la vacuna actualizada contra el COVID-19 seis meses después de la dosis inicial para ayudar a mantener la protección a medida que la inmunidad disminuye con el tiempo.

La AAFP recomienda que todos los niños de 6 a 23 meses se vacunen contra el COVID-19 y que se use un enfoque de dosis única basado en el riesgo para niños y adolescentes de 2 a 18 años. Apoyamos el acceso continuo a la vacunación para cualquier familia que quiera vacunarse contra el COVID-19. Esta recomendación coincide con la de la AAP (2026).

La AAFP recomienda la vacunación contra el COVID-19 durante el embarazo, en cualquier trimestre, y también durante la lactancia. Esto es congruente con nuestra recomendación de 2025 y coincide con la del ACOG (2026).

EJEMPLAR GRATUITO

VOL. 30, Nº 11 | NOVIEMBRE DE 2026

ALIANZA COMUNITARIA

LA VOZ DEL MOVIMIENTO PROGRESISTA DESDE 1996

El alto costo de una grúa tras un arresto de ICE

POR JUAN ESPARZA LOERA

El operador de grúa Ramiro Basurto pierde hasta 700 dólares—sin contar su tiempo ni el costo del diésel, que ya anda en unos 8.49 dólares el galón—cada vez que recoge un vehículo abandonado que pertenece a alguien detenido por agentes federales de inmigración.

Pero esos costos no detuvieron a Basurto, originario de México, quien ofreció el servicio de grúa gratis para cualquier persona detenida luego de que se diera a conocer un aumento de arrestos de inmigración en todo el Valle Central.

"Lo hago porque soy uno de ellos", dijo Basurto, quien agregó que remolca hasta cuatro vehículos al día sin costo para los dueños. "Soy hijo de un inmigrante. Vengo de *abajo*. Así que cuando vienes de orígenes humildes, miras a tu alrededor y sabes lo que se siente".

Al referirse a la más reciente ola de detenciones del Servicio de Inmigración y Control de Aduanas (ICE, por sus siglas en inglés), que comenzó el 5 de octubre, continuó: "Cuando vi lo que estaba pasando... decidí que iba a poner mi granito de arena y retribuirle a mi gente. No los voy a abandonar".

Residentes del Valle como Basurto no perdieron tiempo en echar la mano a las personas afectadas por lo que se espera que sea un operativo de control migratorio de 45 días dirigido a amplias zonas de California, apenas unas semanas antes de las elecciones intermedias.

Hasta ahora, más de 100 personas—trabajadores del campo, jardineros, trabajadores de la construcción y otros—han sido detenidas en esta acción más reciente de ICE.

Los residentes indocumentados representan el 12% (unas 124,000 personas) de la población del condado de Fresno. Los datos muestran, además, que la gran mayoría de las personas arrestadas por ICE desde el inicio del segundo gobierno de Trump no tiene antecedentes penales.



Ramiro Basurto, dueño de Buena Vista Towing, ofrece servicio gratuito a personas cuyos carros quedaron abandonados después de que agentes federales de inmigración detuvieron a sus dueños. *Foto de Juan Esparza Loera*

"Ni lo pensé"

Una ama de casa de Fresno que hornea empanadas de coco se ofreció de inmediato a hacer el mandado y llevárselo a quienes tienen demasiado miedo de salir. También recoge a niños de la escuela para padres que temen ser detenidos.

Una mujer de Kerman, a unas 15 millas al oeste de Fresno, que vende tamales y bebidas calientes a los trabajadores que van rumbo al campo antes del amanecer, organizó a un grupo para preparar 500 comidas de pollo, arroz, frijoles y tortillas de maíz para residentes que pasan hambre.

Un entrenador y emprendedor de Fresno recorre la región de arriba abajo e informa rápidamente a su amplio público en redes sociales sobre la actividad de ICE ya verificada. Sus publicaciones en Facebook, que incluyen enlaces a organizaciones que ofrecen ayuda que va desde comida hasta asesoría legal, han generado más de 11 millones de vistas.

"Claro que me sorprendió ver la solidaridad que todos tenemos como comunidad, pero nunca me imaginé el impacto que tendría mi página (de Facebook)", dijo Gus Gutiérrez, conocido como "Coach Gus" por sus 44,000 seguidores en Facebook.

A Gutiérrez le gustaría ver que otros usuarios de redes sociales con muchos seguidores se involucraran para ayudar a quienes temen ser arrestados por agentes de inmigración, aunque estén aquí legalmente. La comunidad, dijo, ha llenado un vacío dejado por funcionarios de gobierno que han tardado en pronunciarse a favor de la comunidad indocumentada o que se han limitado en lo que pueden hacer.

Continúa en página 19

Donde antes estuvo una correccional de menores, los candidatos del Área 1 exponen sus argumentos

POR ENRIQUE LITTLE

El 10 de octubre fui al Farber Educational Campus con una grabadora en la bolsa y un poco del cinismo propio de la temporada electoral. Muchos foros electorales pueden parecerse entre sí.

Este lugar está lejos de ser común. Farber, el plantel de educación alternativa de Fresno Unified que costó unos 65 millones de dólares, se encuentra donde estuvo la antigua correccional de menores del condado de Fresno, que cerró en 2006 y fue demolida en 2019. Al entrar, sentí que este espacio todavía no había olvidado del todo su pasado. En algún lugar, debajo de la pintura nuevecita y de las mantas sobre trayectorias profesionales, esta vieja tierra todavía parecía estar escuchando, preguntándose qué dirían los adultos ahora sobre los jóvenes. Por otro lado, también vi un monumento al progreso. Desde que era adolescente he luchado contra la ruta de la escuela a la prisión, y esto era una representación visceral de mis metas, sobre todo porque la demolición coincidió con mi último año de preparatoria.

La asistencia fue escasa, con filas de sillas vacías, y Rizpah Bellard dijo que le hubiera gustado que más miembros de la comunidad pudieran asistir. Sin embargo, quienes llegaron no estaban ahí por casualidad: padres de estudiantes de todos los grados; una mamá cuyo hijo se encargaba de los micrófonos; un hombre que se presentó como parte interesada del código postal 93706; y, sobre todo, los jóvenes que organizaron el evento.

Padres de familia y el Jakara Movement, una organización sin fines de lucro enfocada en la participación cívica de la juventud, organizaron el foro, y los estudiantes



El panel completo en el foro de la Mesa Directiva Escolar, de izquierda a derecha: Dr. Daren Miller, Rizpah Bellard, Genoveva Islas, Mirna Garcia, Karen Steed, Dra. Deshunna Ricks, Valerie Davis, Miguel Arias

redactaron todas las preguntas del panel. "Estas no son preguntas que vengan de los adultos", señaló una moderadora. Una cosa es que un candidato les lea su plataforma a los reporteros. Otra muy distinta es decirle a un estudiante de carne y hueso, a quien servirá si resulta electo, qué piensa hacer exactamente en el cargo.

Cinco candidatos compiten por el puesto vacante del Área 1, que abarca la zona de la preparatoria Edison, en la elección del 3 de noviembre: Rizpah Bellard, Deshunna Ricks, Daren Miller, el concejal Miguel Arias y Michelle Escobar Longoria. Los primeros cuatro participaron en el panel del Área 1 y en el foro comunitario de la tarde, y se reunieron conmigo en entrevistas individuales. La Sra. Longoria no estuvo presente ese día.

La ganadera del porche

Bellard es ganadera, como lo deja ver su característico sombrero vaquero; la he visto lucirlo en varios eventos comunitarios. Ella y su padre crían ganado y venden carne molida a instituciones como el Central California Food Bank. También da alojamiento a adultos sin hogar, ha sido maestra suplente en escuelas de todo el distrito y ahora enseña agricultura como maestra de educación técnica y profesional.

Bellard dijo que su candidatura comenzó en el verano de 2024, cuando los niños de su cuadra no estaban en la escuela de

Continúa en página 18