

Labor/Community ALLIANCE

February 2002

© SunMit all rights reserved photo: George Elie Ballis



IN THE SPIRIT OF
MARTIN LUTHER
KING JR.

equality for all

FOOD GREAT
NOT OUTDOORS
BOMBS PEOPLE

Whenever you are engaged
in work that serves humanity
it has dignity and it has worth.

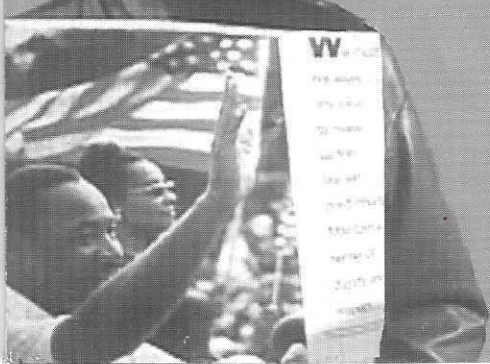
M.L.A. in Memphis, Tennessee, 1964

JOBS WITH JUSTICE

*“To end humiliation was a start,
but to end poverty is a bigger task.”*

— Martin Luther King Jr.

See a thousand of us marching...page 3



OUR PEOPLE SPEAK

Adopt Barbara Lee as our rep.

The adoption by us of Barbara Lee as our congressperson (at large). It is not a new approach.

Decades ago millions of Blacks adopted congressman Adam Clayton Powell, Jr as their congress person. If you wanted something. If you were wronged, You contacted him — and you got action. Your writer escaped several general court martials arising out of defiance of racism because of the efforts of Powell and Mrs. Roosevelt.

Barbara Lee will do no less.

Politically, it will strengthen the peace movement if there is a demonstrated wider constituency for Mrs. Lee.

Write Barbara at: House Office Building
Washington, D.C.

Send her \$25 for her campaign this year.
—Len Holt

Our fraternal twin has new name, CAFÉ

The Labor/Community Alliance (activist organization) has decided to change its name to Community Alliance for a Fair Economy (CAFÉ). This magazine welcomes CAFÉ and looks forward to working with them in the continuing struggle for social and economic justice.

WOMEN BUILDING HOUSES AND COMMUNITY

More than 100 Fresno-area women are building a Habitat for Humanity house at the Habitat Crossroads subdivision at Fruit and Jensen Avenues. We're having a great time learning how to build a house, laughing at our mistakes and cheering our successes. All women are invited to join us. We work every Saturday and some weekdays on the house. We need workers at all skill levels; we also need building materials and money. You can buy a t-shirt for \$10. Call Susan Arpad (228-1867) or Robin Goldbeck (435-8003) or susanar@csufresno.edu

Labor/Community ALLIANCE

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

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Arte Americas: staid museum or vibrant cultural center??

Not many people are aware that a real controversy is taking place at Arte Americas between artists, concerned community members, and Teresa Dias, the new director for the organization.

For 15 years Arte has served, enlightened and educated the community through its various presentations and programs; this is about to end forever, if Teresa Dias has her wicked way. She has begun a campaign to change the mission of Arte from a cultural center to that of a museum. Doesn't sound very dangerous does it? But it is!

Teresa has the backing of several vicious, ignorant and uncaring board members, Maria Gutierrez, Daniela Lopez, Silvia Savala, Enrique Lopez and others who would rather see only paintings hanging from the walls of the ancient, bank building, instead of having a vibrant, alive cultural center with a myriad of activities taking place; a center chock full of artists from all disciplines teaching and passing on the arts to the different generations, a place that acts and interacts with the community and truly represents it.

In the period of a few months Teresa has angered, attacked, conspired against and driven out people from Arte Americas who do not share her twisted vision.

A natural protest began to grow from those whom she had berated and humiliated and these individuals wrote to the board of directors demanding to be heard.

The board finally responded and instead of firing her on the spot for her insensitivity and foul deeds, granted her a 90 day period in which she has to straighten up and fly right. In other

words, they spanked her hand and turned the deranged fox loose inside the henhouse where the blood is still fresh.

Patricia Wells Solorzano and I have taught a multitude of classes ranging from guitar to solo singing, and we have performed many, many musical presentations with and without our students since the foundation of Arte Americas.

In short, we have rallied for, raised money and consciousness, and have defended the mission of said organization and we are proud to admit that it has been our Casa de la Cultura, our home.

Teresa arrived in Fresno some months ago and she has control of the entire building. Neither Patricia or I are trusted enough yet to be given a key to the place.

Two weeks ago I went to Arte to teach my guitar classes and was once again locked out of the building by Teresa. Standing out in the cold, knocking on the window, I realized that things must change here at Arte Americas, that the people who believe in it must fight for it tooth and nail, just as Teresa's supporters defend her evil plan.

Please help us get our cultural center back from the hands of the corporate wolves. For more information call 237-3016. Several surprises are being planned at this time.

If you would like to voice your opinion call Arte Americas at 266-2623 and tell Teresa and her supporters that Arte Americas is a cultural center, and should not be turned into only a museum.

Viva la Causa! —Augustin Lira



Over 1,000 of us marched, chanted, and sang in Fresno's Martin Luther King Day parade this year. Organized labor and community groups united in what some local activists say is the largest manifestation of a labor/community alliance this city has ever seen.

SEIU 250 was in the forefront of the alliance bringing out over 100 home health care workers to the march. Other visible unions were the United Farm Workers, Carpenters, Shepherders, SEIU local 1000, and the AFGE federal employees..

Food not Bombs activist Dallas Blanchard said that "the theme of this year's march is economic and social justice and that is why so many people have come out this year. I think that in previous years they have not put enough emphasis on labor rights and building a poor peoples movement. This year was different!"

The Fresno City garbage truck in the middle of the march showed everyone just how different this march was from past events. The truck was a symbol of the struggle Martin Luther King was engaged in when he was assassinated. He was in Memphis Tennessee to support sanitation workers in their struggle for better pay and working conditions. The dignity of all workers and the struggle for a "living wage" was woven throughout the march.

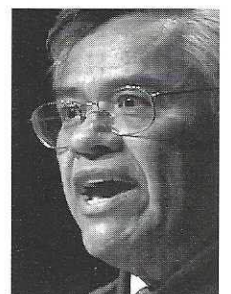
Dolores Huerta from the United Farm Workers Union rallied participants at the start of the march by reminding them that Martin Luther King's dream continues. The struggle today is for a living wage, health care for all, and to stand up for gay and lesbian rights. Dolores said that "if you don't have a cause that is worth dying for, you are already dead."

Marchers were joined by a large group of Shriners, girl scouts, school children, and even a marching band from Edison High School. Also prominent in the march were Fresno's peace activists. There were lots of signs saying UNITED AGAINST WAR. Paul Jackson said he came to the march to send a message.

Paul said "Martin Luther King was against the Vietnam war and I think we have a parallel situation in Afghanistan where innocent lives are being lost." Paul and others were there to talk to fellow marchers about justice not vengeance.

At the Memorial Auditorium SEIU Vice President Eliseo Medina addressed the crowd. He said:

"If Dr. King were alive today that he would talk about why workers should be treated with respect and dignity, that they should be paid a living wage so that they don't have to work at 2 or 3 jobs just to survive. Dr. King would remind us that while this is the richest nation in the world we still have 44 million people without adequate health insurance...that it is wrong for the United States Congress to give away billions of dollars to wealthy corporations...while refusing assistance to hundreds of thousands of workers who are off the job following September 11."

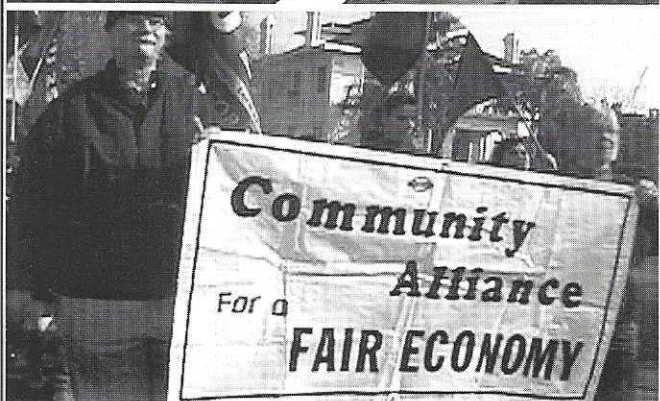


Eliseo Medina

Loudest cheer of the day came after these words.

The Martin Luther King organizing committee is to be congratulated on making events this year more relevant to today's world. The decision to put an emphasis on social economic justice should continue. We don't need George Radanovich or other politicians to tell us how they are "Living the Dream." We need speakers like Dolores and Eliseo who will speak truth to power.

Buy inspiring, educational docu-poem video of King events — garlanding, awards, candlelight vigil, breakfast, march. By prize-winning Sun/Mt team, Maia & George Elfie Ballis. 888 303-0103. Credit cards OK. March delivery.



WILD UTAH comes to town

**Thursday
February 7
7:30pm
Unitarian
Church**
4144 N. Millbrook
Fresno

**Tuesday
February 19
7:30pm
Oakhurst
Library**
49044 Civic Circle
Oakhurst

**Wild Utah:
America's
Redrock
Wilderness**
is a multi-media
slideshow docu-
menting citizen
efforts to des-
ignate public
lands in south-
ern Utah's spec-

Photo by Scott Smith

tacular canyon country as Wilderness under the 1964 Wilderness Act. This 20-minute journey through redrock splendor invigorates and motivates viewers to participate in the movement to protect these unique lands. Wild Utah was made possible through the generous donation of photos, music and words from concerned Utahns who wish to pass this heritage onto future generations, including a special reading by Pulitzer Prize winning author Wallace Stegner from his famous Wilderness Letter.

In conjunction with a 30 minute presentation on the current status of the Utah wilderness movement by Bob Brister, Outreach Associate of the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, this inspirational and informational event is a must see for citizen's wishing to become personally involved to make the difference in this tremendous American public lands conservation effort.

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Fresno



Rev. Bryan D. Jessup

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

Sermon Topics:

February 3 The Reality of Evil
February 10 Who Are We Kidding?
February 17 Gifts From the Heart of Rumi
February 24 What UU's Need to Know About
Euthanasia Speaker: Rev. David Pettee

Sunday Services & Church School 9:15 and 11:00
4144 N. Millbrook Fresno, CA 93726
(559) 227-6146

An alternative movie house is in the works for Fresno. Fresno Filmworks has been raising money, gaining non-profit status, surveying likely locales and otherwise doing the groundwork toward creating a theater that will show movies otherwise not available in Fresno.



FRESNOFILMWORKS

logo design by Michael Parola

An initial fundraiser at the home of Lillian Faderman convinced the fledgling group there is a wealth of support for such a theater. The participants are interested in creating a theater that is an art house, and more than an art house. FFW does not want to mimic any other alternative theater but is looking closely at the ones that have worked elsewhere and is coming up with a vision unique to Fresno.

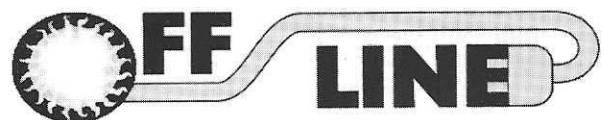
The expectation is that Fresno artists will contribute mightily to the design, architecture and visual experience of the theater. A small coffee shop/cafe will offer locally grown food, hard-core coffee, and space for movie talk and political plots. Most important, the group hopes to show movies that will excite and incite, movies that touch the many communities who come together in Fresno, and movies that are beautiful to watch.

Board of FFW will be made up of members chosen by the board and by membership of the theater, plus an advisory board chosen from the leadership of community groups. FFW is now a sponsored organization of the Fresno Arts Council. The group is working with the Fresno Art Museum to show movies and meet the community at the Bonner Auditorium once monthly for next year. You will hear about us!

If you are interested in joining FFW or in making a tax-deductible donation, or both, call 221-0755, or send your email address, phone numbers, fax numbers, address and name to FFW, PO Box 4555, Fresno, CA 93744. All checks should be made out to the Fresno Arts Council/FFW.

ADMIT ONE
FRONT ROW

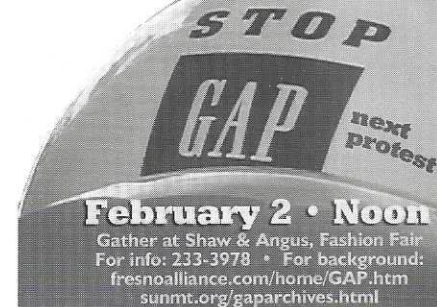
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Outside cold honking; inside warm free speech

by Bob Fischer

The turnout for the January protest against the GAP was unusually small, probably because schools were on Winter Break, and the weather was very cold.

Nevertheless, a faithful number showed up and persevered through two hours of shivering, waving and shouting "thank-you" to drivers who by now are so conditioned that they honk reflexively when they drive by Fashion Fair on the first Saturday afternoon of the month.

(We also had folks INSIDE the mall passing out anti-sweatshop flyers. A clear step forward for free speech.)

The Labor/Community Alliance Magazine is asking other community groups to take responsibility for the anti-sweatshop demonstrations.

Chanah Cossman, CNM
Nurse-Midwife
Prenatal and Newborn Care

Enfermera Partera
Cuidado Prenatal y de Bebé



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GAP is suicidal

The Fresno County Green Party has agreed to organize three of the monthly protests during the coming year, March, November and one summer month.

The February 2nd demonstration will be only an hour long, from 12 to 1 (because of the cold.)

The demonstration is being organized by Fresno's Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

At their next meeting the WILPF will consider organizing more of the monthly demonstrations. Protests directed at the GAP in Europe, Japan and the U.S. have developed a momentum that carries the anti-sweatshop message further with each passing month.

For the 25th month in a row, GAP, Inc. has seen its sales drop. In December, a month that is crucial to retailers, GAP, Inc.'s sales fell 11.0% from the same month a year ago!

If GAP, Inc. changes its labor practices, all working people win. If it does not, it commits suicide. Either way, the anti-GAP demonstrations will not be needed much longer.

McTaggart Irish
band, singers, dancers
benefit jig for
Alliance mag

**Come & dance our
socks off. Prizes for
those who can
actually do it.**

March 15 7:30 pm
Unitarian Church

\$10
\$5 low income
For tickets:
233-3978

Alliance fun\$\$ raiser

Sing-alongs, dance-alongs. Foot-stomping Irish step dancing. Haunting melodies from the Old Country. Under the leadership of Kevin Hall, the group is donating this party to keep our magazine vital — and have fun. More details next month.

Women's ACCESS needs coordinator

ACCESS is looking for a local coordinator for their volunteer Practical Support Network.

ACCESS is an organization out of Oakland, CA that was created in 1993 to improve every woman's access to comprehensive, quality reproductive health care.

Women face all kinds of practical obstacles to getting timely reproductive health care: money, time, distance, lack of childcare, a language barrier, bureaucratic indifference. Practical Support volunteers help women with these obstacles.

ACCESS provides a toll-free hotline connecting callers to complete and confidential information, referrals and support for birth control, abortion, prenatal care and more. Fresno is the about the only place between Los Angeles and the Bay Area where women can receive such services.

If you would be interested in acting as coordinator between referrals from ACCESS and local volunteers or would like to be a Practical Support volunteer please contact: *Vickie Fouts* 658-8260 or *Diane Scott* 222-6135.

"Sentiment without action is the ruin of the soul." "Sentimiento sin acción es la destrucción del alma."

— Edward Abbey



Stonewall Demos to hear candidates February 7, Fresno

by Robin Greiner

The Fresno Stonewall Democrats Club has invited all candidates running for Fresno City, County and State-wide offices to attend a Candidates Night Forum on Thursday February 7, 2002, at the Ted C. Wills Community Center, 770 N. San Pablo Avenue in Fresno. The Forum will commence at 7 pm and conclude at 10 pm.

All Candidates will be asked to respond to questions presented by moderators who have been selected by the Candidates Night Forum Steering Committee.

We hope they will accept this invitation and engage with the GLBT community. Population demographics suggest a Central Valley GLBT population in excess of 40,000 citizens whose political interests are as diverse as the demographics they comprise.

A list of California Assembly and Senate Legislative Bills of interest to the gay and lesbian community that were introduced during the three most recent annual sessions in Sacramento were included in the invitation, for the candidates reference and review.

For additional information, contact Fresno Stonewall democrats President, *Jay Hubbell*, 559-292-4905 or email at hubbell@online.no



Vote March 5, 2002

For

★★★ **Nuel Brown** ★★★

Democratic Central Committee

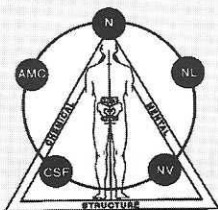
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The Central Valley Partnership's Civic Action Network is proud to present . . .

The First Annual

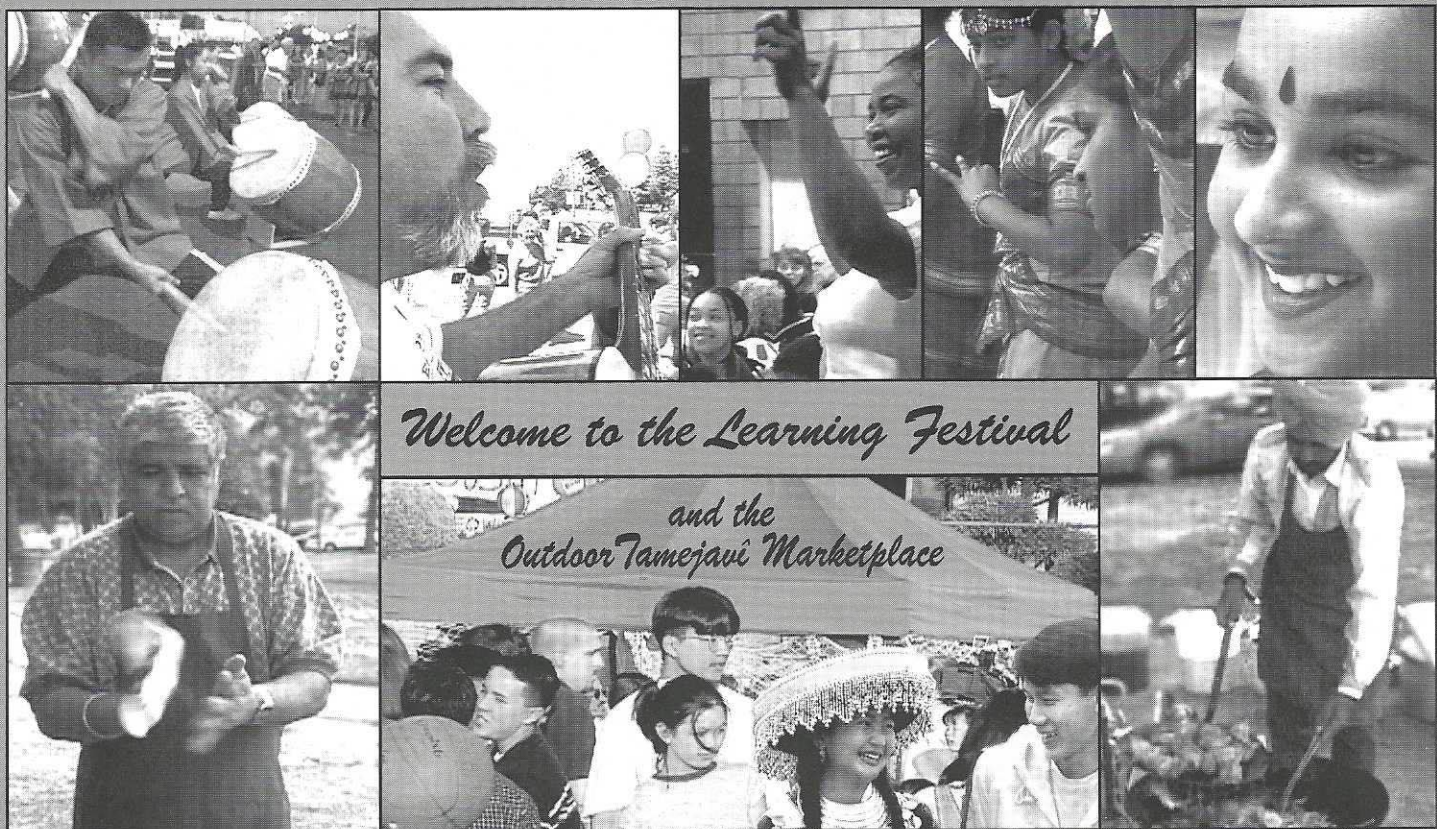
Tamejavu Festival

Building Community Through Cultural Exchange

April 26-28, 2002 • Tower Theater, Fresno, CA



Join us in celebrating the life, struggles and contributions of all immigrant communities in California's great Central Valley.



We invite you to participate in a **LEARNING FESTIVAL** featuring:

- An outdoor Tamejavu marketplace for the whole family.

Tamejavu is derived from the Hmong, Spanish, and Mixteco words for a cultural harvest market: Taj Laj Tshav Puam, Mercado, and Nunjavu merge together and become TAMEJAVU! A place where cultures meet, share stories, food, art, songs and dance and gain a deeper understanding of one another.

- Networking opportunities for local and regional civic participation projects.
- Music, theater, multi-media, poetry and art showcases that build the public voice, pride and recognition of a diversity of valley cultures.
- Interactive "Learning Labs" that provide opportunities to learn from one another and experiment with new approaches to building community.

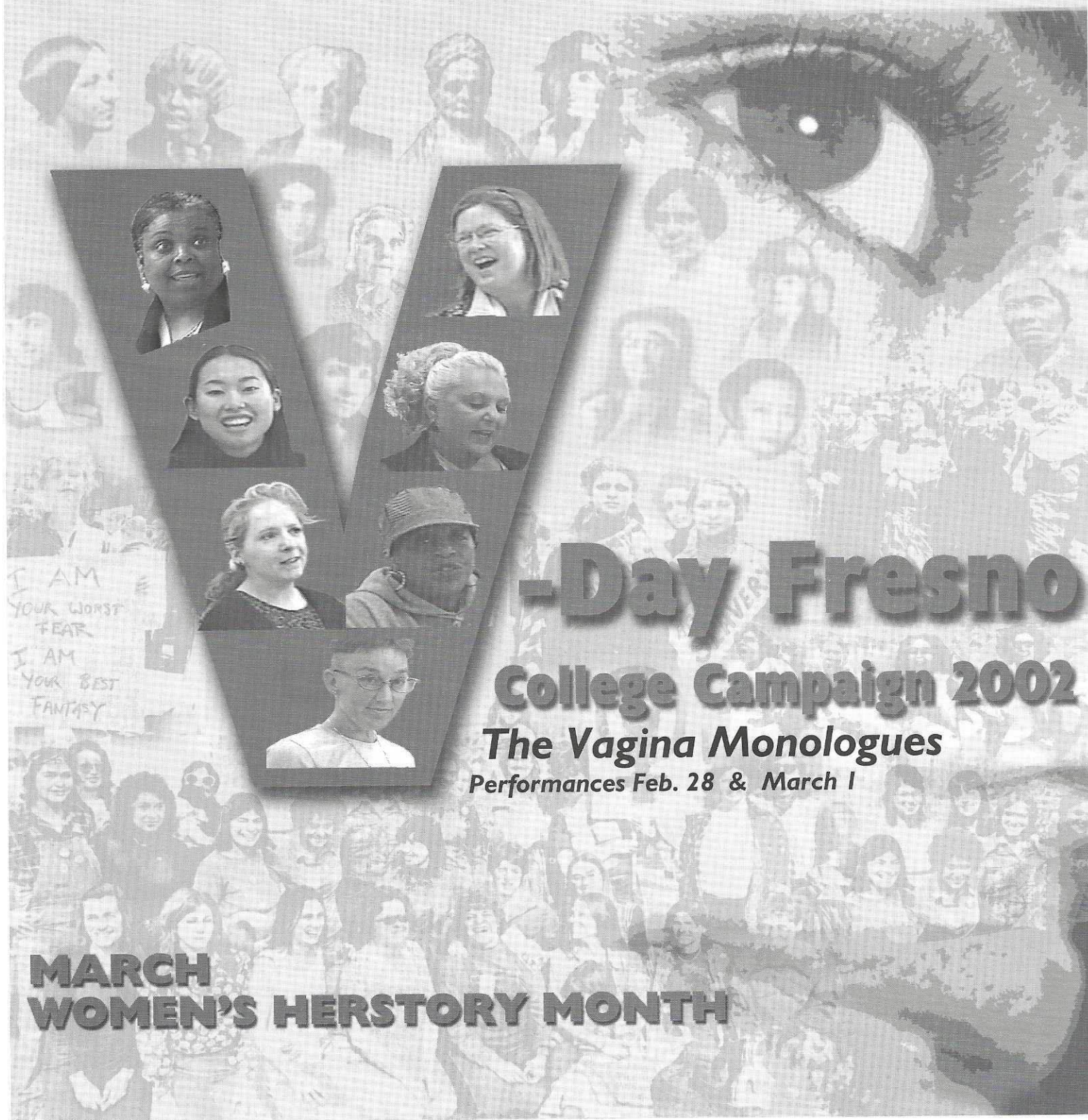
WHEN: April 26-28, 2002 • WHERE: Tower Theater & Second Space in Fresno's Tower District • WHO: All are welcome!

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

Contact Lordes Sevilla at the Pan Valley Institute (559-222-7678), Pai Yang, Catholic Charities, (559-237-0851) or Event Coordinator, Terry Maestas at 559-438-6745 or at bizclub@earthlink.net

**This event is made possible by a grant from The James Irvine Foundation*

A celebration of women's sexuality & visions



-Day Fresno

College Campaign 2002

The Vagina Monologues

Performances Feb. 28 & March 1

MARCH

WOMEN'S HERSTORY MONTH

Graphic Design by Maia Ballis/SunMt. Graphic Sources: Fresno Vagina Monologues audition video by Desi Cortez; and archival photographs from Irene Stuber's Herstory web site of the Women's Internet Information Network, the Library of Congress, the Sophia Smith Collection of Smith College, the '76 Continental Walk by J.C. Stockwell, a NYC gay lib parade by Diana Davies, and an ERA march circa '74 by Gloria Goldsmith.

Happenings during Women's Herstory Month

THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES PERFORMANCES Feb. 28 & March 1 • 8 p.m.

the CSU Fresno Satellite Student Union,
doors open 7:30pm

Tickets: \$7.50 for students • \$15.00 for general admission

• **SILENT ART AUCTION** featuring
local women artists' work

• **NIGHT TIME CAMPUS WALK
THROUGH**

See dates in our March Alliance issue

• **WOMEN'S DISCUSSION GROUPS
& LECTURE SERIES**

• **RAPE FREE ZONE CAMPAIGN** which
will encompass the distribution of ribbons

By Stefanie Monahan

Freelance writer and The Vagina Monologues cast member

In 1995 Eve Ensler created The Vagina Monologues, a series of touching and hilarious soliloquies in which women from around the world share stories about a variety of topics from what their vaginas would wear if they got dressed, to the horrors of genital mutilation. This play, which celebrates women's sexuality and condemns its violation, has been a commercial success throughout the world and has also become a social movement through V-Day, an annual fund-raiser for women's organizations. The event is the brain child of Ensler, who vows to continue V-Day until the violence against women stops.

V-Day will occur on 548 campuses in the United States and in 245 other venues internationally in 2002. California State University, Fresno will host the V-Day event for the first time this year. The event is currently being sponsored by several CSU Fresno departments including Women Studies, Theatre Arts and the Women's Resource Center. Other departments are expected to assist.

"When we talk about The Vagina Monologues it's not just about sexuality. It's about living fully and acknowledging ourselves fully from a woman's perspective, The twisted message that mainstream media feeds us about being human is still coming from a man's point of view."

"Our progressive community doesn't fully make the connection that personal issues are also political...."The Vagina Monologues" makes that connection directly and that is what excites me most about this project. It's so simple... It's the words of the women and just the fact that they are being said, that alone to me is powerful," said Cortez...The stories in this play have a powerful impact on both men and women."

—Desi Cortez, V-day co-coordinator

CSUF Theatre Arts professor Barbara Jo Maier will direct the Fresno production which features a cast of 22 women from throughout the local community. The stories that unfold during the play feature the full spectrum of women's experiences with their sexualities.

The monologues include titles such as:

- Happy Fact
- Not-So-Happy Fact
- My Angry Vagina
- My Short Skirt
- Because He Liked to Look at It

V-Day FUND RAISING for WOMEN'S GROUPS

Fresno's V-Day event will raise funds for the following organizations:

- The Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA)
- Healing for Survivors, Central California Pride Network
- Take Back the Night 2002 at CSU Fresno
- El Concilio
- Rape Counseling Services
- Planned Parenthood's Destination Out.....of Harm's Way
- Marjoree Mason Center
- Central California Pride Network

V-Day has been named one of the top 100 most worthy non-profit organizations out of 840,000 organizations by Worth Magazine. The production itself raises an awareness about issues that many people are ignorant about. Cortez sees the V-Day event as a way to connect the CSU Fresno academic and student community with the broader community of Fresno and the world. She estimates that production and advertising costs for the Fresno V-day event will reach \$7,000.

STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN!

Research from the US Department of Justice in recent years indicates the following devastating statistics regarding violence against women in the United States:

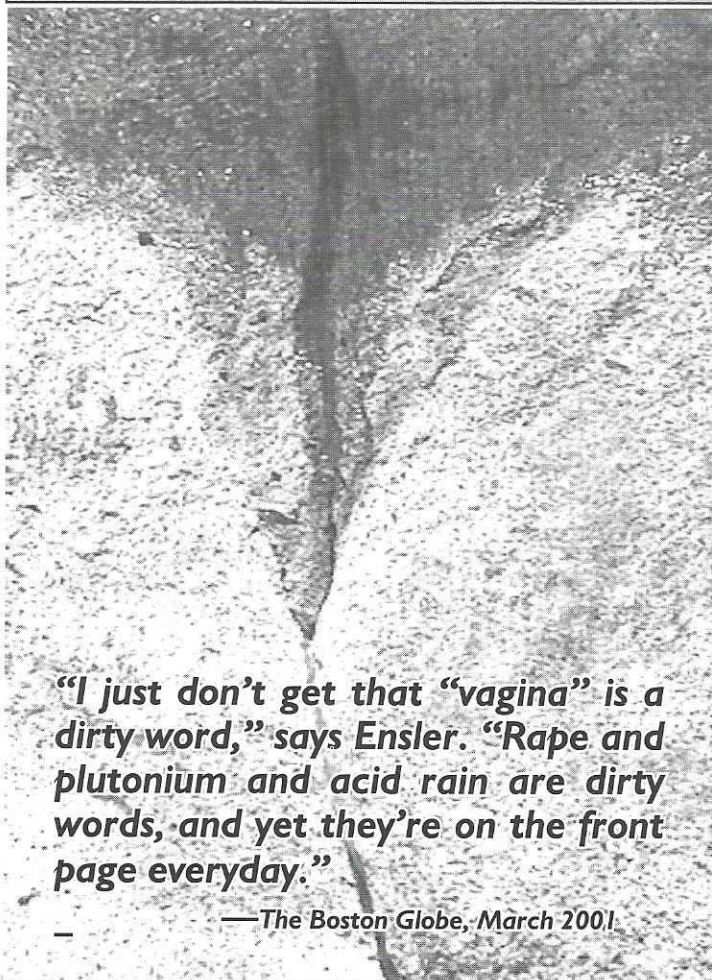
- A woman is raped every 90 seconds.
- 1 of every 3 murdered females is killed by a partner, versus 1 of every 34 murdered males.
- 1 million women are stalked annually.
- 1 of every 6 women in the United States has experienced an attempted or completed sexual assault.

CONGRESSIONAL V-CARD CAMPAIGN

Sponsored by Lifetime Television. Congressional V-Cards are an avenue to contact Congressional representatives about issues regarding violence against women. The cards will be available as hard copy postcards and on-line at the Lifetime web site:

<http://www.lifetimetv.com>

V-Day and Lifetime are hoping to deliver **one million** of these V-cards to Washington, D.C.



"I just don't get that 'vagina' is a dirty word," says Ensler. "Rape and plutonium and acid rain are dirty words, and yet they're on the front page everyday."

—The Boston Globe, March 2001

TO CONTACT US

- for performance tickets, • for a calendar of all V-Day events, • to send a donation, • to place your individual or company ad in the V-Day program, or • to volunteer for the committee:

please call the CSU Fresno Women's Center at 278-4435 and ask for Desi or Aniesha or go to web site: csufresno.edu/studentorgs/womensalliance/vday

GREEN PARTY

Private election firm throttles free speech

Recently the Fresno County Green Party was adversely impacted by the ongoing trend of privatization of governmental services.

California election law provides a means by which political parties may contact their registered members in each county by an insert to be included in the sample ballot which is distributed by county election officials.

State law clearly allows a county political party, such as the Fresno County Green Party, to submit a one page insert to the county elections department for inclusion with the sample ballot.

Contra Costa County's Green Party was able to have an insert sent out to 4500 registered members for only \$65.00.

Unfortunately, Fresno County, unlike Contra Costa, has chosen to privatize the work of preparing and mailing the sample ballot. The result was that we were told that our material would have to be printed

as part of the booklet itself at a cost of \$762.50.

This was especially outrageous because Fresno has only one third as many green party members as that of Contra Costa. When we told county officials that it was inappropriate to allow a private firm to dictate that state law could not be complied with, the response was that there was really no other option and that we should consider litigation to obtain the benefits which state law provides.

Unfortunately, that expensive undertaking is beyond the scope of our resources at this time. We are currently working with the California Green Party to seek resolution through the Secretary of State.

However, the deadline is now passed and the damage has been done for this election.

We urge each of you to consider this as another example of the manner in which individual rights are eroded when governments privatize services.

When private firms can convince counties that it is just too expensive to comply with state law, the public is not being well served. For further information on the activities of the Fresno County Green Party, go to www.greens.org/cal/fresno or call 265-3647.

Immigrants coalition aims for civil-human rights

by Nancy Marsh & Ray Ensher

A successful second strategic planning meeting of the San Joaquin Valley Coalition for Immigrant Rights aimed at supporting civil-human rights.

Butcher paper was spread throughout the room for input from the attendees dealing with trends, problems, economic projections and short and long term opportunities. Goals set to be accomplished within the next six months included: incorporation of the Center, producing a directory of present coalition members, recruiting more member organizations and supporting immigrant and worker rights. There was also agreement that the mission of the new San Joaquin Valley Center for Immigrant and Worker Rights would be "to build collaborations to assure the civil and human rights of workers and immigrants in the San Joaquin Valley".

The gathering was held at Saint Lucy's Catholic Church in Fowler January 12. Representatives from the Community Alliance for a Fair Economy (CAFÉ) — Nancy Marsh, Frances Sivak, Ray Ensher, and Larry Trullinger — also participated in the discussions shaping the mission of the new San Joaquin Center for Immigrant and Worker Rights. Others attending the meeting, which was facilitated by Paul Pierce, included representatives from service organizations, SEIU 250, the United Farm Workers, the Carpenters' Union and immigrant rights activists.

Sari H. Dworkin Ph. D

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It is the deed that teaches,
not the name we give it.
Murder and capital punishment
are not opposites
that cancel one another,
but similars
that breed their kind.

— George Bernard Shaw
Man and Superman, 1902

VOTE MARCH 5, 2002

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Police chief's 1st conversion was a personal triumph; his 2nd a civic blessing

Dyer nixes paramilitary cop unit

by Catherine Campbell

It appears our new Fresno police chief, Jerry Dyer, has had a second conversion experience.

The first was — as most Fresnoans know — when he discovered God.

The second was when he recently dissolved the Police Department's Violence Control Suppression Unit or VCSU, the paramilitary band of sanctified thugs who once roamed, but no longer, roam the streets of Fresno.

People who go through conversion experiences — in my admittedly limited experience — have hit some literal or spiritual bottom. They are alcoholic, compulsively criminal, pathological, world weary, or simply parked in desperation depot: they want out, and only a radical transformation, wrought by a divine engagement, can work the wonder they seek.

They sign up for AA, they roll themselves into a treatment program, they find a therapist, they join the military, or they go to church. When I read that Jerry Dyer changed from being a rogue cop with a pile of citizen complaints for using excessive force to a good Christian husband and father, I thought: hallelujah, let's see if Christianity has anything to do with doing the right thing.

And, apparently, in Jerry Dyer it does, for his first conversation was followed by a second. Jerry Dyer was once a member of the VCSU. The public will never know what Jerry Dyer did, or watched, or knows about, but now they know that the minute he became police chief, this good Christian husband and father called it quits on the VCSU.

Of course, he never said it was a bad idea to begin with, something anyone who lives in West Fresno could have told us. Instead, he said it's usefulness is over, an excellent bureaucrat's exit line. The history of SWAT teams, as they are catchily called in the big city and as our VCSU was called when it began in 1994, is a history of our times.

They began in the 1970's under Darrell Gates, the police chief of Los Angeles, as an anti-gang and anti-revolutionary special forces branch of the police. Their function was focused. They were to handle the particularly difficult, violent confrontations between people and the police, produced by the turmoil of the 60's and 70's: hostage-takings and the like.

Smaller cities had SWAT-envy and put their own teams of paramilitary police together until really small towns had them. Like every smug and self-righteous organization, SWATs and VCSUs gradually expanded their territory until they were rousting gang enclaves, bad neighborhoods, housing projects and other sad spots in our urban landscape. In Fresno, they began to do routine patrol, armed with "flash bang grenades," riot gear and weapons.



Chief Dyer speaks to city council

In the "U" in Fresno, a street on the West Side that is much like a cul-de-sac, the VCSU would swoop down in mid-day, shoot and kill the big dogs, search homes, handcuff everyone on the street, conduct "field interrogations" and arrest everyone in possession of even minor amounts of drugs.

One such raid on the "U" in Fresno caused the lockdown of all the students in the nearby middle school as the students' fathers, uncles, older brothers were dragged off to jail. The students, who could not get out of their classes for hours, cried in despair at the loss of their family members. On that raid, the VCSU found two ounces of marijuana.

Part of the "harvest" of these operations was data. Each person subjected to a search was put into a database where his scars, tattoos and other individual markings were saved. Young men were categorized by these markings, and then files would be kept on them until they gathered a significant history. Then, if one of these youths actually committed a crime, which happened all too often, the court would be presented with a list of "contacts" that implied a more sordid past than one bust would indicate.

Into the system you go, young man. Don't look back. This was the heat of the night, Fresno as a poor, isolated and rural southern town. It was primitive, and it was cruel.

With no civilian review board to watch the police in Fresno, it is impossible to know how many died, how many were wounded.

Christian Parenti* reported that between July of 1997 and July of 1998, the Fresno police shot seventeen people, eight of them fatally. After the advent of the VCSU, the Fresno police increased their misdemeanor arrests by almost 50%. This means more people criminalized and for less significant reasons.

Dyer's action is a good move, one that is good for all the people of Fresno. There are many ways to prevent and prohibit and punish crime, and almost all of them are untried.

Police violence against citizens may work, but it is wrong, and Dyer, bless his Christian heart, has seen the truth of his own history, and that history must be deeply connected to the history of this town. We are all the better for his conversion experience, whatever it was.

*See Christian Parenti, *Lockdown America: Police and Prisons in the Age of Crisis*, Verso Press (1999), particularly Chapter Six: Carrying the Big Stick: SWAT Teams and Paramilitary Policing.

February Events

SEE YOU THERE

Saturday, February 2 9 AM
breakfast, 9:30 AM meeting, and 10 AM meet the candidates **Kennedy Club of the San Joaquin Valley** meeting at Big Boy's Restaurant, 5610 Blackstone. This will be a "meet the candidate" forum. Call 439-8140 for more information. <http://home.att.net/~barbarapyle/kennedy/kennedy.htm>

Saturday, February 2 Noon - 1 PM
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 (559) 233-3978 for more information. For background information about this struggle: <http://www.fresnoalliance.com/home/GAP.htm> & <http://www.sunmt.org/gaparchives.html>

Sunday, February 3 2 - 4 PM
Renewing your spirit of nonviolence. A time for education and spiritual development. The group will meet at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 985 N Van Ness to expand and deepen their understanding of ahimsa and satyagraha, two important concepts of Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence. We will see one segment of the PBS video A FORCE MORE POWERFUL, and afterwards discuss the theory and strategy of nonviolence as demonstrated in this particular episode.

Monday, February 4 7:30 PM
Monthly meeting of the **Fresno Coalition Against the Misuse of Pesticides (FresCAMP)**. Call 439-0280 or 227-6134 for further information. <http://www.pesticidewatch.org/>

Tuesday, February 5 10 PM
Documentary Exposing How NAFTA's Chapter 11 Has Become Private Justice For Foreign Companies Premieres on KVPT channel 18 (ch 8 on Fresno cable).

Wednesday, February 6 3:30 PM
Stir it Up on KFCF 88.1 FM with your host Pam Whalen from the Labor/Community Alliance.

Wednesday, February 6 7:00 PM
Fresno County Democratic Central Committee meeting every first Wednesday's of the Month at the State Building assemble room. February Meeting will be a forum on the candidates for Supervisor and Judges for the March 5, 2002 election. For more information call 495-0606.

Thursday, February 7 4-5:30 PM
The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Student Art Exhibit, Essay, and Speech Winners Reception at Arte Americas, 1630 Van Ness Ave., Fresno. Free Admission. Artwork created by students from Fresno Unified, Clovis Unified and other Fresno County School Districts will be displayed at the Museum February 7-28, 2002. Contact: Gary Ovaian (559) 265-3070

Thursday, February 7 6:30 to 9:30 PM
Fresno Stonewall Democrats and various other GLBT community organizations have invited all candidates running for Fresno City Council, County Supervisor, and local area State Legislative seats to attend a GLBT community candidates forum at the Ted C. Wills Community Center, 770 N. San Pablo in Fresno. All Candidates will be asked to respond to questions. Questions will be presented by moderators selected by the forum steering committee to represent the diversity of the GLBT community. For more information contact Jay Hubbell at (559) 292-4905 or email hubbell@online.no

Thursday, February 7 7:30 PM
Wild Utah: America's Redrock Wilderness is a multi-media slideshow documenting citizen efforts to designate public lands in southern Utah's spectacular canyon country as Wilderness under the 1964 Wilderness Act will be held at the Unitarian Church of Fresno, 4144 N. Millbrook Ave. See article page 4.

Friday, February 8 3:30 PM
Lloyd Carter will host his monthly radio show, **Down in the Valley**, focusing on San Joaquin Valley water, environment and Ag issues, on KFCF, 88.1 FM.

Saturday, February 9 9:30 AM
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).

Sunday, February 10
Deadline for submissions to the March 2002 issue of the Labor/Community Alliance Newsletter. Send calendar items and articles to LCAeditor@mediaone.net

Tuesday, February 12 7 PM
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom Board/General Meeting at Carol Bequette's home, 3747 Circle Drive W. Call 229-9661 for more info.

Wednesday, February 13 Noon
Community Hunger and Nutrition Forum, sponsored by Fresno Metro Ministry will be held at the Trinity Lutheran Church, 3973 N. Cedar (between Ashlan and Dakota). No charge. For more information: call 485-1416 or email metromin@qns.net.
Wednesday, February 13 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.
Thursday, February 14 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. The four pillars of the international Green movement are Social Justice, Grassroots Democracy, Nonviolence, and Ecological Wisdom. Call 265-3647 for details or go to <http://www.greens.org/cal/fresno>

Saturday-Monday, February 16-18 Times to be announced
A forum for Western States community advocates to develop options for a sound and sustainable national nuclear policy of the production, transportation and storage of spent fuel from nuclear reactors and other high-level radioactive waste. Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 985 N Van Ness. Contact - SLO CO Grandmothers for Peace 805/467-2431 peacegrannie@hotmail.com or HOME 760/852-4151 heal@h-o-m-e.org www.h-o-m-e.org for updated info

Saturday, February 16 2 PM
Visalia Friends Meeting is starting a **draft counseling service** in this area in conjunction with anyone else who is interested in participating. See article page 16.

Monday, February 18 7 PM
NOW - National Organization for Women will hold their monthly meeting at the Center for Nonviolence, 985 N Van Ness (south of Olive). Refreshment will be served. For more information call Nora at 253-0109 or email iraep2@juno.com

Tuesday, February 19 7:00 PM
Stonewall Democrats will hold their regular monthly meeting at the Express Lounge, 3075 N. Maroa (just south of Shields). Contact Jay Hubbell at (559) 292-4905 or e-mail hubbell@online.no or visit the website <http://www.mangen.com/stonewall/>

Tuesday, February 19 7:30 PM
Repeat of **Wild Utah: America's Redrock Wilderness**. See article page 4. Presentation will be at the Oakhurst Public Library 49044 Civic Circle.

Wednesday, February 20 3:30 PM
STIR IT UP on KFCF 88.1 FM featuring 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).

Wednesday, February 20 7:30 PM
Panel with Unitarian Universalist Church member Stephen Sacks, Dan Yaseen with Peace Fresno and Anidelle Flint of the Multifaith Exchange on channel 49. Topics will include **US Foreign Policy and Lack of Mainstream Media Coverage**. This show will be repeated on Sunday, February 24 at 3:30 PM.

Thursday, February 21 7:30 AM
Community Health Care Roundtable sponsored by Metro Ministry meets at Trinity Lutheran Church 3973 N. Cedar (between Ashlan and Dakota). Topic: Adult Mental Health Services. For more information: call 485-1416 or email metromin@qns.net

Thursday, February 21 6 - 8 PM
Fresno County Bicycle Coalition monthly meeting. Come join the newly formed bike coalition. We are at the point where we need ideas and energy for new projects and directions. Downtown Library, Sarah McCordle Room. Call Gene Richards with question: 497-0570 or gene1@cvip.fresno.com.

Thursday, February 21 6:30 PM
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom is forming a chapter in Tulare County. Organizing meeting will take place at the Eleanor Roosevelt Community Learning Center at 131 N E, Exeter. For more information call 559-592-9160.

Thursday, February 21 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: (559) 255-9492 maria.telesco@worldnet.att.net

Saturday, February 23 6-8 PM
Americanos: Festival of Performing Arts. Adolfo Guzman Lopez (formerly of the Taco Shop Poets) Tim Z. Hernandez, Marianno Rodriguez, and Reggae & World Rhythm group, Waddama. ARTE AMERICAS (Casa De La Cultura), 1630 Van Ness Ave, Downtown Fresno. For more information call (559)266-2623.

Monday, February 25 6:30 PM
The Labor/Community Alliance meeting at 985 N. Van Ness.

Wednesday, February 27 3:30 PM
"Stir It Up" WILPF-style on KFCF 88.1 FM with your host, Desi Cortez.

Thursday, February 28 3 - 5 pm
Measure C Steering Committee monthly meetings. Discussions concerning putting a new Measure C (half-cent county sales tax for transportation) on the November, 2002, ballot. The public is allowed to speak at the end of the meetings. Call Gene Richards with questions: 497-0570 or gene1@cvip.fresno.com. Greater Fresno Area Chamber of Commerce, 2331 Fresno.

Friday, February 28 5 PM
Street Heat on KFCF 88.1 FM featuring Labor and Community activists.

Friday, February 28 8 pm
Vagina Monologues See article page 8.

CALENDAR ITEMS NEEDED We need your Peace and Social Justice calendar items for March Labor/Community Alliance magazine. Please send items of interest in the progressive community to LCAeditor@mediaone.net by Friday, February 15.

In addition to these calendar items appearing in the L/CA magazine they are also forwarded on through countless listserves, announced on radio shows, and the information is reprinted in several area newspapers. So, if you want people to know about your event send that calendar item to us today.

(continued on next page)

Ghost of St. Patrick rides into Fresno so we can dance our socks off & raise \$ for this magazine.
Story: page 5

Solidarity can save all of our lives, all of our freedoms

A National Day of Solidarity with Arab & Muslim Immigrants on February 20, 2002 being organized by La Resistencia. (See <http://www.laresistencia.org> for more information.)

by Vickie Fouts

As a progressive activist in Fresno I can relate to what Pastor Martin Niemoeller had to say at the end of WWII.

If I don't speak up today for our Arab & Muslim immigrants, will "they" soon come for me? Will I, too, be disappeared, rounded-up, be a defendant in a military tribunal, or experience the denial of due process as our Arab, Muslim and South Asian immigrants are now experiencing?

What can you and I do to build a broad, diverse and determined movement that will stop these injustices? We can do something as easy as smiling to a young Muslim mother with her three young children, as I did recently, as she smiled back warmly.

"First they came for the Communists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist. Then they came for the Jews, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist. Then they came for the Catholics, and I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me, but by that time, no one was left to speak up."

--Pastor Martin Niemoeller

and give them a place where they can speak their truth. For more information on A National Day of Solidarity in Fresno please contact me: Vickie Fouts (559) 658-8260 or vmfouts1@sierratel.com

2 More tiddledums Vie for DA?

by Cindy Calvert

Just in time for the December filing deadline, two additional lawyers declared their candidacies for Fresno County District Attorney. (The other three candidates, Dennis Cooper, Elizabeth Egan, and Dennis Cooper were discussed in an article in our Dec. magazine.)

The new candidates are Colin Kooyumjian and Gordon Panzak. Panzak is a registered Republican; Kooyumjian, a Democrat. Panzak is a career prosecutor who retired from the Fresno District Attorney's Office last year, and is now in private practice. He has been an attorney since 1976. Kooyumjian has been an attorney since 1995 and is in private practice.

Neither candidate responded to the questionnaire we used to elicit responses from the candidates. Panzak stated by phone that he is running to reform the DA's office. He laments that the DA's office is the weakest link in law enforcement, losing 50% of their jury trials.

Voters who want to be informed need to engage the candidates in discussions about the resources of this county used to prosecute third strike cases, death penalty cases, economic and social issue cases.

Why the reliance on prison building as the only response to crime? Why the disparate impact of law enforcement on racial minorities and the poor?

More: February events

(continued from previous page)

EXTENDED CALENDAR PLANNED The Labor/Community Alliance magazine is planning ahead. We want to have a calendar of upcoming events for all of 2002. This calendar will help prevent scheduling conflicts in the community and make it easier for everyone to see what is coming up. Send all calendar items of interest to the peace and social justice community to LCAeditor@mediaone.net

JOIN THE THIS WEEK IN FRESNO LISTSERV 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 e-mail address to LCAeditor@mediaone.net saying you would like to subscribe to this service.

ONGOING ACTIVITIES/PROGRAMS

Monday - Friday 6 AM & 9 AM

Democracy Now! on radio KFCF 88.1 FM. Amy Goodman, award-winning veteran journalist, appropriately subtitles this show "The Exception to the Rulers" as the program covers news of the nation and world from a progressive viewpoint, with focus on the history and economics of workers, women and people of color around the world.

Every Monday 6:30 PM

CSUF Campus Peace & Civil Liberties Coalition meets in Social Sciences Room 205B. There is another, more social meeting on Tuesdays from 4 pm to 5:30 pm in the Coffee House on campus. They have a table on Wednesdays and Thursdays in the Free Speech area from 12 Noon to 2 pm. For more information, e-mail: oscartategilmore@hotmail.com

Every Tuesday 6:30 PM

Peace Fresno Committee will hold an anti-war organizing meeting at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence at 985 N Van Ness. If you want to help STOP THE WAR - come to this meeting! For an up to the minute listing of all Peace actions in the Fresno area call the Fresno Center for Nonviolence at 559-23PEACE (559-237-3223).

Will tour of rolling thunder democracy rumble here??

by Matt Jendian

I just read in the December 2001 issue of "The Hightower LOW-DOWN" that a number of national progressive organizations (including ACORN, Global Exchange, Public Citizen, USAS, & WILPF) and leaders (including OJim Hightower, Barbara Ehrenreich, Utah Phillips) have joined together as organizers of a "Rolling Thunder Downhome Democracy Tour."

Throughout 2002, this tour "will work with progressive groups in cities across the country to organize local democracy festivals that will bring thousands of people together for a weekend ..."

This group will not "be rolling in as outsiders to give local folks a pre-packaged medicine show, but to give all of us the chance to become more deeply involved in the essential, unifying work of democracy-building."

To get involved, contact the National Field Coordinator, Darci Andersen (1615 Broadway, 9th Floor, Oakland, CA 94612; tel. 510-645-1027; fax 510-663-8569; thunder@california.com).

Has any progressive group in Fresno contacted Darci? Is any group or collaboration of groups interested in getting involved in this? If there isn't something happening in the Central Valley, where and when is the closest one?

FAIR PLAY: David James, our last treasurer, is in Africa, where his family has gone on missionary assignment. It is only fitting that our new treasurer is a recent arrival from Africa. Thuli Fletcher, a native of Swaziland, has agreed to take on our bookkeeping as of January. We gladly welcome her into our fold. (And yes, Greg is her husband.)

EDUCATION: Thoughts on what it means to educate ourselves and our children have re-gained prominence in my mind of late. To begin with, the use of the police to enforce truancy laws brings up again the hopeless paradox in the phrase "compulsory education". We know what's at stake in enforcing attendance is money, not learning. While it may be true that you can't teach them when they aren't there, it's equally true that you can't teach anyone against his will.

Also, the Center has been invited to participate in a conference focused on education: "Youth & Violence Prevention Forum." In correspondence with the organizer of the conference, I suggested that attention be given to the importance of neighborhood-building, repeating my mantra that *for civic improvement what's needed are "Neighborhoods, Not Urban Theme parks"*; and secondly that *"economic consideration needs to go beyond appeals to big business" to look at how "the way we do business itself contributes to violence."*

Finally, here are some excerpts from a letter I wrote to Santiago Wood, Superintendent of Fresno Unified, in response to his remarks about teaching nonviolence in the schools, made at a gathering in December:

Dear Dr. Wood...It was a wonderful surprise to hear the Superintendent of FUSD speak so passionately about non-violence as a critical goal of education. There were, however, a couple of phrases you used that I would like to comment on. Most strikingly, in speaking about the destruction wrought on your homeland, you spoke about "Panama being bombed."...

In the dialogues I've had over the years presenting my understanding of nonviolence, one thing that I've emphasized is that violence is not "out there" being perpetrated by "evil Others"; it is built into the way our society — I would even say our species' level of consciousness — teaches us to "do business"...

It is crucial for us, as U.S. citizens, to look hard at the violence enacted by our government in our names. For this reason, I would urge you in the future, when you speak about the U.S.'s bombing of Panama for specious political reasons... to speak the whole truth without animadversion. Similarly... the hypocrisy latent in the curricular call to teach students nonviolence while accepting governmental violence uncritically was made absolutely clear at the time of the Columbine shootings.

The very day that President Clinton was mouthing platitudes about how young people need to be taught to resolve conflicts peacefully, he was ordering the bombing of Sudan and Libya. If we want youth to take nonviolence seriously, we have to do better than that... Finally, I want to comment on the phrase "teaching nonviolence."

While we can teach the intellectual concept of nonviolence in a classroom, I see no way to teach its practice academically. We can, though, DISCUSS what it looks like to put nonviolence into use — what are alternatives to using violence to get our way, or in response to violence against us? what do we risk, how do we assess the worth of the risk? How do we judge the effectiveness of our choices? ... For the past year we've had a small grant to go to groups and talk about such issues... The sessions have been difficult and often contentious. But they are a genuine learning experience for all...

For peace, Richard Stone

THE WELCH REPORT

January 14, 2002

Jack H. Welch, M.D.

USE NUKES IN THE "WAR ON TERRORISM"?

Would the US use a nuclear weapon in its "war on terrorism"? Some conservative lawmakers and administration officials say we should; low yield, earth-penetrating nukes are the right weapons for attacking Osama bin Laden and others in their caves or bunkers (we have such weapons available).

It is the official position of the US that it may use a nuclear weapon first in combat. However, since the 1970s, the US has pledged not to nuke a non-nuclear nation that has signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) unless that nation allies itself with a nuclear weapons state. Afghanistan signed the NPT in 1968.

Human and ecological damage wrought by use even a low yield nuclear weapon would be horrific; plutonium and other long-lived radionuclides poison the earth for untold generations. Further, if the US used a nuclear weapon now, why shouldn't other countries do the same? A possible future nuclear exchange could result in thousands, even millions of casualties. Source: Tri-Valley CARES "Citizen's Watch" Dec. 2001

BUSH TO WIDEN WAR

President Bush and his lieutenants are determining which countries to attack next in order to widen the "war on terrorism", the question seeming to be not "if" the US will bomb other nations but "whom" and "when". Bush has laid out a scenario to rationalize a US strike against Iraq. Also, he has dispatched agents to Asia and Africa to lay the groundwork for possible US military assaults on the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Somalia & Yemen, among other countries.

Source: Tri-Valley CARES "Citizen's Watch" Dec. 2001

US MAY SQUANDER PARTNERSHIPS?

George W. Bush's denunciation of the Anti-ballistic Missile Treaty is a crucial step in this administration's foreign policy, in part, making clear the administration's intent to proceed with plans to dominate and control space. That policy affirms its determination to take sovereign and solitary action, with others to follow or not and be rewarded or sanctioned accordingly.

To build up an anti-terrorism alliance, the administration and Congress paid up US debts to the UN and made important concessions to Pakistan, Russia and Central Asian republics. "However, there was no intention in Washington to admit others to US war councils, or to modify decisions according to what the Security Council, or anyone else, thought about the war on terrorism."

What can be called the War Party in Washington has ambitions "to make a fundamental change in the world balance that will leave the US in charge, its 'rogue nation' enemies defeated and the Russians, Chinese and Europeans permanently reduced to secondary roles".

Mr. Putin endorsed the US reaction to the September 11 attacks, saying that Russia also had an Islamic terrorist problem in Chechnya, and so a partnership with the US to deal with terrorism everywhere would be welcome.

"The triumph of military operations in Afghanistan and the collapse of the Taliban have given an enormous boost to Washington's sense of supremacy, which is real, but military-based. It carries political power, but also a grave danger of acting as if no other kind of power counts."

Source: William Pfaff, International Herald Tribune Dec. 15, '01

FEBRUARY WILPF EVENTS CALENDAR

•Tuesday, February 12 7:00 p.m. WILPF Board Meeting open to all at 3747 Circle Drive. Call 229-9661 for directions or more information.

•Wednesday, February 27 3:30 p.m. "Stir It Up" WILPF-style on KFCF 88.1 FM.

MARGARET HUDSON HONORED

Long time artist, activist and WILPF member, Margaret Hudson, received Temple Beth Israel's Social Action Award at a banquet in her honor, January 25. Your WILPF sisters and brothers are very proud of you, Margaret!

WILPF-FRESNO BRANCH LOSES TWO LONG TIME MEMBERS

This past year marked the deaths of Barbara Tokmakian and Marie Emmal, both members for many years. Our sympathy goes out to their families and we celebrate their contributions to our organization and the community.

ACTION IMMEDIATELY NEEDED TO SAVE WOMEN'S BUREAU OFFICES!

Established in 1920, the U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau is the only federal agency mandated to address the needs of wage-earning women. Now the Bush Administration is proposing to eliminate the ten regional offices of the Women's Bureau in its FY 2003 budget and maintain only the national office in Washington, D.C. Each regional office is efficiently staffed with three people with geographical responsibility for five to eight states. Eliminating the Women's Bureau regional offices, which serve as the only vital link to local constituents, will make the next step easier--the elimination of the Bureau itself, following the fate of the White House Office on Women's Initiatives, which was closed in January 2001. Thirty-nine years after the passage of the Equal Pay Act in 1963, the Women's Bureau field staffs were told that they were no longer allowed to advocate for pay equity for women. Any mention of Equal Pay publications were promptly removed from the Women's Bureau national website.

The Women's Bureau, through its policies and programs, impacts the lives of all working women. Women deserve a local voice and federal resource in their communities and not just a token D.C. office.

We encourage all individuals and organizations to e-mail or write to President Bush, your two U.S. Senators and Congressional Representatives to support the continuation of the ten WB regional offices and maintain the Women's Bureau's budget to permit the continued operation of the regional offices. Your voice can make a difference in preserving an important agency for all working women.

Submitted by Ellie Bluestein, Legislative Chair

President Bush, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington DC, 20500
E-mail President Bush at: president@whitehouse.gov

You may find the mailing and e-mail addresses of your Congressional Representatives by visiting the U.S. House of Representatives website at www.house.gov or by visiting the U.S. Senate website: www.senate.gov

CORPORATE POWER WORKSHOPS

WILPF's campaign to Abolish Corporate Personhood is about the question of who's in charge. If We the People are sovereign, we must control the government. Corporations are created and chartered by the government which, acting on behalf of We the People, gives corporations privileges, not rights. Neither the government nor corporations have the

right to rule over the people. Since corporations have gained the legal status of persons, corporations have accumulated rights and become rulers--in other words, they can tell the government what to do. Molly Morgan and Jan Edwards, two young WILPF activists, have been conducting highly acclaimed creative workshops raising the following issues:

- hidden history of how corporations came to have so much power
- a chronology of how corporate personhood came to be
- why all this matters and what impact it has on democracy
- actions people can take to change the current situation.

We're thinking of bringing them to Fresno in March to conduct workshops on campuses as well as for a community appearance. If you'd like to work on this event, please call Ellie at 229-9807. We'd need money for transportation, so we need to involve as many groups as possible and need people to help coordinate this if it is to come about. Submitted by Ellie Bluestein, Legislative Chair

WATCHDOG TECHNIQUES by Pat Schroeder

....With a mandate-less president we women need to watch our elected officials carefully. As a former member of Congress I know what it feels like to be watched, so I can tell you the best way to apply pressure. Gather like-minded friends and form a monitoring cabal

.....As a former member of Congress I know what it feels like to be watched, so I can tell you the best way to apply pressure. Gather like-minded friends and form a monitoring cabal...Here are some watchdog techniques:

If your elected officials aren't to your liking, meet with them as a group and give them the chance to "court" you. All federal representatives have offices in their districts and all are interested in expanding their base. But since they don't read brain waves, you will have to tell them why you didn't support them. This is crucial because "I never knew this was important to you" is a politician's favorite excuse.

Even if your candidate won, she or he still needs reminding that your continued support is based on kept promises. If your attempts to meet are thwarted, write letters to the editor relating to your experience. Run an ad with the politician's picture, offering a reward to anyone who can supply information on the whereabouts of this person. You will be called troublemakers--a badge you should wear proudly.

Whenever an issue comes up that you care about, alert your elected representatives. If they vote incorrectly print up flyers describing the issue and telling people how their legislators voted. Send a copy to that legislator and say that you have posted hundreds all over the district. Extending tentacles into the community is a politician's worst nightmare, and most will want to know how to stop you...Now that I'm no longer in Congress, I love to use my rights as a citizen to plague Congress members. So, if you've packed it in until the next campaign issue, unpack. We can either wring our hands or roll up our sleeves, and I don't know anyone who can wring and roll at the same time.

Excerpted from Ms. Magazine February/March 2001, p.33
Former Representative Patricia Schroeder (D-Colo) is president and CEO of the Association of American Publishers

If you're a WILPF member, we encourage you to submit any information you have and want to share with other members. Call or e-mail Carol at 229-9661/cbequette@aol.com. Thanks to this month's contributor, Ellie Bluestein, for the important information she has brought to our attention.



Let's show our colors & our swelling ranks

Rally in Valley for Peace & Justice

Saturday, March 16, 2002 Fresno County Courthouse Park in Downtown Fresno 1:00 PM

The volume of peace honking is rising at Shaw-Blackstone during our Friday witnessing.

Now let us show the valley the swelling numbers of people in the liberal/progressive community who strongly favor peace with justice.

Peace Fresno and the Fresno Center for Nonviolence and other organizations to be announced are organizing a motorcade to protest the war against terrorism and in support social justice.

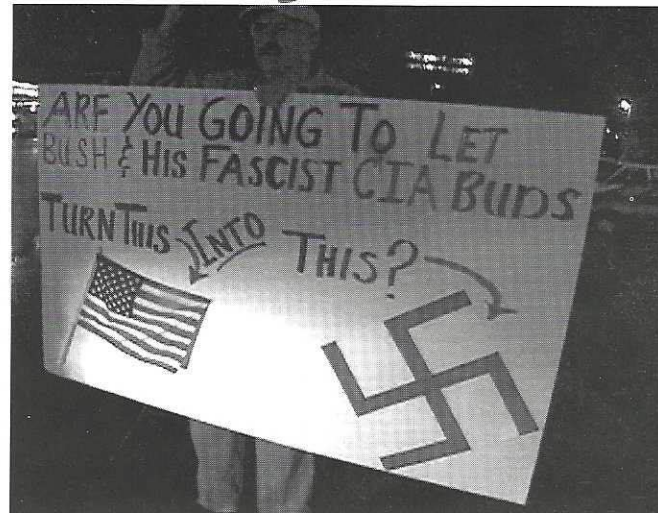
We are organizing communities from Merced to Visalia to conduct demonstrations in front of their neighborhood high schools.

Participants will then drive to Fresno County Courthouse Park displaying their individual messages for peace and social justice, e.g., "CHOWCHILLANS FOR PEACE" or "MENDOTANS FOR IMMIGRANT RIGHTS" to arrive at 1:00 for the RALLY IN THE VALLEY FOR PEACE & JUSTICE.

A statement will be made when these messages from Exeter, Porterville, Cantua Creek, etc. are seen en route to the courthouse.

The size of the event will depend on effective LOCAL publicity and LOCAL organization.

Organizational meetings of support are held on Tuesdays at 6:30 PM at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence.



Call Vince Lavery at (559) 439-0821 or Ken Hudson (559) 229-8971 for information or e-mail Peter Hudson at fresnoprogressive@earthlink.net.

Draft counseling info February 16

We at the Visalia Friends Meeting are planning to start a draft counseling service in conjunction with anyone else in the area who is interested in participating. This is an opportunity to get in on a training session even for people who are out of the area. Two people from CCCO (Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors) based in Oakland will be coming to give a 3 hour workshop on the afternoon of Saturday Feb. 16, 2 pm, at the Visalia Friends Meeting House.

Anyone interested should contact me at david@davidchandler.com or 559-539-5300. Directions to the Visalia Friends Meeting House are on the meeting's web site at <http://www.quaker.org/visalia>. There is no charge for the workshop, but we will ask for donations to go the the CCCO.

Although there is no actual draft at the moment, there is the threat of its possible reinstatement. There are also issues of draft registration, military recruitment on high school campuses, Jr. ROTC, helping people who have had second thoughts to get out of the delayed enlistment program or out of the military, and there is the need to think through the issues surrounding war, peace, militarism, and conscientious objection.

A highly recommended book for every person interested in this subject (both to have and to loan to young people considering enlistment or facing a draft) is "Choosing Peace: A Handbook on War, Peace, and Your Conscience" by Robert A. Seeley. It is available online at: <http://www.objector.org/ccco/catalog.html>.

"Our government has kept us in a perpetual state of fear — kept us in a continuous stampede of patriotic fervor — with the cry of grave national emergency. Always there has been some terrible evil at home or some monstrous foreign power that was going to gobble us up if we did not blindly rally behind it...."

— General Douglas MacArthur, 1957

Ongoing peace actions

Every Monday 6:30 PM
CSUF Campus Peace & Civil Liberties Coalition meets in Social Sciences Room 205B. There is another, more social meeting on Tuesdays from 4 pm to 5:30 pm in the Coffee House on campus. They have a table on Wednesdays and Thursdays in the Free Speech area from 12 Noon to 2 pm. For more information, e-mail: oscartategilmore@hotmail.com

Every Tuesday 6:30 PM
Peace Fresno Committee will hold an anti-war organizing meeting at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence at 985 N Van Ness. If you want to help STOP THE WAR — come to this meeting! For an up to the minute listing of all Peace actions in the Fresno area call the Fresno Center for Nonviolence at 559-23PEACE (559-237-3223).

Every Wednesday 6 - 8 PM
Peace Teach-In North Fork, "The Studio" community center next to the library.

Every Friday 3 PM
FRESNO CITY COLLEGE FORUM ON WAR AND PEACE. A series of forums on the Bush "War on Terrorism" and the alternative will be held every week at Fresno City College Forum Hall 101. The forum is free and open to the public. Forum topics will be announced on a weekly basis. For more information contact Rod Gaudin at 442-4600 ext. 8349.

Every Friday 4:30 PM
A demonstration for peace will gather at Shaw and Blackstone every Friday until the crisis is over. For an up to the minute listing of all Peace actions in the Fresno area call the Fresno Center for Nonviolence at 559-23PEACE (559-237-3223) and press #3.

Labor/Community
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