

Labor/Community ALLIANCE

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VOLUME 6, ISSUE 2



FEBRUARY 2001

FRESNO TO HOST ANTI-PRISON CONFERENCE

Do we really want more prisons in the Central Valley? Are prisons bad for our health? Are we so desperate for jobs that we'll do anything? Can we stop this process if we don't want it?

Several environmental and social justice organizations have come together to explore these topics at a conference that will be held in February at CSUF. The conference will examine the connection between environmental racism, environmental injustice and the prison industrial complex.

THE CONFERENCE

While much has been written about how unwanted land uses such as toxic waste dumps constitute environmental racism and injustice, we believe that the siting of prisons in economically depressed communities shares much in common with this prior thinking but has yet to be explored.

Across the country, prisons are almost entirely sited in economically depressed, rural communities on the promise of jobs and economic prosperity. The uncontroverted evidence, however, is that prisons don't help these communities.

Delano is a prime example. Delano already has one 5000-bed maximum-security prison. In 1990, prior to the opening of that prison, the unemployment rate in Delano was 26%. Today, the unemployment rate in Delano is 26%. The State itself projects that of the 1600 new jobs which will purportedly be created by the new prison, less than 100 will go to the residents of Delano. It is hard to imagine any other \$335 million investment in a town the size of Delano (35,000) producing less than 100 new jobs for its residents.

The conference promises to be a unique look at these issues that will change the way we think about the prison industrial complex, environmental racism and environmental justice. And through the excitement generated by the conference we hope to consolidate already-existing activism around the environment, the prison industrial complex and local economic development alternatives.

We envision a day long conference broken into three sessions:

- ♦ How do prisons constitute new forms of environmental racism and injustice both in the communities in which they are sited and in the communities from which the majority of prisoners come;
- ♦ How might environmental strategies be used to stop new prisons, looking at the struggle around Delano II as a case study; and
- ♦ What types of economic development alternatives might we

look to both for rural communities which house most prisons and urban communities where most prisoners come from.

Speakers include: Dorsey Nunn (Critical Resistance, Legal Services for Prisoners with Children), Laura Pulido (author and Environmental Justice scholar), activists from Mothers of East L.A., Rufino Dominguez (Frente Indigena, Fresno), Ruthie Gilmore (Critical Resistance, CA Prison Moratorium Project), Henry Clark (West Co. Toxics). Spanish translation provided.

JOINING FORCES:

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND THE FIGHT AGAINST PRISON EXPANSION

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2001 • 10:00 AM - 6:30 PM

**Fresno State University Student Union • Conference Rooms 312-314
FRESNO, CALIFORNIA**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER PLEASE CONTACT
CRITICAL RESISTANCE AT:**

1212 Broadway, Suite 1400 • Oakland, CA 94612

Phone: 510-444-0484 • Fax: 510-444-2177

email: critresist@aol.com • web site: criticalresistance.org



Mayor Autry says that he doesn't want The Gap to make their clothing in sweatshops. For more information on The Gap anti-sweatshop campaign, see page 10.

Photo Credit: Mike Rhodes

LABOR/COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

The Labor/Community Alliance newsletter is an independent voice for workers and progressive groups in Fresno and the Central San Joaquin Valley. We support the struggle for social and economic justice and believe that all workers should be paid a living wage. The Labor/Community Alliance is affiliated nationally with Jobs with Justice. Meetings are held on the last Monday of each month at The Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 985 N Van Ness at 6:30 PM. This newsletter is published monthly.

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For a Just Society*

EDITORIAL

The effects of the GLOBAL ECONOMY came to the Central Valley last month when nearly 500 union workers at the Pirelli Armstrong Tire plant in Hanford were laid off. The Italian multinational corporation that owns Pirelli closed its last U.S. plant and will now produce all their tires in Brazil, Venezuela, and Europe.

Why did this happen? Because the workers in Hanford were paid a living wage and Pirelli can pay less in South America? Because Pirelli can get away with lower environmental standards elsewhere? Because they don't care about the lives of their workers?

When good jobs are taken out of the valley and sent to a third world country to maximize profits for a multi national corporation it should be a crime. Is it not criminal to throw hundreds of workers on the street so some fat cat CEO can make a few million more bucks this year? Corporations must be held accountable by the communities they are a part of.

That is why it was so encouraging the other day to hear Fresno's new mayor say that it is "unacceptable for THE GAP to manufacture their clothing in sweatshops in third world countries." Right on! Mayor Autry says he wants to talk to THE GAP about locating clothing manufacturing facilities in the Central Valley. Right on! But let's take that one step further and demand that these jobs pay a LIVING WAGE.

We must make it clear, however, that we are not asking for companies like The Gap, Nike, etc to close their facilities in third world countries. We are demanding that they respect workers rights and pay a living wage, whether those jobs are in Fresno or Brazil. If The Gap wants to locate manufacturing facilities here in Fresno County, they will be welcome as long as they are willing to pay a living wage and aren't looking for corporate welfare.

Until workers everywhere are paid a living wage, corporations in the new global economy will try to play one group off against

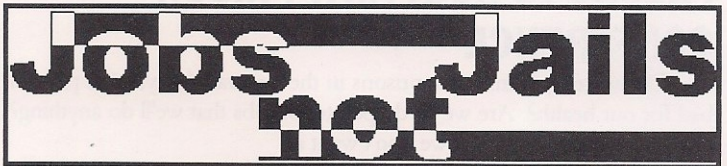
another. The solution is to build an international worker solidarity movement that holds corporations accountable and pays ALL workers a living wage. We hope you will join the Labor/Community Alliance in this struggle for JOBS WITH JUSTICE.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The front page piece on election reforms by Pam Whalen in the December issue covers reforms which need to be looked at for future elections so what has occurred in the 2000 presidential elections does not take place again. We cannot afford to have our people and nation go through such a snafu again.

I would just like to add to her suggestions, as many other columnists and political experts have expressed, the correlation of time zones so that all polls open and close at the same time. This would prevent the electronic media in calling winners prematurely and discouraging western area states citizens from voting.

Ray Ensher



Tired of Poverty Wages and Corporate Greed?

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**The Labor/Community Alliance Newsletter P.O. Box 5077,
Fresno Ca 93755 (559) 226-0477**

2001 MARTIN LUTHER KING MARCH DRAWS DIVERSE CROWD



Marchers demand Jobs with Justice.

Photo Credit: Mike Rhodes



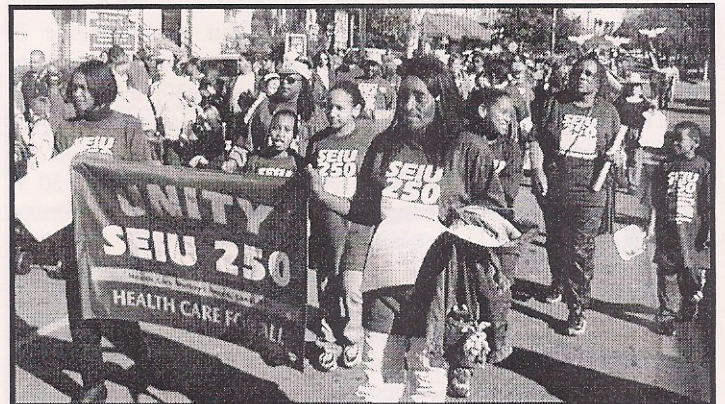
Immigrant rights and amnesty for undocumented workers were called for by marchers at this years MLK march.

Photo Credit: Mike Rhodes



Women's International League for Peace and Freedom shows solidarity.

Photo Credit: Mike Rhodes



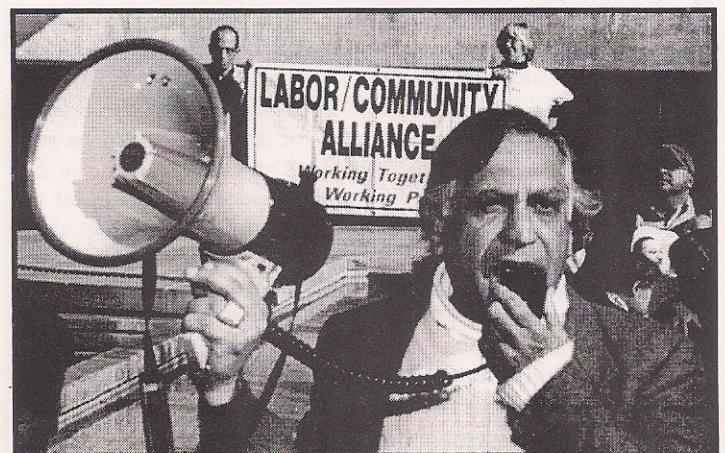
Home health care workers were a big part of the MLK march.

Photo Credit: Mike Rhodes



The MLK march started at the AME church in downtown Fresno.

Photo Credit: Mike Rhodes



Dr. Su Kapoor addresses marchers in front of city hall.

Photo Credit: Jonathan Rollins

CELEBRATING AFRICAN PEOPLE'S HISTORY MONTH

The following article was created by combining the information sent to this newsletter by: Diane Scott & Nona W. Harris

This is the time of year when African Americans celebrate the contributions of our people past and present. Throughout Fresno local groups will have the following events:

Colonel Allensworth State Historic Park, February 10th, 10a.m. - 4p.m. This day focuses on providing an educational and fun experience for school children. Visitors will receive guided tours of the park's historical buildings, which include living history. The program will also feature the Black History Bee Contest (played similar to Jeopardy), and the historical "Cake Walk Contest". Prizes will be awarded. There will also be vendors on site so that everyone can eat or buy souvenirs. The 24th is set aside for those who cannot attend the events on the tenth. For more information, contact George Finley at 485-5216.

The African American Historical and Cultural Museum, 1857 Fulton St. at Divisadero (268-7100), will show the Henrietta Marie Slave Ship exhibit through March 25. This important exhibition shows artifacts such as shackles, and diagrams of living and sleeping space for the cargo of black people bound for the slave markets of the new world. Take your children to African Film Day and Story Telling in the museum library from February 7 - 23. February 7 is Senior Day which features free admission to Seniors and a tour of the museum. The 23rd is a Black tie event, the annual fund raising banquet and awards ceremony recognizing, "The Firsts in the History of the San Joaquin Valley". This year's theme is "Celebrating Our History Together," and will include entertainment, dinner and a guest speaker. Time: 5:30p.m.-8:00p.m.

There will be a dance event February 15, "Having Our Own Say: The Delaney Sisters" held at Theater 3, 1544 Fulton St. between Calaveras and Stanislaus. Also, on Feb. 8, 4:00 - 5:30 at Artes Americas, there will be an exhibit of Student Art and Essays honoring Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

Fresno City College will begin their celebration of February with Opening Day Ceremonies "Historical Pathways" beginning at 11a.m. at the FCC Theater. Friday the 2nd is Gospel night featuring local churches, beginning at 7p.m. The 3rd is D.E.F. Com. African American History Month Comedy Jam, FCC Theater 9p.m. Tickets \$12 general, \$10 w/Student ID. On the 6th, the Dallas Black Dance Theater Performance will be held at the Tower Theater, 7p.m. Tickets \$12, \$10, \$8-students and children under 12. The 7th is a Soul Food Sale, "A Taste of Africa", in the Fountain Area at FCC, 10a.m.-2p.m. The 13th brings African American Health Issues and Careers in the Student Lounge, 12 noon. The 21st is "African Americans in the Media," a panel discussion held in the Student Lounge at 12 noon. On the 23rd, plan for the open discussion with Theophile O'Benga, a scholar from the Congo. Finally, on the 27th will be "PASU UMOJA Circle, Putting God First", 11a.m. at the Student Lounge. Call 442-4600x5711 for more information about events at FCC.

CSUF's celebration is called "Remembering the Dream... Continuing the Legacy." They have events scheduled for almost every day/evening: Music Jams, a Jazz Concert, Movies, Poetry, "Hip Hop Fashion Show", Children's Day, and Talent Show to name but a few. Most of these events take place at the Satellite Student Union. You can call 278-2078 for dates and times.

AIDS PROGRAM COMES TO MERCED/MARIPOSA

By: Jean Kennedy

The Light House AIDS Management Program is a new project under the Fresno Center for Non Violence. This project is designed to maintain and enhance independent living of people with HIV/AIDS. The Light House is a program which will accomplish services to individuals affected directly or indirectly by the disease. This is done through support, advocacy, direct services, and education. This project will take an educational approach with a team concept of service provision. This project is being underwritten by federal grants and coordinated by Jean Kennedy and will target the Merced and Mariposa Community, as there are no support services presently being offered in that area to the Merced/Mariposa community. A special thanks to the Center for Non Violence for assisting us with the non-profit status so that this project could take place.

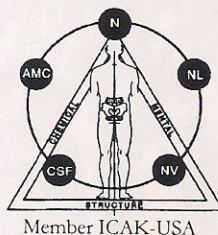
HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Habitat for Humanity Fresno is planning a women-built house for 2001. All women are invited to join the effort. The first organizing meeting is Saturday, February 3 at 10 a.m. at the Habitat office at 2219 San Joaquin St. in downtown Fresno.

Opportunities to participate are not limited to hammering nails. We need leaders and members of the following committees: fundraising, public relations, volunteer organizing, special events, and construction.

Habitat is a Christian organization, but many non-Christians are Habitat partners in both building and homeownership. All women are invited to participate.

You can get in on the ground floor, so to speak, by responding now. Call the Habitat Office at (559) 237-4102 or Susan Arpad at (559) 228-1867 for more information or come to the meeting on February 3.



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DON'T PUT THE UTILITIES BACK IN CHARGE

By David Bacon

BERKELEY, CA (1/13/01) - California's experiment with deregulating electricity is on its last legs. "Deregulation is dead," declares Public Utilities Commissioner Carl Wood. And from the governor to the PUC to the legislature, almost everyone expects the state's electrical system to be regulated once again.

Meanwhile, the utilities stand with their hands out, threatening bankruptcy and demanding bailouts. Heightening the atmosphere of crisis, they lay off thousands of workers, just when ratepayers most need a skilled workforce to keep power plants running, and maintain a transmission and distribution system capable of surviving storms and blackouts.

In a crisis atmosphere, it's tempting to think the state can simply return to the past. But it can't. And the reason is the change in the utilities themselves. Despite their public protestations, PG&E and Southern California Edison are no longer primarily interested in providing dependable service to ratepayers at a reasonable price.

The mythology of deregulation tells us that the inefficient, regulated, monopoly utilities were dragged into this new era, kicking and screaming. They would be faced, goes the story, with unwelcome competition from the lean and mean companies of the future. These new competitors would out-perform the behemoths -- cutting costs to the bone and delivering products at cheaper prices. Consumers would rejoice.

But the mythology was just that. In fact, the utilities were the authors of deregulation. Their unregulated subsidiaries have become their own competition.

PG&E (the world's largest utility) and SoCal Edison co-wrote the state's law which deregulated the industry. The original proposal was written in 1994 by free-market appointees to the PUC. But it was immediately supported by a coalition between PG&E and its largest industrial customers, called Californians for Competitive Electricity, which included the California League of Food Processors, the California Manufacturers Association, the California Large Energy Consumers Association, and the California Independent Energy Producers Association.

With the blessings of the PUC's free marketeers, and those on the federal commission as well, the utilities were allowed to set up unregulated subsidiaries in the early 1980s. Today, PG&E's subsidiary, US Generating Co., and SoCal Ed's Mission Energy, operate many unregulated plants out of state, bringing in huge profits. By 1995 the U.S. Generating Co. was already operating 22 power stations from coast to coast, with a combined capacity of 4800 megawatts. By 1997, USGen owned most of the power plants in Massachusetts.

The profits made from California ratepayers paid for the investments in those plants. Thirteen US Gen facilities alone represented an investment of \$4.2 billion. And because USGen is unregulated, it operates numerous coal-fired plants (illegal in California), which pollute the atmosphere more than those using any other fuel. But because coal-fired plants are the cheapest to operate, except for hydroelectric facilities, they are very profitable.

The unregulated subsidiaries are also non-union, with little incentive to invest in a stable, high-paid and high-skilled workforce.

While buying plants elsewhere, PG&E stopped building power plants in California in 1993, and even bought up five plants

belonging to independent power producers and shut them down. The deregulation bill, AB 1890, required the sell off of the utilities' remaining California generation plants. The plants' new owners, with no regulatory cap on prices, raised them astronomically on power which the utilities were required to buy.

Deregulation has created a shrinking club of gigantic unregulated power generating companies nationwide. PG&E and SoCal Ed are both members of the club.

Turning control of the system back over to them, even in the old regulatory framework, ignores their obvious conflict of interest. Both utilities are much more interested today in the fate of their unregulated subsidiaries, and the enormous profits to be made from the power they generate, than in providing electrical service to California customers at reasonable rates. Some generators are even using the crisis to call for building high-pollution, high-profit plants in the state once again, overturning two decades of hardwon environmental protections.

The only future for ensuring an adequate, environmentally-responsible power supply, and controlling its cost, is if the state itself takes over the system. In Los Angeles, Sacramento, and a handful of other California cities, prices are stable, and have been for years. These cities own their electrical systems. They offer conservation programs and invest in cleaner power sources. Los Angeles generates so much power it's been able to sell excess during the current crisis, keeping rates there low.

The experience of Los Angeles and Sacramento demonstrate that electricity can be efficiently provided by the public sector, where the pursuit of profit doesn't override rational decision-making.

The state really has no other option which can ensure cheap dependable power other than running the system itself. PUC Commissioners Wood and Bilas have both suggested looking at public ownership of some section of the utility industry through municipalization or state authority. Even the governor has hinted at it.

California doesn't need a bailout of the big utilities that leaves them in charge. If rates are to go up 9% to stave off their bankruptcy, that increase should be a down payment on a new public system that can provide dependable service at its true low cost.

Found on the Internet by George Ballis:

¡Look who's going broke!

PG&E's sister corp., PGE&E (Pacific Gas, Electric and Energy) just last month purchased 18 (yes, 18!) power plants in England. It's holding company, PG&E Corp., posted record profits of \$753 million in the first quarter. It has total assets of 33.8 billion and has reported \$304 million in cash on hand.

LINEONLINE

A new feature in the Lineonline cultural arts e-zine for the San Joaquin Valley focuses on watercolorist Rollin Pickford and the video and book projects organized by his son, Joel Pickford. Please visit on line at <<http://lineonline.org>>

Calendar of Events for February 2001

Friday, February 2 - Sunday, February 4

Temple Beth Israel, College Community Congregational Church, Wesley Methodist, St Paul Newman Center and several other local faith groups are sponsoring theologian Walter Brueggemann for the '01 Interfaith scholar weekend. Call 278-3005 for more information or reservations.

Saturday, February 3 • 9 AM

The Kennedy Club of San Joaquin monthly meeting at Fresno Breakfast House. Call 439-8140 for more information.

Saturday, February 3 • 10 am - 4 pm

Visitors day at Sun Mt. Time to learn about Sun Mt's energy-saving methods. Passive solar devices, solar electricity, composting toilet. Trying to maintain step with Big Mama. One hour outside of Fresno. Guided tour of facilities at 1 pm. \$10/person. Free to SunMt members. Bring a picnic lunch and hang out at this 40-acre land trust. Steep granite cliffs and thick woods with friendly dogs. Call for reservations and map. 855-3710.

Saturday, February 3 • 10 AM

Habitat for Humanity Fresno is planning a women-built house for 2001. All women are invited to join the effort. The first organizing meeting will be at the Habitat office at 2219 San Joaquin St. in downtown Fresno. See page 4 for more details.

Saturday, February 3 • 12 Noon

Protest The Gap's use of sweatshops. Demonstration will gather at Fashion Fair (Shaw Avenue and Angus Street at the north end of the shopping center). Call 226-0477 for more information.

Saturday, February 3 • 7:30 PM

Fresno Art Museum DAVE VAN RONK. Tickets: \$12 Advance, \$15 at door. A folk crooner and blues shouter from the early '60s Greenwich Village scene, Van Ronk is also a guitarist's guitarist. With immaculate phrasing, mother wit, a voice like galvanized steel, and a gift for writing originals that sound like traditionals, Van Ronk is not to be missed. If you've never heard Dave Van Ronk--and after 40 years on the folk scene and 24 albums, it's hard to believe anyone hasn't--get yourself down to the Fresno Art museum on February 3. Tickets for this concert are available at Fig Garden Bookstore, Archer's Music, and The Movies in Van Ness Village.

Monday, February 5 • 7:30 PM

Fresno Coalition Against the Misuse of Pesticides (FresCAMP) meeting will be at the home of Jean Hayes, 5493 N. Roosevelt. Call 439-0280 for questions or directions.

Tuesday, February 6 • 6 PM

Meeting on immigrant rights & general amnesty at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 985 N Van Ness. Call Leonel Flores (559) 270-0418 for more information.

Wednesday, February 7 • 3:30 PM

Stir it Up on KFCF 88.1 with your host Pam Whalen from the Labor/Community Alliance focusing on labor organizing, workplace issues, and immigration.

Wednesday, February 7 • 7 PM

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom monthly meeting. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend. Carol Bequette's house at 3747 W. Circle Drive, West. Call 229-9661 for more information.

Thursday, February 8 • 7:00 PM

Fresno County Green Party Council Meeting at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 985 N Van Ness Ave (S of Olive) The Fresno County Green Party invites you to its regular monthly County Council meeting. Call 265-3647 for details or go to <http://www.greens.org/cal/fresno>

Saturday, February 10 • 9:30 A M

Fresno Center for Nonviolence monthly meeting at 985 N. Van Ness. For more information about the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, see their web page at: <http://www.fresnoalliance.com/centerfornonviolence/> or call 559-23PEACE (559-237-3223).

Saturday, February 10 • 10 AM - 6:30 PM

"Joining Forces: Environmental Justice and the Fight Against Prison Expansion". This important conference takes place at California State University, Fresno in conference rooms 312-314. Contact Critical Resistance at (510) 444-0484 or email critresist@aol.com for more information. See page 1 for details.

Wednesday, February 14 • 7:30 AM

The Hunger/Nutrition Roundtable, sponsored by Metro Ministry, meets at First Congregational Church, 2131 N Van Ness Blvd. For more Information: Call 485-1416; <metromin@qnis.net>.

Wednesday, February 14 • 3:30 PM

Fresno Center For Nonviolence radio show on KFCF, 88.1 FM. Vincent Lavery hosts the FCNV radio show on the second Wednesday of each month.

Wednesday, February 14 • 2 PM

Fresno/Madera quality home care coalition will meet at the Independent Living Center. Call 271-7005 for more information.

Thursday, February 15

Deadline for submissions to the March issue of the Labor/Community Alliance Newsletter. Send calendar items and articles to <clr2@igc.org>.

Thursday, February 15 • 7:30 AM

Health Care Roundtable sponsored by Metro Ministry meets at Trinity Lutheran Church. For more information: call 485-1416 or email <metromin@qnis.net>.

Thursday, February 15 • 7:30 PM

Death Penalty Focus regular meeting at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 985 N Van Ness. For more information contact Maria Telesco at: <martel0000@aol.com> or visit their web site at: <http://www.fresnoalliance.com/focus/>

Saturday, February 17 • 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Community Forum on Police Practices and your rights sponsored by the Fresno City Human Relations Commission and the Central California Criminal Justice Committee at Fresno City Hall - Council Chambers, 2600 Fresno Street. This forum will feature Fred Persily, Executive Director of the California Association of Human Relations Organizations (CAHRO), San Francisco. CAHRO promotes full acceptance of all people by conducting activities designed to protect basic human and civil rights and by creating a climate of respect and inclusion through networks of collaborations that reduce community tension and builds intergroup relationships. For more information call 485-1416 or 498-1646.

Saturday, February 17 • 1:30 pm

Fresno Critical Mass invites you to its monthly bike rides around Fresno. They ride for the enjoyment of those on the ride and to educate the public on bicycle commuting issues. Critical Mass advocates clean air, bike lanes and a progressive Fresno. Rides leave from Fresno City College (grassy area next to the Administration Building on Van Ness Avenue). Families and decorated bikes welcome. For more information, contact Gene: 497-0570; gene1@cviip.fresno.com.

Saturday, February 17 • 8:30 PM

Mardi Gras Dance in Fresno featuring Bad Boys Zydeco. Evo Bluestein on button accordions, fiddle and vocals, Chris Millar on

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

drums, John Shafer on scrubboard, Franck Goldwasser on guitar and Joe Rosato Jr. on bass. Cajun/Zydeco Dance Lesson!!! 7:30 pm with Julie Ann Keller & Chris Campbell. Don't be shy, learn to dance. All ages welcome, costumes encouraged. Cynthia Merrill School of Performing Arts great new dance hall, 4750 N. Blackstone (N. of Gettysburg) tickets \$12 advance, \$15 door. For more information: phone (559)222-6539 see web page <http://evobluestein.com/zbash.html>

Monday, February 19 • 7 PM

The NOW (National Organization for Women) meeting will be held at the Center for Non-Violence at 985 N. Van Ness (just south of Olive).

Tuesday, February 20 • 7 PM

KFCF Board of Directors meeting at the Unitarian Church, 4144 N. Millbrook For more information: <http://www.kfcf.org/>; kfcf@kfcf.org; or call (559) 233-2221.

Wednesday, February 21 • 3:30 PM

Stir It Up! - "The Green Scene". Tune in to KFCF 88.1 FM for a Green perspective on local environmental and social justice issues and events and a monthly look at each of the Green Party's 10 Key Values. Please call 265-3647 to give suggestions for future shows.

Friday, February 23 • 5 - 6 PM

Street Heat on KFCF 88.1 FM featuring Labor and Community activists.

Friday, February 23 • 5:30 PM

African American Historical and Cultural Museum Black History

Month - Annual Banquet "Celebrating Our History". A fundraising banquet and awards ceremony, recognizing "The first in the history of the San Joaquin Valley." Includes entertainment, dinner, guest speakers. Tickets \$50 per person.

February 24-25 • 9 AM Sat to Sunday afternoon

Sun Mt will upgrade its solar electric system by gathering all its panels at one location. Project directed by President Don Loweberg who has installed over 100 solar electric systems in the last 17 years. Good opportunity to learn about alternative energy and Sun Mt... And do some outdoor work. Charge by donation. Limit of 6 persons. Call to reserve your place. 855-3710.

Monday, February 26 • 6:30 PM

The Labor/Community Alliance meeting at 985 N. Van Ness. Call 226-0477 for details, or see <http://www.fresnoalliance.com/home/>.

Wednesday, February 28 • 3:30 PM

KFCF 88.1 FM's "Stir It Up" WILPF-style with Zay Guffy-Bill and Lauralee Crain Carbone hosting. Topic: Upcoming Women's Herstory Month.

For up to the minute information about what is happening in Fresno's progressive community, join the Labor/Community Alliance email alert network. We send out an updated calendar of events once a week and alert you when there is an emergency rally or demonstration. This is a free service. You can join by sending your email address to <clr2@igc.org> and saying you would like to subscribe to this service.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THESE DATES IN MARCH

Thursday, March 1

Artist Judy Chicago will speak at CSUF.

Saturday, March 3 • Evening

Angela Davis will speak at Fresno City College in celebration of International Women's Day. The program is Women Speak Out for Women in Prison. All the speakers/performers will be women. Contact Catherine Campbell at 221-0755 after 2/10 for more information.

Friday, March 9

Join community leaders and members at the Fresno Pedestrian Safety Forum to participate in positive dialogue and to build consensus to solve pedestrian safety problems in the region. Also included in this forum will be a presentation by Dan Burden, a national expert on walkable communities and traffic calming methods. For more information or to register for this event, please contact Julie Rosenberg at (415) 956-7835 or jrosenberg@transact.org.

Saturday, March 17 • 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM

Alternative Media Conference. Call Gunnar Jensen at 264-6059, or Richard Stone at 266-2559, for more information.

Saturday, March 24

The Salvadorian Community is getting ready to commemorate the death of Monsignor Oscar Arnulfo Romero. Organizers are looking for volunteers to help plan and organize this event. They have reserved Centro Bellas Artes and plan to have a Mass followed by live music, films, and Salvadorian folklore dancing, as well as our typical food, like pupusas and tamales. Please contact Luis Melendez at 222-7091 or 441-1029 if you would like to help.

Saturday, March 24 • 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Community Forum on Police Practices and your Rights sponsored by the Fresno City Human Relations Commission and the Central California Criminal Justice Committee, held at Fresno City Hall - Council Chambers, 2600 Fresno Street. Teresa Guerrero-Daley, an independent police auditor in San Jose, will be the speaker. Ms. Guerrero-Daley is a criminal lawyer and private investigator. She has worked as a drug enforcement agent for the Department of Justice. For more information call 485-1416 or 498-1646.

Sunday, March 25

Radio Bilingue's Viva El Mariachi Festival.

Saturday, March 31

Annual march in honor of Cesar Chavez in downtown Fresno.

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Fax (559) 222-9950



Womens International League for Peace and Freedom

WILPF Calendar For February 2001

The following events are all sponsored by National WILPF and/or Fresno Branch WILPF

Fri 2-Sat 3 Western U.S. Race Rave UC Santa Cruz (Please see article on this page)

Wednesday, February 7 Board Meeting 7p.m. at Carol Bequette's All are welcome and encouraged to attend

Saturday, February 10 "Joining Forces: Environmental Justice and the Fight Against Prison Expansion," (Please see article on this page)

Wed 28 "Stir it Up" WILPF-style 3:30 p.m. Topic: Upcoming Women's Herstory Month

Coming in March:

Sat 3 Angela Davis, Fresno City College, 7 p.m.

Forum Hall 101. Call Catherine Campbell for more information at 221-1409.

"November 2000" Directory Updates

If you have not received your "November 2000" directory yet please call Carol Bequette at 229-9661.

Linda Dryden, P.O. Box 404, Clovis 93613

Mallie Y. LaZarr, 2805 Yosemite Blvd, Apt 178, Modesto 95354

Karen Moseley, P.O. Box 26024, Fresno 93729, 432-7143

Cieja Montgomery, 9198 W. Barstow Ave., Fresno 93722

Theresa L. Rogerson, 265-3647

Rebecca Slaton, email address: Rslaton222@aol.com

Marion Young, (559) 855-2438

Still on the Holiday Peace Fair . . .

Appreciation to Pat Wolk, of the raccoon tail hat, for her enthusiastic sale of raffle tickets and to Kevin Hall and the musicians for their joyful sounds.



Pat Wolk sells raffle tickets at the Peace Faire

Photo credit: Zay Guffy Bill

Dr. Marc Lasher receives Temple Beth Israel's 2000 Social Action Award

On Friday, January 26, Dr. Marc Lasher received this prestigious award for commitment to community and the betterment of humankind. Marc is the founder of the Fresno Free Medical Clinic and the Chinatown Family Medicine and Midwifery Medical Office and he is a beloved WILPF member. Congratulations Marc!

WILPF'S On-Line Celebrity Auction

It's back! Because of the holidays the WILPF Celebrity Auction took a break, but now it's up and running again. Special autographed donations to WILPF have been received from celebrities such as Pete Seeger, Holly Near, Adrienne Rich, Tom Lehrer and many more. Every week new items appear. It's easy to do: 1) Log on to <http://www.ebay.com>, 2) type "WILPF" in the box labeled: "What are you looking for?", 3) click "find it!" and go from there. Happy bidding!

Western U.S. Race Rave at UC Santa Cruz, Feb 2-3

Definition of Rave: To talk or write about with enthusiasm.

Race raves are gatherings on college campuses of people concerned about racism. Participants explore racism and the intersections of oppression, promote reparations and healing, and develop the framework for a truth and reconciliation process in the United States. The Western U.S. Race Rave at UCSC will be led by people of color supported by their white allies and involve people of all ages and races. It will include the arts, the spiritual aspects of healing, and inspirational guests who, together with student organizers, will lead discussions that will bring ideas to light and identify solutions to specific ways that racism operates and can be healed within this society.

Race Raves are sponsored by WILPF and Uniting for Racial Justice: Truth, Reparations, Restoration, and Reconciliation (UFORJE). The cost is on a sliding scale \$0-\$100. Bay area WILPF member Chris Ballin is one of the lead organizers for this event. Call Chris at (510) 548-1166 or email her at chrisballin@knobhill.net for more information. There will be a small contingent of Fresno WILPFers heading up on Friday afternoon. Call Zay Guffy-Bill for more information at 227-2133.

Conference examines connection between environmental racism, injustice and the prison industrial complex, Feb 10

Critical Resistance, the California Prison Moratorium Project, the Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice. The Center on Race Poverty and the Environment, Fresno State MEChA, Fresno Branch WILPF, Greenaction for Health and Environmental Justice and the West County Toxics Coalition invite you to a groundbreaking conference examining the connection between environmental racism, environmental injustice and the prison industrial complex; the use of environmental strategies to stop new prisons; and economic development alternatives to prisons.

This important conference takes place at California State University, Fresno from 10a.m.-6:30 p.m. in conference rooms 312-314. Contact Critical Resistance at (510) 444-0484 or email critresist@aol.com for more information.

ERACISM T-shirts for sale

We still have a lot of those wonderful ERACISM T-shirts you've seen community activists wear around town. The cost is \$15.00 for one, \$13.00 each for five or more and \$12.00 each for ten or more. Call Zay at 227-2133 so you can start wearing yours today!

Sorry we goofed!

Sara Hedgepeth Harris is president of the Fresno Unified School District Board of Education, not the County Board of Education. Still a cause for congratulation.

To publish info in the catalyst . . .

Please contact Zay by the 10th of the month (prior to any event you want announced) either by phone: 227-2133 or by email: zaygb@earthlink.net and we'll work very hard to fit it onto this one page.

FRESNO CENTER FOR NONVIOLENCE



AVANTI! The old joke is "Why do we park in a driveway and drive on a parkway?" A similar question is—can you advance at a retreat? Judge for yourself. Here are some issues raised at the Center's annual planning meeting held in January.

THE WELCH REPORT

Jan. 13, 2001

Jack H. Welch, M.D.

It is, I believe, a troubling fact that the Ralph Nader voters in Florida gave the recent election to George W. Bush, abetted by the political action of the US Supreme Court in shutting down the hand recount of Florida votes. Further, reportedly, there was discrimination against black and Hispanic voters in Florida (and elsewhere), allegations that are, properly, being investigated.

It will be incumbent upon those who consider themselves "progressive" to protect some of the actions of the Clinton Administration, which the incoming Bush team no doubt will target, as well as to oppose some of the promises on which Mr. Bush campaigned, e.g., a huge tax cut, Social Security "reform" and National Missile Defense.

The Bush foreign policy team is contemplating radical changes in US nuclear weapons policy, "From MAD to NUTS?", that could set off a global nuclear arms race.

Last spring Mr. Bush spoke of making unilateral cuts in US nuclear forces and taking those forces off hair-trigger alert (both valid steps). He implied that the Cold War doctrine of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD), which spurred the US and the Soviet Union to build thousands of nuclear weapons as a way of ensuring that neither side would dare attack the other, was a "relic" of a bygone era. The President-elect, however, is endorsing the deployment of a massive missile defense program complete with interceptor missiles based on land, sea, and in the air and outer space.

A powerful bloc within the Republican Party has increasingly come to treat negotiated arms control arrangements like the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty of 1972, the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaties (START I and II), and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty as obstacles to US supremacy rather than guarantors of stability in the nuclear sphere. The right-wing rallying cry is "peace through strength, not change through paper", and that could mean shredding two decades of international arms control agreements.

Certain Bush advisors have suggested that the US can significantly reduce the size of its current nuclear arsenal as long as it moves to "modernize" the force by developing low-yield weapons that could be used for such missions as destroying underground command centers or hidden weapons facilities. The premise of this emerging doctrine is a desire to make US nuclear weapons more "usable". At least one sector of American Society will benefit greatly from this dangerous new doctrine: the weapons manufacturers.

In the event of a nuclear exchange prompted by the US use, or threat of use, of such "mini-nukes", the Bush doctrine would trust in our new Star Wars system to protect us. The fact that such a system may never successfully be built does not seem to cool the passions of the new generation of Nuclear Use Theorists (or NUTs, as some call them). The Bush spin control team will wave aside as "old thinking" the fact that this new doctrine of making nuclear weapons more usable might provoke nuclear buildups in Russia and China.

Our voices need to be raised now to demand real nuclear disarmament. Ronald Reagan, a Cold Warrior, ended his terms in office signing onto two major arms reduction treaties, the direct result of pressure brought by the US nuclear freeze campaign, and from European allies and M. Gorbachev in Moscow. It will take a similar US and international outcry now to stop Bush's reckless nuclear doctrine. (For more information see *California Peace Action*, William D. Hartung, World Policy Institute, 20 December '00.)

UMBRELLA: When a 501(c)3 recipient has been needed for grants, we have sometimes served as a fiscal agent for other groups (e.g. The Living Room and Patrick Young's Wheelchair project). Faced with another request to do this, but by a more complex organization, we looked more closely at the fiscal and legal implications of taking this role. With the informed assistance of our new Treasurer, David James, we were able to establish guidelines for our negotiations. (P.S. David is now in business as a financial advisor for non-profits, if other groups are in need of assistance.)

FUNDRAISING & DEVELOPMENT: Board Members Angela Price and Jacqueline Elliot attended workshops, and recommended we begin planning now toward initiating some kind of endowment drive in the near future; and that we begin looking for grants, especially for engaging a paid director. Angela and David agreed to research grant possibilities. Meanwhile Richard Stone has submitted two small grant proposals that would enable him to follow up on opportunities recently opened to work with teens on examining alternatives to violence.

COMMUNITY AND MEDIA OUTREACH: Two perennial questions: how to get our word out, and how to have more impact on our community? Ray Ensher suggests one way is to place people on city and county boards and commissions. Ray has a list of openings. Anyone interested can contact him at 439-8140.

The Center will also be sponsoring an alternative media conference on March 17 (see separate article) to make more visible and coherent the range of options available outside the major outlets. We are also sponsoring two half-hour segments on channel 14 to be hosted by Vince Lavery, as a way to engage those not already in our loop. Possibilities for name and style of the show provided heated discussion as various competing strategies and identities came to the fore. This is obviously a subject in need of much dialogue, and one the Center will be attending to in the next months.

STATE OF THE CENTER: As we looked at what we have accomplished in our 8+ years, we see that we have established ourselves as a facility, as an educational medium and as an agency of linkage and support. We also see that there are innumerable causes and projects we have to pass on for lack of capacity, especially people-power and -time. We are gratified by the monetary support from our donor base: this year again our annual appeal alone brought in close to \$5000. So...we have money for the rent, but lack the ability to tackle issues. How do we successfully solicit time and energy? No answers yet.

HELP WANTED: Vince Lavery and Jackie Elliot have been working to establish the Central Valley Institute, a progressive think tank of experts available to the media for commentary on an array of critical subjects. Jackie has had to take leave, so for the project to move ahead expeditiously, a new collaborator is needed. Requirements include writing and editing skills, perseverance, and delight in making contact with some of the Valley's most innovative thinkers. Call Vince at 439-0821.

Anti-Gap Update

By: Bob Fischer

On the first Saturday of every month, the Gapistas demonstrate against the Gap Inc.'s unfair labor practices in Third World countries, like Saipan, where young girls who have been tricked into involuntary servitude sew its pricey line of clothing. January 6th was no exception, in spite of the fact that Fashion Fair management had rejected our application for access, which was signed by sixteen community groups. The application was turned down because Fashion Fair did not believe that sixteen community groups had actually signed on to the application (in fact, they did!) and because we could not (and would not if we could) give Fashion Fair Security the names of all the people who would come to the demonstration (three weeks before the event!) and because we said that we expected 20 to 30 demonstrators (too many Fashion Fair said) and because our flyer is critical of one of its tenants. (Damned

right it is!)

Undaunted, more than 40 demonstrators showed up to picket legally on the sidewalk on Shaw Avenue beyond the reaches (if not the intense and glaring scrutiny) of Fashion Fair Security Police. The winter sun was shining warmly, and a bunch of new and friendly folks showed up to join the demonstration. Passing motorists waved to us, gave us thumbs up, and created a constant din as they responded cheerfully to our "Honk for Justice" signs. The demonstration received excellent coverage from local television stations. Demonstrating against injustice has never been so popular and so much fun! If you haven't done it yet, you should come join us on February 3rd. You'll be glad you did!

In other news, Mike Rhodes the indefatigable editor of the Labor/Community Alliance talked about the Gap Inc.'s labor practices with Mayor Alan Autry during the Martin Luther King march. What a difference in attitude from Fresno's Chief of Police Ed Winchester! Instead of being protective of involuntary servitude,

and wanting to arrest us for criticizing it, the Mayor is opposed to it. He said he thought clothing sold in America should be made in America, and that it should be made right here in Fresno. The Mayor said he would personally contact Gap Inc. management and tell them "it is unacceptable for them to produce their clothing in sweatshops located in Third World countries." He said, "We will tell them they need to locate those manufacturing facilities right here in Fresno County." He invited Mike to call him for an appointment to talk more about the Gap. Wow! Hooray for Fresno's new mayor! He is obviously a man of conscience and good sense. We are looking forward to talking with him.

The state can't give you free speech, and the state can't take it away. You're born with it, like your eyes, like your ears. Freedom is something you assume, then you wait for someone to try to take it away. The degree to which you resist is the degree to which you are free...

---Utah Phillips

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- * Demonstrate against sweatshops at THE GAP on the first Saturday of each month (see calendar for details)
- * Contribute to THE GAP 20 legal defense fund (C/O The Labor/Community Alliance, P.O. Box 5077, Fresno CA 93755)
- * Come to THE GAP 20 hearings/trial at the Fresno Courthouse.
- * Buy, distribute, and show THE GAP 20 video (call George Ballis at 855-3710 for details)

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FOUR REASONS TO COME TO THE FRESNO PEDESTRIAN SAFETY FORUM

Fresno is growing, as are many other places in California. Yet the recent developments in the Fresno-Clovis region are tilted in favor of those who can afford to drive further out into the suburbs, often at the expense of older, more walkable neighborhoods in the urban core. When neighborhoods are not designed to be walkable, we have to drive to get everywhere, worsening air quality, increasing traffic congestion, and increasing social and economic costs to the public. Furthermore, there is a social equity issue: the victims of pedestrian accidents themselves are often from disadvantaged groups.

1: We are all paying for the public cost of pedestrian accidents.

In 1999 hospitalization charges for pedestrian accidents alone exceeded \$200 million, direct economic costs totaled \$1.3 billion when factoring in additional medical, work loss and property damage, and total costs soared to over \$3.9 billion when factoring in lost quality of life including pain and suffering.

2: Lack of safe places to walk forces more people to drive, adding to traffic congestion.

We have been building schools, parks, and community centers on major arterials where children must dodge speeding cars, or be chauffeured by their parents. So many parents drive their kids to school that in many areas the home-to-school trip accounts for 20 to 25 percent of rush hour traffic. As more traffic increases, more families decide they'll drive because it's unsafe to walk, even if our destination is just a few blocks away from home. It's a domino effect created by our zoning patterns, forcing us to drive everywhere.

3: Mobile sources of pollution, mainly from cars, is the number one cause of air pollution in the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin.

Contrary to what some people may think, most of the air pollution in this region is not blown in from somewhere else, but is home grown. In Fresno, Madera and Kings Counties, 11% of the air pollution is transported from somewhere else, while the rest is locally produced, much of it coming from vehicles. The air quality in the San Joaquin Valley is among the worst in the state, averaging 35-40 days when we exceed the federal health-based standards for ground-level ozone and more than 100 days over the state ozone standard, according to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. It's so bad that the Valley is currently classified by both the state and federal government as a severe non-attainment area.

4: Pedestrian accident victims are often from the most vulnerable groups such as the elderly or children, or economically disadvantaged groups that do not have cars and must rely on walking, biking, or public transit to get around.

When we look at the victims we find that Latinos and African Americans, children, the elderly, and low-income groups are at the highest risk from pedestrian-vehicle collisions.

While 30 percent of the population of California is Latino, they accounted for 37 percent of all hospitalized pedestrian fatalities and injuries in 1998. Americans, 7 percent of the population, accounted for an additional 10 percent of hospitalizations. Furthermore, 35 percent of all hospitalized pedestrian victims under 65 in California were low-income Medi-Cal recipients, while just 11 percent of the general population under the age of 65 receives Medi-Cal.

Being hit and killed by a car is now the second leading cause of fatal injury and the fourth leading cause of hospitalized injury for California children aged 5 to 12. In fact, pedestrian injuries account for two-thirds of all severe traffic-related injuries among children, and that the probability of a child dying or becoming severely disabled exceeds that

of all other causes of childhood illness.

Finally, 22 percent of all pedestrians killed were over 65, even though only 13 percent of the population is elderly.

BE A PART OF THE SOLUTION

Join community leaders and members at the Fresno Pedestrian Safety Forum on March 9th, 2001 to participate in positive dialogue and to also build consensus to solve pedestrian safety problems in the region. Also included in this forum will be a presentation by Dan Burden, a national expert on walkable communities and traffic calming methods. For more information or to register for this event, please contact Julie Rosenberg at 415.956.7835 or at jrosenberg@transact.org.

A report by the Latino Issues Forum and the Surface Transportation Policy Project entitled "Dangerous by Design," from which information for this article was gathered, is online at www.transact.org/ca/.

ALTERNATIVE MEDIA CONFERENCE

Have you had trouble getting your event listed (no less covered) in The Bee? Tired of 30-second film clips of the most amusing element of your demo, with no explanation of why people were there? Wondering if there are other ways to let people know what you're up to?

You're not alone. So why don't all of us in this same "boat" meet together?

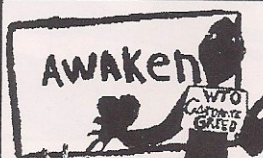
Finding no good reason why not, the Fresno Center for Nonviolence is sponsoring an all-day "alternative media conference" to be held on March 17. We are sending invitations to several progressive organizations and to a wide range of people who provide venues for public information--from print journals to e-mail networks, from radio shows to politically-tinged music events. If you don't get an invitation, you're still invited. Call Gunnar Jensen at 264-6059, or Richard Stone at 266-2559 for information. And see next month's LCA for more details.

Celebrate • Inform • Inspire

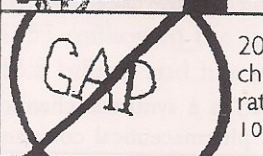
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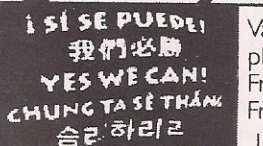
Herewith 3 samples. You can check these and others out by renting them from The Movies video store in Fresno. If you're hot to trot, buy them there or directly from SunMt.



Street theater, teach-ins, protests and civil disobedience shut down the Seattle WTO. 32 minutes
\$30 for unrich persons and unfunded community groups;
\$125 for all others



20 are arrested at Fresno's Fashion Fair challenging GAP sweatshops and corporate greed.
10 minutes \$20 and \$80



Valley union Carpenters rally against exploitation of workers and low quality on Fresno housing tracts. Demand action by Fresno City Council.
10 minutes \$20 and \$80

Checks to: SunMt, 3575 I Oak Springs, Tollhouse, CA 93667 559 855-3710

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EL SALVADOR EARTHQUAKE RELIEF

The Fresno Salvadorean Community is raising money to help the people of El Salvador, after the 7.6 earthquake that occurred January 13. Luis Melendez, who has worked with many progressive community groups in the Fresno area (including the Labor/

Community Alliance), will be going to El Salvador to hand deliver contributions where they are most needed.

Luis is from El Salvador but moved to Fresno during that country's civil war in the 1980's. If you would like to help, send your donation to -C.B.A.Comunidad Salvadorena, located at 1048 "E" St. Fresno, Ca 93706.



The people of El Salvador need your help.

Photo Credit: Mike Rhodes

Recently a black-robed figure with a death-head mask has appeared in Fresno. Patty Ford is the woman behind the mask and the article which follows explains what she is protesting and why.

THE DISEASE OF THE 21TH CENTURY - ASPARTAME DISEASE?

It looks like sugar and is 200 times sweeter than sugar, so how come ants won't eat it?

Aspartame (trade name NutraSweet) is a synthetic chemical additive developed by the G.D. Searle pharmaceutical company. It is now found in over 5,000 different products – most notably in diet soft drinks but also in toothpastes, childrens vitamins, and prescription and over-the-counter medications. Aspartame is composed of three ingredients which are natural, but are never found together in nature in such a combination. It is composed of two amino acids, phenylalanine (50%) and aspartic acid (40%), as well as methyl alcohol, a.k.a. methanol or wood alcohol (moonshine.)



Photo Credit: Mike Rhodes

Aspartame Politics

During the early 1970s, Searle submitted the results of more than 100 tests to persuade the Federal Drug Administration that Aspartame was safe. However, during the FDA's approval deliberations, several scientists raised serious questions about the sweetener's safety. As a result, the agency created a public board of inquiry to audit the Searle tests. The board recommended against approving Aspartame (www.dorway.com/pboi.txt).

In recommending against approval, the board said Searle's studies were scientifically deficient and did not demonstrate reasonable safety. For over eight years the FDA refused to approve Aspartame because of the seizures and brain tumors it produced in lab animals. The FDA continued to refuse to approve it until President Reagan took office and appointed Dr. Arthur Hull Hayes as FDA commissioner. Commissioner Hayes overruled his own Board of Inquiry and approved the use of Aspartame in dry foods (1981, www.dorway.com/enclosur.html). In 1983 Aspartame was approved for use in carbonated beverages against the advice of the National Soft Drink Association (www.dorway.com/nsda.html). Shortly thereafter Hayes left for a position with G.D. Searle's Public Relations firm, Burson Marsteller for \$1,000 a day. In 1985 Monsanto Corporation purchased Searle.

Aspartame in the Body

Free methanol is created from aspartame when it is heated to above 86 Fahrenheit. This would occur when an Aspartame-containing product is improperly stored or when it is heated (e.g., as part of a "food" product). The absorption of methanol into the body is sped up considerably when free methanol is ingested. According to the EPA, methanol "is considered a cumulative poison due to the low rate of excretion once it is absorbed. In the

(Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 12)

body, methanol is oxidized to formaldehyde (embalming fluid) and formic acid (the venom in ant stings); both of these metabolites are toxic." The recommended EPA limit of methanol consumption is 7.8 mg/day. (One 12-ounce can of most aspartame-sweetened soft drinks contain about 10mg. of methanol.) The FDA average daily intake for aspartame was set at 50mg./kg of body weight. One diet soda contains 200mg. According to Dr Woodrow C. Monte, Director of the Food Science and Nutrition Laboratory at Arizona State University, "Due to the lack of a couple of key enzymes, humans are many times more sensitive to the toxic effects of methanol than animals. Therefore, tests of aspartame or methanol on animals do not accurately reflect the danger for humans."

There are no human or mammalian studies to evaluate the possible mutagenic, teratogenic, or carcinogenic effects of chronic administration of methyl alcohol" (www.dorway.com/monte84/txt). While fruit juices and alcoholic beverages contain small amounts of methanol, the methanol in natural products never appears alone. In every case, ethanol is present, usually in higher amounts. Ethanol is an antidote for methanol toxicity in humans.

In 1993 the FDA approved aspartame as an ingredient in numerous food items that would always be heated to above 86° degrees F (30° Degrees C). On 27 June 1996, the FDA removed all restrictions from aspartame allowing it to be used in everything, including all heated and baked goods.

In February of 1994, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services released the listing of 92 adverse reactions reported to the FDA. Aspartame accounted for more than 75% of all adverse reactions reported to the FDA's Adverse Reaction Monitoring System. By the FDA's own admission fewer than ONE PERCENT of those who have problems with something they consume ever report it to the FDA. The top 3 adverse reactions are headache, dizziness or problems with balance and mood changes (www.dorway.com/symptom.txt).

Diabetic specialist H. J. Roberts M.D. published findings of more than 500 cases of aspartame-induced illnesses in "Aspartame (NutraSweet) Is it Safe?" in which he states "aspartame is potentially dangerous and may produce a wide variety of physical and mental symptoms, most of which go unrecognized or are misinterpreted as serious illnesses" (www.dorway.com/hjrbio.html).

For a list of peer reviewed references see www.dorway.com/peerrefs.txt

Patty Ford is the founder of "Conscious Eating Seminars" *a grassroots healing movement. She can be heard every Saturday morning @ 8am on KIRV - 1510 am warning Fresnoans about the dangers of ASPARTAME. (559) 325-9483 Pager: 489-9323 / www.getprimed.bigstep.com

PATIENCE MILROD

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HEY FRESNO - CHECK IT OUT STIR IT UP!

programs produced by local activists.

Every Wednesday from 3:30-4 PM on KFCF 88.1 FM

1st Wed. of the month: Hosted by Pam Whalen of the Labor/Community Alliance. A program focusing on labor organizing, workplace issues and immigration.

2nd: Hosted by Richard Stone and Vincent Lavery of the Fresno Center for Non-Violence. A program looking at issues concerning peace, social justice, health and community relations at the local and regional level.

3rd: Called the 'Green Scene' and hosted by Theresia Rogerson and Jeremy Hofer of the Fresno County Green Party and the Fresno Coalition Against the Misuse of Pesticides (FresCAMP), this program focuses on Green values, including ecological wisdom, social justice and grass roots democracy.

4th: Hosted by Zay Guffy-Bill and Lauralee Carbone of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. The program will cover issues with local impacts and activities concerning national and international politics, economics and human rights.



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SLEEPING BAG PROJECT

By: Jean Chipp, Coordinator, The Sleeping Bag Project

The Sleeping Bag Project was started six years ago by Mark Metzler and the Quaker Peace and Social Justice Concerns Committee. It is now sponsored by the Fresno Free College Foundation and has a tax-exempt status for donations. Its main purpose is to provide sleeping bags and/or blankets for the homeless during the cold wet winter months.

The Sleeping Bag Project has focused on supplying bags to social service type groups that can provide comprehensive services to help with their underlying problems instead of just giving them a sleeping bag. We've given to eight different organizations for distribution to the homeless. They include FOOD NOT BOMBS, Povarello House, Holy Cross Center for Women, The Veteran's Crisis Program, The Sanctuary, V.A. Hospital Mental Health Clinic, Lighthouse of Hope (a religious group serving food by the Povarello House last year) and the Biola Help Center.

It is estimated that 2,000 people live outdoors in Fresno County. That figure could be much higher and may also include migrant workers. We've averaged giving out about 100 bags and 60 blankets each year. Obviously, there are still a lot of people that are cold out there.

All donations of sleeping bags, blankets or money with which to buy them will be gratefully appreciated. For donation information please call 488-6545. Checks may be made payable to THE SLEEPING BAG PROJECT, 727 W. Yale, Fresno, CA 93705.

YOU CAN FIND THE LABOR/COMMUNITY ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

African-American Museum
1857 Fulton Street in
Fresno

Arte Americas
1630 Van Ness Ave.

California Teachers Assn.
5330 N. Fresno

Catholic Charities
149 N. Fulton Ave.

Centro Bellas Artes
1048 E Street

Colegio Popular
R and Mariposa Streets

Peace and Conflict Studies
CSU, Fresno

Laborers Union
1805 Tucker St. in Selma

Hart's Haven Bookstore
950 N. Van Ness Ave.

Fresno Center for
Nonviolence
985 N Van Ness

Pan Valley Institute
1440 W. Shaw Ave

Radio Bilingue
Belmont & Willow Ave.

SEIU local 250
3485 W. Shaw

The Movies
1435 N. Van Ness

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AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE A PARTICIPANT INSTEAD OF JUST AN OBSERVER IN FRESNO COUNTY AND CITY GOVERNMENT

By: Ray Ensher

There is an old adage that many citizens complain but few are willing to participate.

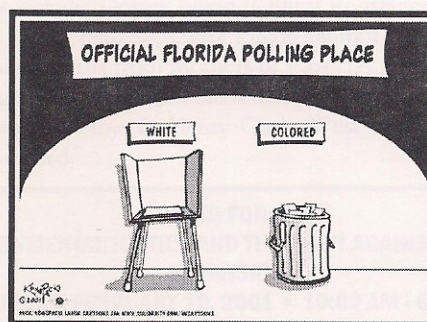
The beginning of a new year brings an opportunity for citizens to change that by their willingness to serve a few hours per month on the various Boards and Commissions on the Fresno County and City governmental levels. A citizen can pick and choose from those boards and commissions of which they have a profound interest. Many of these bodies have closed shop or are inactive because enough citizens are not interested to fill vacancies. For example, on the county level the child care and development planning council has 9 positions open. Historical landmark advisory & records commission 8, law library board of trustees 7, human resources advisory board 12, water advisory committee 10, and workforce investment board 9. In addition to these, there are still some 30 other boards, commissions or advisory bodies with vacancies. Descriptions and more information on these citizen positions (some pay) can be secured by contacting the County Clerk's office at the Hall of Records (Courthouse Park) or calling 488-3529. A citizen can also contact their County Supervisor for positions available.

On the city level there are some 43 commission or advisory board openings including the Planning Commission, West Area

Community Plan, Parking Authority, Housing Authority, Commission on the Status of Women, Clean Air Advisory Board, Apartment Vacancy Task Force, Human Relations Commission and all of the Neighborhood Planning Advisory Councils. Contact the Fresno City Clerk at 498-1321; ask for Cindy for information and application forms. Also one should contact their city council member regarding openings, since most of the time they would submit your name for council and/or mayoral approval.

An investigation by concerned citizens including Barbara Pyle, Ray Ensher, Jose Barraza, and Harriet Ingram revealed the lack of information on citizen participation positions. In speaking with several supervisors and council members they felt a better job could be done to get the word out. The committee appeared before the City Council and Supervisors in January to encourage citizens to participate in their government. There has been positive feedback. Both the city and county wish to cooperate in a more up-to-date citizen information network.

To secure a complete listing of county and city openings send a self-addressed envelope in C/O Citizen Positions, 364 W Vartikian Ave, Fresno Ca 93704-1549 or call 439-8140.



INTERNET WEB SITES OF LOCAL INTEREST:

Patrick Young's Wheelchair Project now has a web site:
<http://www.WheelchairProject.org/>

The Fresno County Green Party has a web site at:
<http://www.greens.org/cal/fresno>

Planned Parenthood in Fresno: <http://www.ppmarmonte.org>

National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights: <http://www.nnirr.org>

The Great Valley Center: <http://www.greatvalley.org>

The Labor/Community Alliance is a member of the Jobs with Justice coalition:
<http://www.igc.apc.org/jwj/>

A directory of ethnic media in the Central Valley:
<http://www.ncmonline.com/ncm-directory-new/index.html>

Food Not Bombs is an international network of volunteers who serve free hot vegetarian food to low income people, and offer political support. See the Fresno chapters new web site at: <http://www.fresnoalliance.com/FNB/>

The Campaign for Labor Rights has good information on sweatshop campaigns: <http://www.summersault.com/~agj/clr/>

Labor Notes, the progressive labor monthly newspaper:
<http://www.labornotes.org>

Agustin Lira & musical group Alma provides music for the movement:
<http://www.home.earthlink.net/~almas2/>

Fresno Folklore Society: <http://home.pacbell.net/ckjohns/>

Fresno's Fine & Folk Arts Journal: <http://www.lineonline.org>

Sun Mountain: <http://www.psnw.com/%7Esunmt/index.html>

Frente Indigena Oaxaqueno Binacional:
<http://www.laneta.apc.org/fiob/>

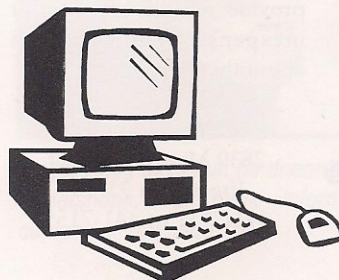
Fresno/Telpaneca Sister City Association (Nicaragua):
<http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Lake/1441/index.htm>

Radio Bilingue: <http://www.radiobilingue.org/>

KFCF 88.1 FM: <http://www.kfcf.org>

The Fresno Community Radio Coalition has a new web site that can be found at: <http://www.fresnoalliance.com/crc/>

The Living Room: <http://www.aplacetobelong.org>



Fresno Area Substitute Teachers Association (FASTA):
<http://www.geocities.com/athens/oracle/4802/index.htm>

United Farm Workers of America:
<http://www.ufw.org/>

Labor/Community Alliance

P.O. Box 5077

Fresno, CA 93755

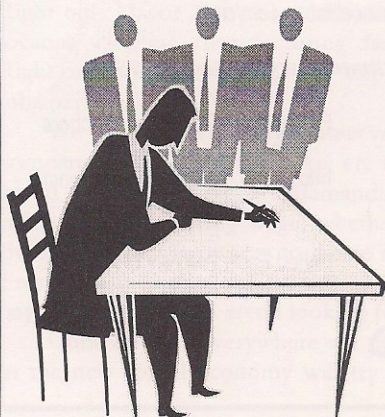
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NEW IMMIGRATION LAW WILL HELP FEW IN THE VALLEY

Outgoing President Clinton held up the budget process for several weeks to get some liberalization of the U.S. immigration policies that leave millions of workers without legal status. Most workers will remain without any immediate prospects to become legal residents.

There were, however, a few changes in the law that will help specific individuals. There is, for example, a temporary restoration of 245(i) for 4 months, a creation of a provision V visas, and help for some who qualified under the 1982 Amnesty law.



The following is a list of reputable non-profit organizations that will provide reliable and free or inexpensive information about these changes:

Colegio Popular
2839 Mariposa Street
Fresno Ca 93721
441-7131 or 441-7155

Concilio Immigration Project
1532 Fresno St
Fresno Ca 93706
485-0679

Catholic Charities
149 N Fulton Street
Fresno Ca 93701
264-6400

Menonite Central Committee
1010 G Street
Reedley Ca 93654
638-6911

Reedley Social Services
1133 G Street
Reedley Ca 93654
638-4479

Coalition For Immigrant Rights
2014 Tulare Street suite 716
Fresno Ca 93721
490-1087

The fight for a real amnesty law continues. If you would like to help please attend the next meeting of the Amnesty Coalition of the San Joaquin Valley, Tuesday, February 6 at 6 PM at the Center for Non-Violence, 985 N Van Ness.