

A COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

FREE!

The Voice of the Progressive Movement since 1996

Da Rogue Returns

by Stephen A. Mintz



"Mahzjai Bellydance Fusion," performed by Mahzjai, at Dianna's Studio of Dance (North Venue), 826 North Fulton, A new Bellydancing troupe here in Fresno, Rated PG for costumes

It's amazing what some good scotch can do for the community.

It's even more amazing when a local theatre guy who hadn't been known for drawing the huge crowds can somehow sell-out random spaces just years later.

How? How did Marcel Nunis read the trends? A former school-teacher for under-privileged youth, Nunis was no marketing guru (that we knew of) and no maverick with a face-changing 'downtown river' idea. He was just a Tower rat of sorts, someone completely invested in his neighborhood and constantly surrounded by friends.

It was some of those friends (and that nice glass of scotch)

that got Nunis a'talkin.' In the vein of 'hey, let's put on a show,' Nunis likely put it out there and sat back with his typical cat-like grin. His friends had been through many fun times with Nunis, and this was to be no exception.

So they put on a little show. Community theatre at its best, based on the famous fringe festivals of San Francisco and Edinburgh. Box office monies went straight to the performers, ticket prices were dirt cheap, and his students acted as ushers and concession sellers.

Now?

It's huge.

Written up in the New York Times, attended by thousands over the two weekends, and now a not-for-profit with hundreds of volunteers, a dozen+ venues, and performers from farther than Edinburgh.

Sure, you've heard of it by now. Might have even seen a show or two. But really? This little festival (starting February 28) became the impetus for central Fresno growth and an unprecedented boom in the performing arts.

Since the start of The Rogue Festival, no less than four separate new professional performance companies have launched. Art galleries have grown, the Woodward Shakespeare festival blossomed, and grant money for

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SAMMY GALVAN WRONGFUL DEATH TRIAL COMES TO FRESNO

By Mike Rhodes



Sammy Galvan

Why was Sammy Galvan shot to death by Modesto police? The case has led to demonstrations against police brutality and numerous newspaper stories in the *Modesto Bee*, and now a wrongful death lawsuit will be heard in the federal courtroom in Fresno. The jury trial is expected to begin on March 11.

What both the Modesto Police Department and the Galvan family agree on was that Sammy was shot and killed by police officers in the early morning hours of August 24, 2004. According to the complaint filed in court by the Galvan family, Sammy and his girlfriend Yesenia had been arguing. Susan Galvan, Sammy's mother, called 911 because she wanted Yesenia to stop yelling and banging on the door. Sammy lived in a cottage behind the Galvan residence.

When the police arrived, Sammy's father, Ramon Galvan, unlocked the gate to the cottage. Sammy and Yesenia were by that time in the cottage and everything was quiet. Ramon began to lead the officers to the cottage but was prevented from getting to the door. Ramon then left the back yard to retrieve his dogs, and that is when he heard the gunshots. He yelled at the officers, asking them what was happening, and saw Yesenia being removed from the cottage.

The complaint filed in federal court describes what happened inside the cottage:

When the officers appeared at the cottage door to Sammy's cottage, Yesenia had been inside for a long period of time. The yelling had stopped. Seated on the floor at the foot of the bed, Yesenia saw two police in the doorway next to each other. She

stood up and approached them. Each had flashlights shining, which illuminated the otherwise dark room. As she approached to within about two feet of the officers, she saw their guns pointed. Then she looked around; Sammy stood up with a knife in his

hand. Sammy was far away from both Yesenia and the officers. He stood between the bed and a wall. A dresser with a television on it, along the wall past the foot of the bed, separated Yesenia and the officers from Sammy. Yesenia heard "put it down". About the same time, Yesenia also said to Sammy "put it down," as she lowered herself toward the floor. She was going to kneel down. The officers fired immediately. Bullets flew near her head.

Sammy never moved beyond the bed. He never had a chance to comply with the officers' command. He fell back. He did not move. His face had an expression of shock. Yesenia saw Sammy on the floor. The officers immediately grabbed her and forcibly put her out of the room.

At no time while the police were on the scene at Sammy's cottage described above, was Sammy disorderly, or a threat to the safety of himself or that of others. He did not commit any criminal offense.

In the moments after the shooting, as Ramon was standing in the front yard with his dogs, he was told by arriving officers to put his hands behind his back. As he complied with the officer,

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FREE SPEECH GETS FIRE BOMBED IN FRESNO
(see page 21)

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COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

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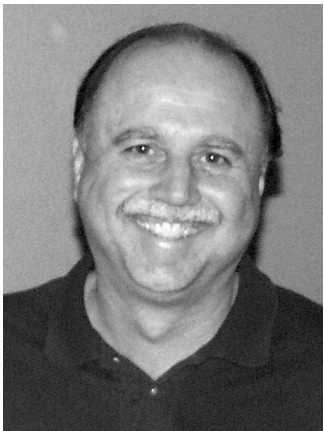
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From The Editor

by Mike Rhodes

Free Speech Gets Fire Bombed in Fresno



I was delivering the *Community Alliance* newspaper in downtown Fresno last month when I saw from a distance that our newsstand in front of the main Fresno Police Department (FPD) building was missing. I knew that the newsstand on the Mariposa Mall (near N street) had been vandalized before, but it is really unusual to have a newsstand stolen.

Vandalism has happened to our newsstands (what usually happens is that the Plexiglas front gets kicked in), but the frequency and viciousness at that particular location is way out of proportion. Out of a total of ten vandalism incidents in the last year, half of them were done to the newsstand in front of the FPD headquarters.

When I got closer I could tell that the newsstand was not missing but had been burned to the ground. There was nothing left except some melted plastic and the chain that kept it from being stolen. The destruction of our newsstand was no accident — somebody had to cover the newsstand with a significant amount of flammable liquid to make it burn into a lump of plastic. I asked for a police report on the incident but was told there was no report available. I think it is odd that arson, which must have shot flames 25 feet in the air right in front of police HQ, was not even noticed by our alert and diligent police force. Maybe they were too busy infiltrating Peace Fresno to notice the flames at their own doorstep.

Earlier in the week, one of our writers who had proposed a special section on an important and controversial environmental justice issue had the tires of both his family cars slashed.

The fire bombing of our newsstands and intimidation of our writers will not succeed in forcing the *Community Alliance* to back down in our support for peace and for social, economic, and environmental justice. In fact, these cowardly acts of violence will have the opposite



A Community Alliance newsstand (just like the one shown here) was burned to the ground, right in front of the Fresno Police Department headquarters.



Our newsstand was melted into a blob of melted plastic. The burning newsstand, remarkably, did not attract the attention of the police.

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Quote of the Month

“Naturally the common people don’t want war, but after all it is the leaders of a country who determine the policy, and it is always a simple matter to drag people along whether it is a democracy or a fascist dictatorship, or a parliament, or a communist dictatorship. Voice or no voice, the people can always be brought to the bidding of its leaders. This is easy. All you have to do is to tell them they are being attacked, and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger. It works the same in every country.”

Hermann Goering, Hitler’s Reichs-Marshall, at the Nuremberg Trials, after World War Two

effect. Here is why: Our readers (that is you) know the importance of free speech and will defend this newspaper against the threats of the thugs who would censor what you read and bully writers into silence. This is not Nazi Germany and we will not tolerate this attack on our free speech rights.

Because our readers care about free speech, I believe that one of them will send us \$100 to replace the newsstand on the Mariposa Mall. In fact, I wouldn’t be surprised if five or ten people sent us \$100 so we can put newsstands in even more places. We have about 20 newsstands in the community right now. It would make a huge difference if we had 30.

Those readers who don’t have the resources to make a donation can help us by distributing the newspaper to more readers. Pick up copies at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence (on the southeast corner of McKinley and Van Ness) and take them to waiting rooms at doctors or dentist offices, hospitals, and clinics. Some of our supporters take as many as 200 copies each month and deliver them in their neighborhood. Another way to support the newspaper is to patronize our advertisers. Tell them you are buying from them because you saw their ad in the *Community Alliance*.

Fire bombing the free press, right in front of the Fresno Police Department HQ, was done to send us a message. Maybe whoever fire bombed our newsstand didn’t like our front page story about how anti-nuclear activists stopped the construction of a nuclear power plant in Fresno; maybe it was our articles calling for an Independent Police Auditor and more police accountability or our ongoing coverage about the homeless; or maybe it was the information about Title IX and gender equality. Whatever it was, this kind of intolerance must be opposed by an outpouring of support for the free press. We must show these neo-fascists that their tactics of threats and intimidation will be countered by more newsstands and increased distribution of this newspaper.

You can count on the *Community Alliance* to continue speaking truth to power. We are more determined than ever to build a progressive movement and to show that another world is possible. With your ongoing and increased support we will succeed.

This Situation Cries Out for Justice

By Al Williams

On December 20, 2007, at 11:51 A.M. My wife, Sherri Williams, passed away. It is my opinion, and the opinion of others concerned, that she died a needless death, at the very young age of 45 years old, because of inadequate health care. This problem must be fixed now. I don't mean hire some firm \$150,000, or more to study the problem, I mean it's time to GET-ER-DONE, now. We the homeless, the displaced, the poor, are sick and tired, of being sick and tired. Myself, among others, blame local government, starting at the top, with Mayor Autry, the City Council, their hired buddies, and please don't leave out Larry Arce, and the Rescue Mission, and lately the Poverello House.

Let me explain, starting with adequate health care. Community Hospital receives \$20,000,000 a year, if not more from other donations to provide adequate health care for the homeless, the displaced, the poor. I ask you this question. Why are people such as Sherri Williams, who was homeless the last to years of her life, handicapped, confined to a wheelchair because of a prolapsed rectum, and uterus, declining health, because of her condition, refused medical care, which resulted in her death? On Sherri's previous three visits to Community Hospital, a few doctors attempted to get her into surgery, but the big bosses at Community Hospital, who tell doctors what they can and cannot do, or simply putting it in lay term, who will live, and who will die, refused to grant Sherri the surgery she needed to save her life. What they did was discharge Sherri, with a open wound, {prolapsed rectum}, into a open dirt field, with no shelter, except a sleeping bag, and yes, she became

ill once again, with an infection in her intestines, which could have been repaired had the proper surgery been done. Now Sherri is no longer with us. I now ask you this. Don't doctors take an oath to save lives? And if so, why are there supervisors ordering doctors to go against this oath? Personally, I feel that it is time for some replacements of the supervisors, period. Does the mighty dollar override humane life? That is not the oath of a doctor. So, what are we going to do? I say, GET UP, STAND UP, FOR YOUR RIGHTS. Let us not have any more needless deaths.

Next on the hit list. The city of Fresno, along with the poverty pimps, such as The Rev. Larry Arce, and the Rescue Mission, The Poverello House, The Naomi House, and a large portion of the recipients of government funds that are given to the city of Fresno has made homelessness a profit making business.

After a short break from reality, we wished Sherri a safe journey on her continued travels. We put together a memorial for Sherri at Roeding Park that was second to none. It goes to show the homeless are a responsible group that can produce excellent events when it is necessary. We did this, of course, with a little help from our friends - the use of a laptop computer to create a beautiful four page memorial program and a phone to make contact with involved and interested people who wished to participate in the memorial service.

My point is, most programs such as the Rescue Mission, the Poverello House, etc. contend that we are not responsible, or do not have the intellectual ability to create, or organize successful events and/or programs to take care of



Sherri Williams

ourselves. Sherri's memorial was an excellent example that we can get-er-done.

Let us respectfully compare the memorial that took place on the 23 of Dec 2007 at Roeding Park that was organized by high dollar organizations and Sherri's memorial done on the 12th of Jan 2008, organized by a few homeless and a few advocates. The homeless did it right, we got-er-done. My point being- it's time for the homeless to take charge of our own destiny. We can and will do it. It's time to fire the poverty pimps. The Larry Arce's, and those similar to him. Its time to say to them - We refuse to let you turn homelessness into a business for personal profit! We refuse to let that happen!

Therefore, starting on the 16th of February at Roeding Park after Food Not Bombs at 2:00PM we will be having a weekly workshop to end homelessness now, not in ten years. All interested people homeless and otherwise are invited. Especially homeless advocates.

At this time I would like to extend a special Thank You to the following individuals on behalf of Sherri Williams- Pam Whalen, Simone Whalen-Rhodes and Mike Rhodes, Alvin Valeriano, Kelly and Tina B., Jean Chipp, Tom Machado, Rev. Floyd Harris, David Alvarez and family, and Food Not Bombs.

And from the bottom of our hearts, a very special Thank You to Elizabeth Kucinich, for her attentive, compassionate visit to Sherri on December 1. Thank you so very much!

These are my personal recommendations and do not represent positions of the California Democratic Party or any other group.

Chuck Krugman

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His gaunt face haunts me as I trudge homeward. What happened? How did he get in this condition? Was he born like this? These and other thoughts raced through my mind. He had an air of acceptance about him that seemed to suggest more than just faith here. There was a kindness about him, a resoluteness. Something that says "well, this is the way it is and I will make the best of it." Sometimes he chats with friends or acquaintances but always he is there. Like a sphinx his tall body stretched out in his wheelchair, quietly saying "God bless you" if anyone speaks to him. I long to take his face in my hands to see if my couch can soothe away some of the suffering I see there. We are taught not to touch each other, to not violate another's space, but sometimes a touch is all we need. One day I screw up my courage enough to say hello. (Why, I ask myself, should it be so difficult to speak to a stranger? A human being?) "God bless you," he says and I almost weep. "Thank you," I answer and go on.

Gradually we get to know each other better, my friend and I. He tells me he was sitting at a bus stop one day when a car careened out of control. He jumped in front of a man in a wheelchair to save him from being hit. It was a selfless act done without hesitation. Could I have done that, I wondered? I doubt it. More likely I would have stood frozen in fear. I'm not a brave person. Still, I think of myself as a 'good' human being.

We talk further. He tells me that currently he is homeless. I ask him if he has not tried to get help anywhere. "Where?" he asks blankly. I told him of the places I know. The Poverello House, Catholic Charities. I even call a few of these places myself. Everyone seems closed for the holidays. Perhaps saving souls on the street. But no place for a homeless man in a wheelchair. I ask him where he is staying, where he calls home? He points to a little alcove where he is sheltered from the wind a little bit. "Isn't it dangerous" I ask. "Oh, yes!" he replies. "Very dangerous." Then he tells me of how he was robbed and beaten by gangs. Only his wits saved him. They were trying to steal his wheelchair. Only by pressing the control button was he able to keep the wheelchair one jump ahead of the robbers. He showed me where the wires were exposed. He felt grateful to be alive.

This scene is played out over and over again in Fresno and in the United States. The land of the free and home of the brave. We feel pious and patriotic as we say our prayers and sing our songs. And my friend is still out there, on the streets, in the cold. Is anybody listening, Fresno? Is anybody home?

Virginia Milne

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor:

For the past three years, the City of Fresno has allocated \$100,000 (\$300,000 total so far) for homeless people to participate in as City Stewards - hang around downtown, act as guide, pick up trash etc. None of the people benefitting from the public funds were ever homeless but rather people who have gone through a Christian program run by the Fresno Rescue Mission.

Information in the city budget and that posted on the city Web site claims that these are homeless people. The funds are kept at \$100,000 per year to get around bidding requirements, to deny all other groups the opportunity to have a crack at it. Just imagine possibilities if the \$100,000 were spilt into ten \$10,000 grants or even 20 \$5,000 grants. People could come up with innovative solutions instead of supporting one Christian group.

If your paper were to look into the backgrounds of the participants, you would find that these are people who were court ordered into the Rescue Mission program due to drug use or other crimes. Never been homeless. Some come from rich families. This needs to be exposed before the next city budget!!

Anonymous

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Dear Editor:

Thank you for printing the amazing real, and not sugar coated, or corporate bought stories in the Community Alliance. I also want to thank you for giving prisoners a voice and a page to print it on. The Boston Woodard story about Parole Board Pillory certainly continues. Did you know that two board members got arrested for D.U.I. on a Monday night after leaving this prison? They were here as guests at one of our Long Termers Organization (LTO) meeting. The message was that if we didn't go to Narcotics Anonymous or Alcoholics Anonymous meetings we (lifers) would not get a release date. If we did not want to do NA or AA then we should pick another "self help group" to join. So, these two leave here and go to jail overnight and went to work the next day. Hmmm. Taxpayers money is keeping a lot of dirty little secrets here in Chowchilla as well as (I suspect) the 32 other prisons in California. And so it goes. I think the Board of Prison terms should be abolished and everyone be given a fixed term. Please give Maria Telesco and all the church ladies who helped bag the Christmas goodies for us (and the men too) a big thank you. It is so nice to know that someone out there cares. Most of us are so far from our families and only get one or two visits a year. Once again thanks to her and everyone involved and to you and your staff. You all Rock.

Carren Hill
Central California Women's Facility, Chowchilla

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I have been asked by several people to send out recommendations for voting on the February ballot propositions. They are as follows:

Proposition 91—Transportation bond issues. This proposition is no longer strongly supported by its sponsors as the issue has been resolved by legislative action. For this and the reason that it would if enacted potentially cause reductions in available funding for public transportation. Vote "NO."

Proposition 92—community college funding—this is a confusing initiative. While this initiative would roll back funding for community college tuition to the rate of \$15 per credit hour, money for this initiative to be implemented would come from funds for K-12 education. The drawback to this initiative is that to amend its provisions it would require a 75% "yes" vote. While I initially supported this initiative I had second thoughts because of the funding mechanism and the 75% requirement for any amendments or repeal of it to occur. Therefore I would vote "NO."

Proposition 93—term limit initiative—This initiative would allow for newly elected legislators to serve their entire terms of twelve years in one house of the legislature. This would allow currently elected legislators to remain in their seats for an additional amount of time. This legislation for all practical purposes is a means of providing job security to incumbent legislators and maintains the status quo and rewards current legislators for what I consider to be bad or self-serving behavior. Therefore, I would recommend a "NO" vote.

Propositions 94-97—Indian Gaming Compact ratifications. For the purposes of expedience I am consolidating them in to one recommendation as they are similar. These compacts would allow select Indian tribes to expand their gaming or casino operations. This only benefits each tribe mentioned as these compacts are tribe specific. In other words, this does not benefit tribes that have not yet ratified or entered in to negotiations with the state. The allegations of money being generated for the state are grossly misleading as the life time compacts extends over a number of years. These compacts have been negotiated by the Governor with the tribes without adequate input from organized labor in the negotiating process. These compacts do not protect the average casino workers and there are barriers for union organization on the parts of these tribes. While I support Indian gaming I believe that new labor-friendly compacts should be negotiated that allow rights for self-determination of workers. I also believe that the tribes that operate casinos should also be mandated to honor all laws regarding non-discrimination. Because the tribes have played their "sovereign nation" card they are exempt from California state discrimination laws and their compliance with ADA guidelines leaves much to be desired. The financial purpose of these compacts is another means for Arnold to not deal with reality in his budget games. Therefore, I would recommend a "no" vote.

Who Will Fresno Progressives Vote for on February 5?

The Community Alliance asked subscribers of this newspaper and members of Fresno’s progressive community who they were going to vote for and why. Here is what they wrote:

Kucinich — the only candidate, Dem or GOP, with a clear progressive record and a clear progressive message.
Kucinich has a wife who supports and articulates his uniquely progressive message.
Only Kucinich advocates single payer medical plan.
Only Kucinich is pushing to stop war NOW.
Only Kucinich backs a shift to renewable energy.
This is no time to vote for the lesser of the evils, because the lesser is still evil. And the lesser cannot, will not, will not be allowed to, steer our beloved country forward to sanity. Kucinich is the ONLY possibility....

Smiling Seriously,
Maia & Elfie Ballis

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It’s clear to me that of the three Possibles, Edwards, with clearly the most progressive program, is the Democratic nominee also with the best chance of winning.

But, that said, I’d pick ANY of the Dem candidates over any of the truly dreadful Republican doofuses.

Edwards is politically experienced, telegenic, articulate, a Southerner, a populist with wide union support, and the only one of the top tier Possibles to correctly say NO WAY to new nuclear plants in the US. Also, on the biggest issue, ending the Iraq fiasco, he probably would do it sooner than either of the other Possibles would.

Clinton and Obama have just too much going against them for the general election: big baggage in the first case and clear inexperience in the second case. As much as I’d like to see a woman or minority as President, these two are not the ones now.

Clinton is clearly too divisive a personality and too tied to corporations and Israel. She also stupidly wants to make nice with the Bushes, also with nuclear energy and big insurance.

Obama is attractive but has no foreign policy experience and I doubt a Black will ever be elected in this country unless the South secedes again or gets kicked out.

Edwards is the one!

Gene Tuck

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In the general I will vote for the Democratic candidate no matter who he or she is. I want a Democratic Party win because I think the country is finished without one.

I get the feeling that the right wing corporate controlled mainstream media (MSM) that dominates public opinion by controlling most of the major news and opinion outlets through ownership of the large daily news papers as well as most radio and television stations really wants Clinton or Obama as the Democratic candidate because they think that neither a woman nor a black can win. They may be right but this is due in part to the public having had a year of the right wing punditry beating up on both Hillary and Barrack. There are already cloaks of lies, aspersions and falsehood that have been placed upon the shoulders of both Clinton and Obama. Just as they were placed upon both Gore and Kerry.

I like Kucinich, I’m sorely tempted to vote for him in the primary. That is the romantic lefty in me. The pragmatic left side of me says vote for and support John Edwards. He seems less cozy with the corporate fascists than Obama or Clinton. Also the MSM hasn’t been going after him or setting him up as the candidate for the Republi-Nazi (Yet to be named) to defeat.

When I listen to him he says enough of the right things. He reminds me of Robert Kennedy Sr. in many ways. We need to return the country to the real America of FDR and I think he might be closer than most of the other candidates to that sort of Democratic Party heritage. We need someone to take on the corporations as their power has gotten out of hand and yet we need someone with enough charisma to win.

We also need someone to drag along enough folks in congress both senators and representatives to pass laws to undo the damage of 40 years of nearly uninterrupted movement to the right.

Suzan Cooke

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I don’t like Sen. Barack Obama. That must be because I am old and war weary. World War II, Korean Conflict, Vietnam War, Afghanistan and Iraq should be enough of war for any contemporary voter’s lifetime. I don’t like Obama “storming up San Juan Hill” right into Iran. The war in Iraq has, already, done enough irreparable harm to the United States; materially and ideologically. John Edward, speaks of the government’s social contract with the people. This is a language I can understand and appreciate. It is the language of the founders of this nation. The language that is the American Constitution, the Bill of Rights. I have also considered that the Republican party might, again, be up to its strategy of early supporting an un-electable Democrat candidate, thus luring voters into the Republican fold.

Isabell Lawson

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I became an Obama supporter when both Kucinich and Richardson told their supporters in the Iowa caucuses that their support went to Obama if their own candidacies became unviable. As a long time supporter of Kucinich who has developed significant respect for Richardson over the past couple of years, I will make my vote count by casting it for Obama on February 5. If we join together behind Obama, we have a very real chance of actually electing someone who, if not my first choice for president, is not just “the lesser evil;” that is much more important to me than simply “making a statement” by voting for my first choice candidate.

Jan Balcom

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I will vote for Sen. Hillary Clinton on the Feb. 5, 2008 primary election ballot. Reasons include her past demonstrated efforts on obtaining health care benefits for all Americans. She made a very strong effort in the early nineties, but was defeated by a Republican Congress and a very strong health care industry opposition. She has learned from that experience. not letting it defeat her long term goals. From her many speeches and experiences, I believe Sen. Clinton is a highly intelligent and capable woman. She demonstrates common sense as well as intellectual knowledge. She is likely to select men and women of the highest quality as her Cabinet members, enabling her to accomplish her goals for our country. This includes ending the war in Iraq and bringing our military troops back home.

Billie MacDougall

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I will support any Democrat chosen by my party, but at this point I’m choosing John Edwards. All the candidates want to get out of this war, stop the erosion of our economy and the out-sourcing of jobs, become energy independent and fight global warming, get some decent health care for our citizens, restore our Constitutional liberties, do something half-way humane about the undocumented, adhere to the Geneva Convention, and once again have America at least respected, hopefully admired, by the rest of the world. But that’s not going to be easy. Many of the candidates want to “work with” or “sit down with” the vast military-industrial complex that seems to be running the country. Edwards is the only one who is realistic about whom we are facing—corporations that thrive on phony military invasions, corporations that have gotten massive subsidies and tax breaks and are able to exercise enormous power, big oil, big coal, big pharmaceutical companies, big HMO’s, big insurance companies, and huge media empires. Edwards seems to understand what he’s up against if elected. He understands you can’t “make nice” with Halliburton or Exxon-Mobil. We need a real fighter, and in my view, of the front runners, he’s the most committed.

FranzWeinschenk

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Sen. John Edwards gets my vote hands down. He has called for a complete withdrawal of troops from Iraq

within 10 months; he has long advocated for universal healthcare, and he supports the necessary 80% reduction in greenhouse gases by 2050 – and he clearly understands the change needed to achieve those goals: the U.S. must have a strong middle class to dilute the concentration of power now dominant. To that end he has stood repeatedly with workers seeking to protect existing unions and to form new ones. “The greatest anti-poverty program in America is the labor movement,” says Edwards who’s right to warn us against replacing a corporate Republican with a corporate Democrat. As another great American, Ralph Nader, said to Politico.com, Edwards “now has the most progressive message across a broad spectrum of corporate power damaging the interests of workers, consumers, taxpayers, of any leading candidate I have seen in years...Edwards is at least highlighting day after day that the issue is who controls our country: big business or the people?”

Kevin Hall

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Send a message. Vote for YOUR values. Vote for the one candidate who does his homework, has a lifetime of experience both as an executive and legislator, and has the solid progressive record to back it up. Kucinich is the only one we can trust. The others smooth talk you but don’t walk the walk. A vote for Dennis Kucinich is more than a vote for the most experienced individual running (he worked his way up from a child of a homeless family to city council and mayor of Cleveland, to Ohio state senator, to the U.S. Congress) it is a vote for the progressive agenda. These are a few of my favorite things. Kucinich has proposed national Not-for-Profit, Medicare for All. Kucinich would immediately end the U.S. war on the people of Iraq. Kucinich is the ONLY candidate who voted AGAINST the war from the start. Kucinich would restore our constitutional civil liberties by nullifying the Patriot Act. He would establish a Works-Green Administration that would simultaneously engage in national jobs creation and promote sustainable earth-friendly energy: wind, solar, and geothermal, and end subsidies for the fossil fuel giants. He would abolish NAFTA and institute fair trade.

Jay Hubbell

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I’m going to vote for John Edwards, because he is addressing poverty in the U.S. more than the other candidates.

Phil Erro

////////////////////////////////////

Hillary.....or obama

George Madrid

////////////////////////////////////

I believe I will vote for Edwards, more so because he has recused himself from the 2007 horse race. I would vote for Kucinich- Hillary and Obama—Judicial Watch agrees with me on them.

Laurie Miller

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RECOMMENDATIONS RE: STATE BALLOT PROPOSITIONS

The grid shows the recommendations listed on the websites of various political parties and organizations concerning the seven statewide ballot propositions.

Detailed summaries of the propositions and Pro/Con arguments are available in the California Secretary of State’s voter pamphlets and website at www.voterguide.sos.ca.gov/.

The Propositions to be voted on for the February 5, 2008 election are:

- Prop 91**
Transportation funds (Supporters now recommend a no vote.)
- Prop 92**
Community College Funding, Governance, & Fees
- Prop 93**
Limits on Legislators’ Terms in Office
- Prop 94-97**
Referendums on Indian Gaming Compacts

| ORGANIZATION | 91 | 92 | 93 | 94 | 95 | 96 | 97 |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Democratic Party | N | -- | Y | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Green Party (Alameda County) | -- | Y | N | N | N | N | N |
| Libertarian Party | -- | N | N | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Peace & Freedom Party | N | Y | N | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Republican Party | -- | N | N | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| AFL-CIO | N | Y | Y | N | N | N | N |
| California Federation Of Teachers | N | Y | Y | N | N | N | N |
| California Teachers Association | N | N | Y | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| League Of Women Voters-California | N | N | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| United Farm Workers | -- | Y | Y | N | N | N | N |

Will José Crow Voter ID Laws Pick Our President?

By Greg Palast
Thursday, January 10, 2008

State Representative Russell Pearce of Mesa Arizona has warned us: “There is a massive effort under way to register illegal aliens in this country.”

How many? According to the Congressman’s office, there are five million: Democrats, he says, who are not good Americans - they’re Mexicans!

Really?! Holy Cow! The Senator has uncovered a conspiracy to flood the voter rolls with Brown Hordes who’ve swum the Rio Grande just for a chance to vote for Hillary Clinton?!

Thank the Lord for vigilant citizens like Senator Pearce. His efforts, along with the work of other patriotic (Republican) politicians, successfully stopped 300,000 voters from obtaining ballots in 2004 - because these voters had brought the wrong ID to the polls. New ID laws in Arizona and half a dozen states blocked these voters at the polling-house door. Others with “wrong” ID’s were handed what are called ‘provisional’ ballots - which were then not counted.

On Wednesday, the Republican majority on the US Supreme Court indicated it would vote to uphold these new voter ID requirements.

And just in time. If not for these new ID laws, warns Senator Pearce and other Republicans across the nation, a dark wave of illegal aliens would vote again in our upcoming Presidential election.

Or maybe not. Maybe there aren’t five million illegal voters for Hillary or Obama or Edwards. Maybe there are just five hundred. Maybe there are none.

I called Senator Pearce’s office to get a couple of the names of these illegal voters. After all, it should be easy as pie to catch them: they have to give their names and addresses to register and vote. Odd thing, out of five million illegal registrants, the Senator, after a week of looking, couldn’t provide me the name of one. Not one.

Another Republican politician, this one in New Mexico, the sponsor of the voter ID law there, said on the floor of the State Legislature that she had the names of two illegal voters. Well, that’s a start.

I called her, Representative Justine Fox-Young (yes, that’s her name, and she has the ID to prove it).

Q. Justine, you’ve uncovered felony criminals [illegal voting is a jail-time crime in every state]. Do you have the names?
A. Oh, yes!

Q. Really? Wow! Did you turn these names over to the US Attorney?
A. Well, no

Q. You had evidence of a crime and you didn’t have the bad guys arrested?
A. Not exactly

Fox-Young promised to send me the names of the illegal voters. The names never arrived. But shortly thereafter, based on her claim, the Legislature passed, and Governor Bill Richardson signed, a voter ID law certain to knock out Hispanic citizens. (In fairness to Richardson, I should note that he forced the Republicans to drastically alter their bill.)

Our investigations team talked to some of New Mexico’s allegedly illegal voters.

In 2004, the Catholic Church organized a bus and caravan to take newly registered Chicano “low-riders” to a Roswell, New Mexico polling station. The white officials turned away several of the young Hispanics for presenting the wrong ID. Maybe the middle initial on the voter form was missing from the driver’s license, or “Jr.” was added. No perfect match, no vote: a gotcha! set of rules that seemed to apply only to voters of a darker hue.

One of the rejected young Chicanas said she wouldn’t return to try again to vote; one round of humiliation was enough. “They don’t want me to vote there any-

cepted your signature matched to prior records as proof you’re a legal voter. Now we’re going to change this system to prevent the crime of folks voting more than once and the crime of aliens voting. The odd thing about these crimes: they virtually don’t exist. Yet to prevent crimes that aren’t committed, we are allowing elections officials to commit a greater crime: stopping legal voters - especially new, young, Hispanic voters - from having their piece of our democracy.

Who was behind these viciously undemocratic, racist José Crow attack on brown-skinned voters? His initials are Karl Rove. In 2006, I smelled out the link to Rove, then White House political chief, when I reached out to the US Attorney for New Mexico.

That US Attorney, David Iglesias, had indeed investigated the “illegal” voters identified by Fox-Young, working from a list of 150 sent to him by Republican officials. After marching all over the mesas with the FBI, Iglesias found exactly zero cases to prosecute.

So, finding folks innocent, Iglesias did not arrest them. That was a mistake - at least for his career. Karl Rove, visiting New Mexico, heard from the state’s Republican Party chiefs that Iglesias was not bringing prosecutions and would not continue the witchhunt for “illegal” voters. Iglesias contends that Rove took the Republican complaint to the Oval Office. There, a man who goes by the alias, “The Decider,” decided to fire Iglesias and other US Attorneys who wouldn’t agree to phony prosecutions of innocent voters.

Iglesias told me, “This voter fraud thing is the bogeyman. It was designed to scare up, rile the [Republican] base. I looked into [the fraud allegations] ...We didn’t find the evidence.”

I met with Iglesias at the park overlooking the Statue of Liberty in New York. The wistful ex-prosecutor, who has returned to his former post with the Navy as a JAG lawyer, said, “Looking back, I mean I feel like I was set up; that they really felt that I would go forward with some half-baked prosecutions and hope for a guilty plea. That’s not what a legitimate federal prosecutor does.”

(Rove won’t respond to BBC’s requests for his views - nor respond to a subpoena from Congress to explain his involvement in the firings.)

Whatever Rove’s political motives, I did have to ask if there’s a legitimate reason for these new ID laws. I challenged the leader of the New Mexico Catholic Charities voter drive, Santiago Juarez, to answer Ms. Fox-Young’s charge that, without voter ID, his new citizens could steal elections by voting more than once using someone else’s name.

Santiago replied, “How do you organize thousands of people to vote twice? Hell, it’s hard enough organizing them to vote once!”

* * * * *
Greg Palast is the author of the New York Times bestsellers, Armed Madhouse and The Best Democracy Money Can Buy.

Space Invaders: Five Million Aliens for Hillary

way,” she said. And they don’t.

But hey, what’s wrong with requiring voter ID? I’ll give you a million reasons. Since 2004, when 300,000 citizens lost their right to vote because of ID challenges, the number of states that have passed voter ID laws has quadrupled. Expect the challenges to quadruple as well, to over a million in the upcoming 2008 presidential election. Does ID challenges make a difference? In New Mexico, George Bush’s victory over John Kerry by 5,900 votes can be completely accounted for by minority provisional ballots rejected. ID was the key.

In Louisiana, the law says voters may be asked to produce a photo ID. A study conducted by the US Department of Justice discovered that Black voters are only one-fifth as likely to have photo ID’s as white voters. (That figure may be optimistic - as Justice took the survey before Black voters’ ID washed away with Hurricane Katrina.)

In New Mexico, in Louisiana, in Georgia, in Alabama and in Florida, it’s the same story. It’s not a random set of voters who lose out on ID challenges; it’s voters of color.

Four years ago, the Jim Crow era ended when biased impediments to voting were struck down by the courts and Congress: poll taxes, “literacy” tests, citizenship tests that blocked Blacks more than whites. From that time until now, almost every state has ac-

Community Speaks Out

Press conference held to demand local control

By Rev. Floyd D. Harris

Several organization leaders, along with members of the West Fresno School District elected governing board, held a November 23 press conference to insist that the State return local control to the district. The district has been under state control since March of 2003 after a long bitter battle with former county superintendent Pete Mehas. Claims made by the county superintendent that the district was on the brink of bankruptcy that lead to the takeover, have been shown to be false.

For more than 3 years the board struggled to maintain control of its finances and leadership of the district while clear signs of interference by the county superintendent's office were the causes of the perception of a district out of control. "We knew that things could not have been as bad as he was making them out to be. Dr. Lee assured us that the district was in sound financial shape" said board president Alice Grant. Ms Grant had served on the board from 1998- 2000. She said that Dr. Lee had left the district with more than 1 million dollars as an ending balance and had a growing student enrollment. "We knew that being the only all African American Board in Fresno County placed us under the microscope but we never thought that Dr. Pete Mehas would and could disregard the ED code and interfere to the extent that he did" remarked Ms. Grant. She said that she had contacted the State Attorney General's office to look into the fact that acts of double entrees had been uncovered by the state administrator. "Their response back to me (several weeks later) was they had turned over my concerns to the states superintendents' office. To me that's like asking the fox how many chickens are in the hen house?" said Ms Grant

Former board member Mel Sanders recounted how the district staff was told by the county superintendent's office to disregard any and all directive by the district's superintendent and to take all directions from the county's fiscal advisor. Sanders said access to the districts codes to request movement of budgeted funds was denied by Dr. Pete Mehas. "He didn't act alone" Sanders said, "He had help from white staffers who did not like that fact that the district leadership had an African American view of education". Sanders said many of the people of color within the district were threatened with the loss of their jobs if they sided with the board against the county office. "I saw many African American employees who benefitted from the support of the board, suddenly turn to support what they knew was wrong, just to keep a job" Sanders said.

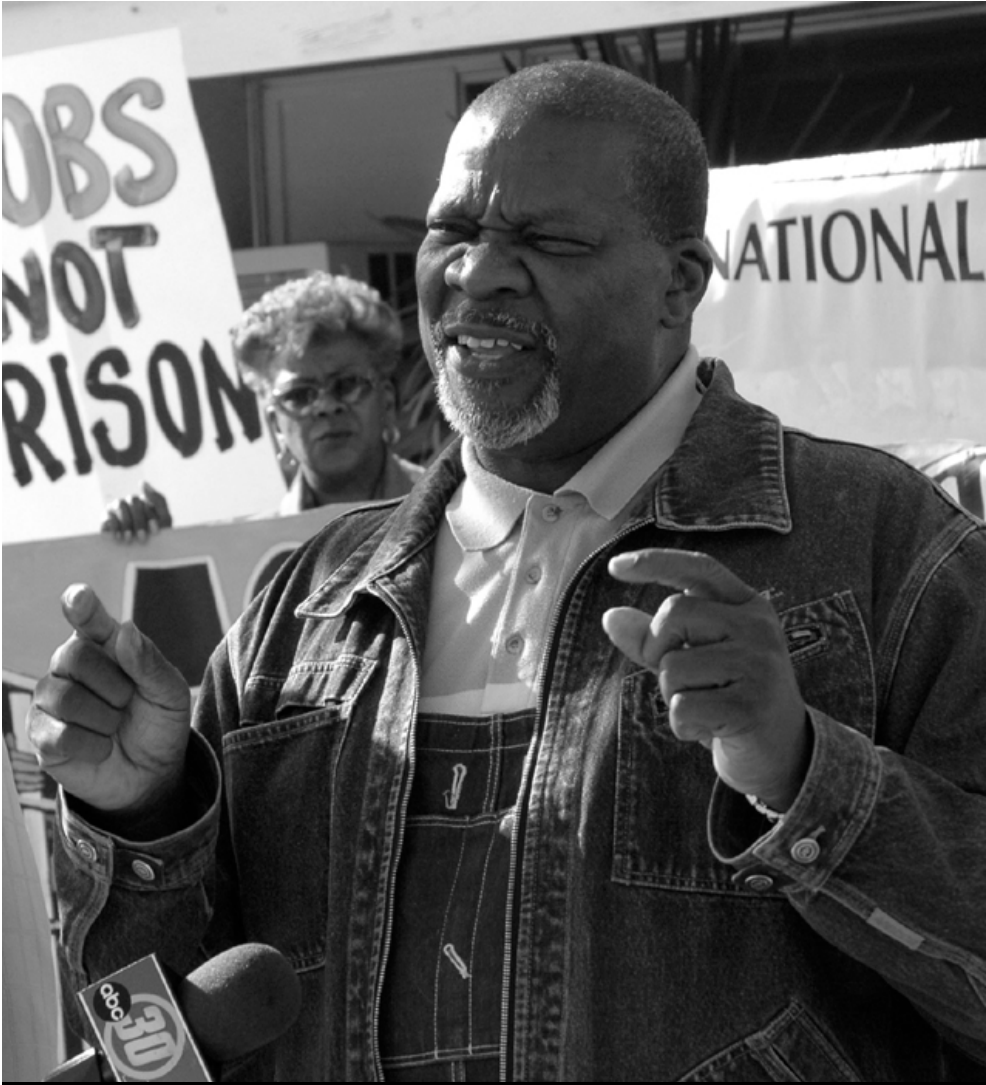
In 2006 the state assigned a new administrator to the school district who reported that his business office had found errors in the budget process of the district. He presented a revised budget to the board revealing over 1 million dollars had been double entered in the budget prior to the state takeover. West Fresno School Trustee, Lula Tucker asked, "why have people involved with 'cooking the books' not been charged? I've sent letters to the State asking in light of these facts, why do we not have local control?" Reverend Leonard Adams President of the local chapter of Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) remarked that there must be reconciliation and healing with the African American community before real change can occur. "One just doesn't mistreat his fellow man and expect things to be 'business as usual' without first asking forgiveness and being willing to make whole those who were offended." Adams offered the support of SCLC in reclaiming the district to local control. He also stated that the mission of SCLC was to encourage the African American Church to become more active in the day-to-day lives of their members.

The decision to return local control rests with the State Superintendent Jack O'Connell who is completing his final term as state superintendent of schools. "We will be requesting a meeting with him to hear his explanation for the delay of returning the district to local control," expressed Darrel Muhammad of the Nation of Islam. "We are standing together and we demand justice for our people, we expect change."

Lewis Coleman, president of the Local Organizing Committee (LOC) followed by saying that our community must mobilize every voter in this war of equality and justice and fight back. "This could only happen because our community does not participate in the political process to the level necessary to influence politicians." Coleman said that the African American community is the only community where politicians will attempt such outrageous actions. LOC President, Mr. Coleman exclaimed that there has to

be accountability for actions taken against the community. "When Dr. Pete Mehas can destroy the district and our leadership is being dragged through the mud because of the lies and manipulations of the office of the County Superintendent, then we know that racism is not dead" said Mr. Coleman. Coleman said, "Politicians like former assemblywoman Sarah Reyes who sponsored the takeover bill (AB38) and others must not be given a free pass to continue to use African Americans as stepping stones to higher office".

Former board member Ms Juanita Morrison who served on the board during the battle of control of the district summed up the sentiment of the press conference by saying that the answers to the problems of the district lies within us. She said that too many in the African American community believe that in order for success to occur, we must allow non blacks to lead us. "Check our history. When we worked together as a family we were able to do great things, even while facing death" she said.



Lewis Coleman is the president of the Local Organizing Committee.

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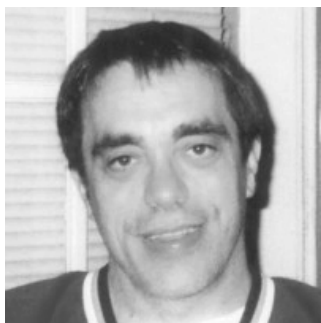
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QUEER EYE

Fresno Is Battleground for Episcopal Church

by Dan Waterhouse

Since a majority of those attending the convention of the San Joaquin diocese voted in December to leave the Episcopal Church, the drama has heightened.

The vote on December 8th came after many years of rancor over the ordination of women and the role of gays in the church. The San Joaquin diocese was one of a few dioceses that refused to follow church rules for many years and ordain women. The breaking point that led to the split came after an openly gay priest was elevated to bishop in the Episcopal Church several years ago.

The drama now includes: Anglican Bishop John-David Schofield removing several vicars who didn't support him and announcing his intent to retain the smaller churches in the diocese; the national media reporting on long-standing rumours about Schofield's sexual orientation; and presiding bishop Jefferts Schori appointing the Rev. Canon Bob Moore as the interim pastoral presence in the diocese and declaring that Schofield has abandoned the Episcopal Church; he can not function as Bishop in the diocese.

After the vote, presiding bishop Schori made it clear to Schofield that he could not take the diocese out of the Episcopal Church. In a letter to Schofield, Schori outlined what would happen if Schofield "pretended" to leave the Church: the Presiding Bishop could "present materials to the Review Committee regarding potential abandonment by" Schofield, "and if the Committee agreed that abandonment had taken place."

On Friday, January 11th, Schori announced that the review committee had determined that Schofield had abandoned the Episcopal Church and that Schofield was now barred "from exercising the gifts of ordination in the ordained ministry of this Church" She added that "pursuant to" church canons, I order him to cease all 'episcopal, ministerial, and canonical acts, except as relate to the administration of the temporal affairs of the Diocese of San Joaquin'." This

means Schofield at this time has no authority in the diocese.

Schofield's reaction to the ban was essentially, 'I'm no longer part of the Episcopal Church so they have no authority over me.'

In the morning of January 12th, the following blustering statement was issued by Schofield's office: "The Episcopal Church's assertion that Bishop Schofield has abandoned the communion of this Church is an admission that TEC rejects the historical Anglican faith which is why The Diocese of San Joaquin appealed to the Anglican Province of the Southern Cone of South America for emergency and temporary protection. The majority of the other provinces of the Anglican Communion hold to the traditional faith. It is the primary duty of bishops to guard the faith and Bp Schofield has been continually discriminated against for having done so while Bishops and Archbishops around the world have affirmed not only his stance but the move to the Southern Cone. Bishop Schofield is currently a member of both the House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church and the House of Bishops of the Southern Cone, a position not prohibited by either house. Governing documents of TEC do not prohibit relationships between different members of the Anglican Communion, rather they encourage it. TEC's action demonstrates that there is an enormous difference between their church and most of the Anglican Communion. Again, this action is a demonstration that TEC is walking apart from the faith and its expression of morality held by the rest of the Anglican Communion. The Episcopal Church's own identity is dependent upon its relationship with the whole Anglican Communion. TEC should consider whether it is imperiling that relationship by taking such punitive actions. How is it that over 60 million Anglicans world wide can be wrong while a few hundred thousand in the American Church can claim to be right?"

The statement was then pulled in the afternoon of the same day from all the websites it was posted on. The

statement reportedly was put together by a Laguna Beach public relations firm, Gladstone International, which specializes in "crisis management." He now has two months to recant.

If Schofield fails to do so, the matter would go to the full House of Bishops. If the House concurred, the Presiding Bishop could remove Schofield "and declare the episcopate of that diocese vacant." An interim bishop would be appointed until a new diocesan bishop search process could be initiated and a new bishop elected and consecrated. A lawsuit would be filed against the departed leadership and a representative sample of departing congregations if they attempted to retain Episcopal Church property."

Schofield claimed in December that the Archbishop of Canterbury, the spiritual leader of the Anglican Communion, approved of the split. In fact, the Archbishop had not.

San Francisco's Bay Area Reporter raised the question of Schofield's sexual orientation in its coverage of the

December 8th vote. That question was first raised in a 1994 story in the gay Episcopal group Integrity's newsletter. According to that story, Schofield had "told members of his clergy that he was a 'cured homosexual'." The *Voice of Integrity* story went on to say that "in an amazingly frank interview with *Foundations Daily*, the Episcopal Synod of America journal at convention (the ESA was the group opposed to women and gays in the church in the 1990s), Schofield said his opposition (to gays in the church) was based on his own experience at New Creation Ministries, an 'ex-gay' program in Fresno."

New Creations Ministries is tucked away on the grounds of Schofield's cathedral, St. James Anglican, at Cedar and Dakota Avenues. It claims to "cure" queerness.

According to Episcopalian blogger Lisa Fox, the Integrity story was seemingly confirmed by Brad Drell and Greg Griffith of StandFirm in November 2006 after she reported on it. Drell said on the group's website, "Lisa Fox just recently discovered what many of us knew, but that some of you may not know. This, of course, explains why he is being attacked so very often. His is a witness the Episcopal Church desires most to stifle." StandFirm styles itself as "traditional Anglicanism in America." In other words, it is opposed to the Episcopal Church and presumably friendly towards Schofield.

However, both Rev. Gandenberger and Schofield deny the story. Ganderburger confirmed that Schofield supports New Creation Ministries, and has attended events there. Schofield says he never said he was a 'cured' homosexual. Gandenberger urged anyone with any proof to make it public.

According to *Episcopal Life*, the vicar of St. Nicholas Episcopal Church in Atwater did not support the bishop at the convention. On December 20, Schofield allegedly threatened St. Nicholas with closure, and the vicar reportedly wrote to Schofield, asking him to clarify his intentions.

Bishop Schofield visited St. Nicholas on December 23, accompanied by men described in news reports as bodyguards. Schofield addressed the congregation after the service. He said he had not come to fire the vicar nor to close the small church, then he announced the vicar would no longer be paid to serve there.

Then, on Christmas morning, Schofield's assistant the Rev. Canon William Gandenberger sent an e-mail to St. Nicholas' deacon and senior warden, announcing that the vicar was fired, that locks were to be changed, that financial control was to be ceded to the diocese of San Joaquin, and that all records were to be turned over to the diocese.

Members of St. Nicholas' congregation reported that there had been what was described as "an unpleasant scene" on December 23, when Schofield appeared. According to witnesses, the vicar then "gave the bishop a piece of his mind."

St. Nicholas has reconstituted itself as "St. Nicholas in Exile" and is holding services elsewhere in the Atwater area.

Church-goers who want to remain in the Episcopal Church are attending services at the five parishes that voted against the split. Services at Fresno's Holy Family parish church have been packed since December 8th. Holy Family voted against leaving the Episcopal Church.

Local Episcopalians planned an all-day meeting on January 26th at Hanford's Church of the Savior to discuss the future of the diocese. According to an announcement posted on the Remain Episcopal website, "the title of this event, "Moving Forward, Welcoming All" expresses the desire of the Remain Episcopal membership that their diocese be rebuilt with an inclusive and Christ-centered message of love and salvation, rather than a judgmental attitude that demands schism. We hope many will experience the joy of reconnecting with the national church in a spirit of mutual respect, and the prospect of a renewed mission for Jesus Christ as experienced in and through the Episcopal Church."

Remain Episcopal supports those who wish to remain affiliated with the Episcopal Church in the San Joaquin diocese. Their vision is "celebrating and proclaiming the inclusive love of Jesus Christ in and through the Episcopal Church." The group maintains a website, www.remainepiscopal.org, where more information about what's happening can be found.

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Credo

By Richard Stone

“to be alive is to grow
to grow is to sprout
to push up through
the hard-packed earth
of impossible situations
reaching to the light
source of all our being
there to leaf
to bud
there to burst into FULL BLOOM”
Margaret Hudson

How apt, how true. For Margaret Hudson’s “Credo”, a picture would be indeed worth a thousand words. The best I can do is a word-picture.

I enter Margaret’s newly re-done living room. Always cozy and alive, it is now glowing. The walls (“white forever!”) are now a pistachio-greenish wash, against which the dozens of her friends’ paintings seem like windows into dozens of different worlds. A new bay window lets in so much more light and living landscape. Message: it is never too late to change, to grow, to make life more beautiful.

Margaret greets me a-buzz with excitement. How can she begin to speak all that comes to mind with questions like, “What beliefs shape your actions? what do you intend when you wake up each day?” She is welcoming, and sits me down, with purpose, at the old wooden diningroom table, her father’s table, a man whose brilliance and humanity she feels ever-present, a man whose international assortment of friends opened in her young mind a sense of life beyond the boundaries of her own experience.

“And that,” she begins almost randomly, pointing to a particular picture, “is painted by a man with cerebral palsy, who holds the brush in his mouth. And that one, the onions—the only one in here that’s by me...I was



Margaret Hudson - Find out what her ‘CREDO’ is by reading this article.

searching for a subject to paint and I stumbled upon some onions that had been planted a long time before and been forgotten. One had matured and rotted; but four new onions were sprouting inside. And I saw life emerging from death, and that was a subject for me.”

“But beliefs...I don’t know. I came from a family of church-goers, and I can say I’m a follower of Jesus. But I’m no longer a Christian. At this age, theology has dissolved. I can’t live bounded by rules and rites....I know only that I’m here to love and care for others. I wake up filled with gratitude for being alive, and go to bed filled with gratitude for another day of living.

A picture visibly passes through her mind...and she

speaks of how she came to have the gardens on the grounds, and how she loves “the floral project” whereby she raises flowers and her friend harvests them to make bouquets for the Hinds Hospice and the Marjaree Mason Center and the Evangel Home.

Another picture, another story: how the sweat lodge came about, and the 10 years of wonderful monthly gatherings.

And yet another story: how “the big frost” of several years ago broke all the clay sculptures she was working on, but led her to take painting classes at City College, opening her to a world of color in her art. And how an unplanned excursion to cathedrals in Paris led her to see the similar structure of vast sacred space inside tulip buds, and so she began a series of 36 4-foot canvasses of tulips. And in one bent-over tulip she found an image for the pain of loss: the loss she felt for son who had yielded his life to his own pain; the loss felt by soldiers’ mothers during the Gulf War then in progress, and of all mothers during all wars. She followed tulips from buds to disintegration, and found in their trajectory a celebration of the life process.

More stories, of the 2000 schoolchildren who come to the grounds each year on field trips, how she shows them the growing things she cares about, and the joy of taking clay in your hand and creating something from yourself, hoping when they leave the children will feel glad they’re alive.

Teachers? Matthew Fox, Thomas Merton? Friends and artists? Beliefs? “I believe that gardening and painting are meditative endeavors, where you deal with the deepest issues of possibility and limitation. I believe in the utmost importance of valuing and caring for our bodies and well-being. I believe I’m here to create beauty...to feel pain and create beauty from it.”

But it is the picture of Margaret herself, animated by thoughts and feelings, amidst the things of the world she loves, that most truly represents her Credo.

Until the Violence Stops... V-Day at Fresno State

By ashley fairburn

When one in four women in the U.S. (one in three worldwide) will be assaulted in her lifetime something must be done. Feminist playwright Eve Ensler, author of the phenomenal play *The Vagina Monologues*, has created a global movement for communities to do their part. Ten years ago Ensler began traveling the world to listen to women speak about their experiences as women. She has interviewed survivors of war and genocide in such places as Yugoslavia or Afghanistan, women fleeing female genital cutting in Kenya, survivors of child abuse who now are homeless here in the U.S. Ensler has also spoken with women about discovering themselves, their first sexual pleasure, how they feel about their vaginas. These interviews have been compiled as *The Vagina Monologues*, a collection of monologues featuring these women’s stories. Every year hundreds of communities around the world participate in what is known as V-Day, also known as Vagina Day, Violence Day, Victory Against Violence Day, an event that combines art and activism to spread awareness. Every year during February and March Ensler freely offers the rights to her play *The Vagina Monologues* to be put on as a part of V-Day on one condition, all proceeds from ticket sales are donated to organizations who are working to end violence against women. In 2006 over 2,700 communities around the world participated in the V-Day and in the nine years it has been going on over \$40 million has been raised.

Once again Fresno State is happily joining this global movement. On February 10th and 11th V-Day Fresno State, a coalition of the Women’s Studies club P.O.W.E.R. and the Women’s Alliance, will be performing *The Vagina Monologues* in the Satellite Student Union. Performing the *Monologues* includes a talented and diverse cast of V-Day Fresno State members and women from the Fresno State Theater Department. We are all quite excited to be a part of this consciousness and fundraising event. Ten percent of all money raised through ticket sales or otherwise will be donated to the 2008 spotlight organization Women of New Orleans. All other proceeds will go to Fresno organizations Fresno State’s Violence Prevention Project, Centro la Familia, the Marjaree Mason Center, and a new organization addressing violence in Hmong communities known as United Hmong Women and Men Against Violence.

Watching *The Vagina Monologues* is a breathtaking experience. The audience will be moved from laughter to tears and back again. It makes for a great girl’s night out or is a great way for guys to gain perspective and understand how to be allies to their mothers, sisters, friends, and community. Men should not be intimidated or worry they will experience man-bashing. That would be counter-productive to the V-Day movement. Instead women and men can expect to hear a side of women’s lives rarely spoken about. This is despite the fact that so many of us, men and women alike, have experienced violence, at home, in relationships, at school, on the streets, or in militarized zones. Speaking openly and candidly about this reality is the first step to addressing a problem so many of our communities face and begin the dialogue to heal each other and ourselves.

Fortunately the violence women face is not the only topic of this play. The *Monologues* also include experiences of pleasure, first loves, short skirts, and reclama-

tion of words. And while experiencing such forthright monologues one can remember that their money is well spent. Tens of thousands of dollars were raised last time *The Vagina Monologues* were performed at Fresno State, and we hope to do so again. This is not just a night at the theater. While at other times throughout the year theater groups may buy the rights to perform this *The Vagina Monologues* for their own profit, V-Day Fresno State is offering the opportunity to be a part of a global movement to end violence, spread awareness, and to all do our part for our community.

Please join us for this captivating play two nights only February 10th and/or 11th at the Satellite Student Union. Doors will open at 6 pm and the play will begin at 7. Ticket prices for students are \$5 and \$10 for the general public. And of course further donations will be accepted.

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ashley fairburn is a member of the Fresno State Women’s Studies club P.O.W.E.R. and of the C.A.F.E. Infoshop. She can be reached at tiltgrrrl33@hotmail.com.



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Is There Equal Justice Under the Law?

By Mike Rhodes

There were a lot of things about Pamela Kincaid's life that I didn't know when she died last summer. Pam was a friend of mine, she was homeless, and she was the lead plaintiff in a lawsuit against the City of Fresno. The lawsuit was filed to stop the city from bulldozing homeless encampments; in part because of Pam's courage and willingness to stand up for justice, a preliminary injunction was issued to protect homeless people's property. Some people think that it was her high profile in this case that led to her death.

Pam's boyfriend at the time, whom we will call Mario, told me that she was beaten by drug dealers who were directed by the police to attack Pam. Mario said he witnessed the beating, and he described it in painful detail. He swears he will have revenge on those who attacked Pam.

Since writing an earlier article about this incident (see: <http://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2007/08/18/18441458.php>) I have been told that Mario himself beat Pam and that he told his story about the police connection and the drug dealers to direct attention away from himself. People who believe Mario was involved in the beating incident cite his history of violence toward Pam as evidence that he was capable of the crime. Pam told her friends that Mario hit her and she left him, more than once, because of the violence.

After the memorial service held for Pam at Courthouse Park in downtown Fresno (see: <http://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2007/08/27/18444050.php>) I was approached by an older homeless man. He said "I want to talk with you because I know who beat Pam." In a whisper he said that there was a witness to the incident and his friend, Susan Gamboa (not her real name), had seen Mario beat Pam. I said "I want to talk to this person," but was told that Gamboa had disappeared shortly after Pam ended up in the hospital. As far as I know, Gamboa has not been seen in Fresno again

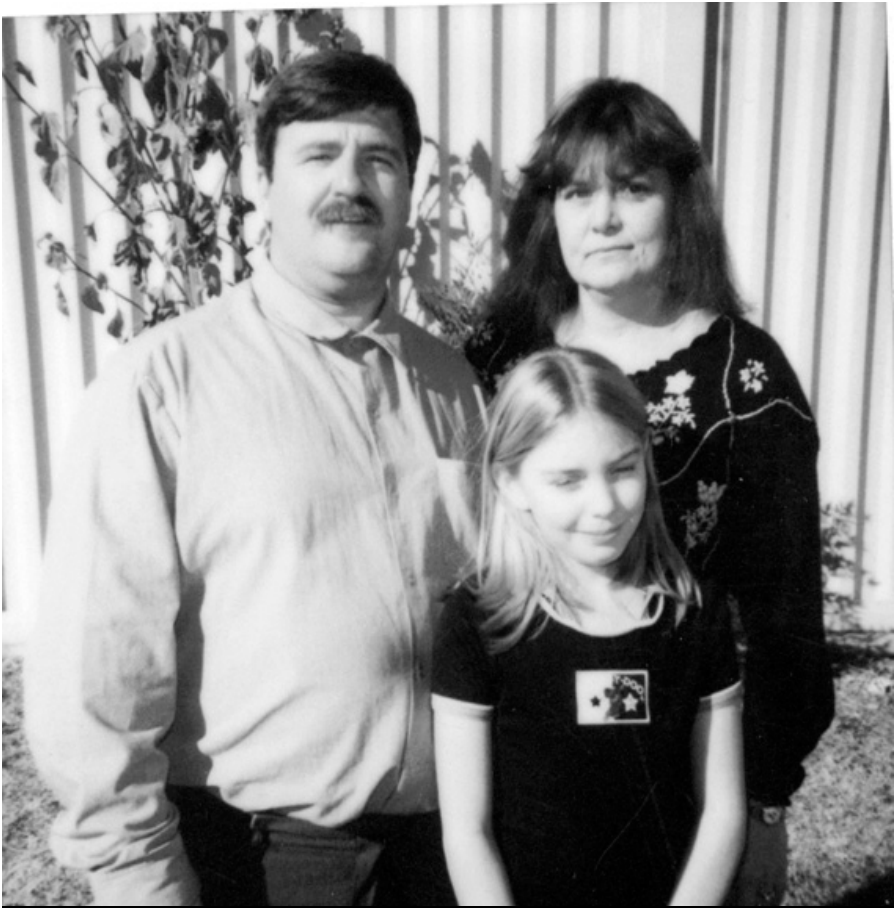
If the Fresno Police Department had done their job after they interviewed Pam in the Community Medical Regional Center (CRMC) emergency room, we might have found out who was responsible for the brutal and vicious attack that nearly killed her. Instead, the FPD officers investigating the crime wrote the following report:

I contacted Kincaid, the poss vict. She was being treated. Unknown persons dropped her off. She had numerous abrasions on her body and face. Her face and head was purple. One doctor thought she had severe sunburn as the skin was peeling uniformly on her face.

We asked her what happened and she said the people at a hospital did this. She said she was not beat up. The injuries looked approx 3 to 5 days old. When asked how she got them she got mad and told me she had already told me. They did this to her at a hospital. The nurse said that's what she told them also. She

talked as if she was mentally ill but I could find no priors.

The FPD never carried out an investigation to determine why Pam ended up in the emergency room at CRMC. Doctors at the hospital later determined she had subdural hematoma, which means there was bleeding in her skull that was putting pressure on her brain, causing disorientation. The subdural hematoma accounts for Pam's behavior when she was talking to the police, but it does not explain why the responding officers did not take her condition more seriously. Is it



Paul, Pam, and Kayla. Paul and Pam were married at Avenal State Prison, where this photo was taken.

possible that they did not investigate the crime because she was a homeless woman? Would they have paid more attention if Mayor Alan Autry had been beaten and was in the emergency room?

Pam was so disoriented from the beating that she did not know what city she was in or what year it was. She told the nurses at CRMC a vivid story about how she and her daughter had been raped and beaten. Pam said her daughter had been killed and she was left for dead.

In the spring of last year Pam was told that her only daughter Kayla was dead. Pam was distraught, depressed and inconsolable when she learned about the death of her daughter. The torment Pam experienced manifested itself as the delusion of the rape and

Fresno looking for Pam. When they could not find her, they left word with one of Pam's friends that Kayla had died. The friend told Pam the sad news. Who would lie about something like that, and why?

Kayla and Pam were very close and loved each other very much. Before becoming homeless, Pam lived with Kayla in Coalinga where Pam worked for the local school district as a cook. She had moved to Coalinga to be near Paul Kincaid, who was in Avenal State Prison. Kayla is the child of Paul's brother Michael. Pam visited Paul every week and eventually they got married.

I visited Paul in Avenal and was impressed. First of all, I was impressed by how god-forsaken the prison at Avenal is. The road leading to Avenal is like a moonscape and once you get to the prison you are confronted with razor wire, sally gates, flies everywhere, and the smell of chicken shit from their poultry farm. Hardly the country club some right wing ideologues say prison has become. Paul has been in prison for 26 years on a sentence of life with the possibility of parole. He said I was the first visitor he has had in years.

Paul said Pam was the best thing that had happened to him and he wanted to know what happened to her. We talked all afternoon and at the end Paul said he would do anything he could to get to the truth.

The truth is not going to be easy to find, in part because none of the government agencies involved are asking the hard questions and vigorously investigating what happened. The FPD gave up before they started. Detective Mark Eaton of the Fresno County Sheriff's department says that the investigation into Pam's death is continuing, but "preliminarily it looks like an accident." Pam fell from the fourth floor balcony at University Medical Center (UMC) where she had been transferred after leaving CRMC.

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) also investigated Pam's death. Their conclusion, in a letter to CRMC dated October 29, 2007, was that "after completing direct observations, interviews, and/or review



This is the balcony on the 4th floor at UMC. It is not likely someone would "accidentally" fall off the balcony.



This is the view looking down from the 4th floor balcony.

beating she told to the nurses who oversaw her care. Fortunately for Kayla, but sadly for Pam, Kayla was not dead; she was living in Coalinga all the time.

Kayla contacted me through her best friend's mother after she learned through news reports about the death of her mother. Kayla wanted to know about her mother's life in Fresno and to learn the truth about Pam's death. I asked Pam's friends why she thought her daughter was dead. The story they told me was that someone had come to the homeless encampments in downtown

of documents, it was determined that violation of regulations could not be substantiated." The CDPH could find no fault with the hospital's procedures.

A letter from Marjory Beekman, director of Med/Surg at CRMC, sent to CDPH immediately after Pam's death, said that she "fell from the 4th floor balcony to the ground below. Staff heard the alarm on the door to the balcony go off and immediately investigated and found no one there. They looked below and saw no one. They did a bed check and found Pam Kincaid missing. They looked on the ground floor and found her. The staff called 911 and she was admitted to CRMC ICU."

On August 1, the day Pam died, I got a call from the attending physician at CRMC who said Pam had landed on her head. He was asking me, since I was the person Pam had designated to make medical decisions for her, if they could disconnect her from life support. Since I was out of the country at the time, I asked Kelly Borkert, a friend of mine who works with Food Not Bombs, if he could go down to UMC and try to find out what hap-

Continued on page 10

pened. He went with Al Williams, a homeless man from the Roeding Park area, and when they arrived they found a repair person working on the door alarm that is supposed to alert staff if anyone opens the door to the balcony. Pam had fallen at about 1:30 AM. Why was there a repair person working on the door alarm at 8 o'clock that morning?

Cynthia Manuszak, a local artist and photographer, had tried to call Pam during the two days she was at UMC. Manuszak was told, several times, that Pam was not available because she was on the balcony smoking. Pam did not like to be confined and sometimes felt claustrophobic. One worker on the fourth floor said that when the staff went onto the balcony the night Pam died, they found a pillow. This worker speculated that other staff members might have let Pam sleep on the balcony.

If you go to the fourth floor balcony at UMC, you will see that it is part of a fire escape and that, if she had wanted to leave the building, Pam could have just walked down the stairs. There was nothing to stop her from leaving if she wanted to go (except the alarm on the door and the alert staff). Why then would she have gone out the door and over or under the fence on the balcony instead of walking down the stairs? Could she have rolled under the protective fence in her sleep? Is it possible that someone pushed her over the side? Perhaps the person who beat her up wanted to keep her from talking. Maybe she was so distraught over the death of her daughter that she committed suicide. Without an investigation it will be hard to know for sure. Perhaps a look at the video surveillance tapes would reveal something. As far as I know, nobody has looked at the video.

Five months after Pam's death, the Coroner's office still has not released the report on her death. I have paid for a copy of the report but have been given no indication of when it will be complete. Maybe the length of the



Pam Kincaid (center) is talking to Jeremy Alderson on the Homelessness Marathon which was broadcast nationwide from Fresno last year.

sheriff's department investigation and the missing Coroner's report mean that there is more going on here than we know about. On the other hand, it could just be that the death of another homeless woman is a low priority and the investigation has ended up on the bottom of the work pile for too long.

How could a seriously disoriented person, who is under medical care, be allowed to get to a fourth floor

balcony where she could fall to her death? Didn't the staff supervising her medical care have an obligation to keep her from hurting herself? If this had happened to Mayor Autry, the powers that be in this community would be howling to high heaven. Justice would be demanded and those responsible for his death would be held accountable. Pam Kincaid deserves nothing less.

Advocates for the Homeless File Lawsuit against City of Sacramento and County of Sacramento

(This is a press release from Sacramento Loaves and Fishes <http://www.sacloaves.org/2007/08/02/class-action/>)

A coalition of advocates for the homeless today filed a lawsuit in federal court challenging the confiscation of personal property belonging to homeless people by the City of Sacramento and the County of Sacramento.

The lawsuit also attacks the practice of City and County law enforcement agencies of writing citations for illegal camping to homeless persons sleeping on public property during the night time.

"City and County governments in Sacramento have a long history of taking basic survival equipment from homeless people without proper notice," said Mark Merin, the principal attorney for the group. "Tents, sleeping bags and blankets are tossed into County dumpsters by Sheriff's work crews and homeless people are left to shiver in the night. Deputies then write them tickets for sleeping. It is our goal to get these practices stopped before the onset of winter."

"People think that homeless people can just go to shelters," Merin continued. "But there are not enough shelters available at any time of the year in Sacramento. People have to sleep and if they have no housing and no shelter is available, then they have to sleep out in the open. The solution to homelessness is housing. It is not in harassing homeless people until they go away." The lawsuit alleges that such practices violate basic constitutional rights and asks the Federal Court to enjoin the City and County from continuing such actions.

The lawsuit was filed on behalf of eleven individual plaintiffs and asks the Court to certify them as representatives of a class of all homeless people who have had their property taken by City and County work crews and/or who have been cited for camping while sleeping on public property at night or in the early morning. Loaves & Fishes, Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee (SHOC), and Francis House, all

nonprofit charities that assist homeless people, have joined the suit as plaintiffs.

Each of the eleven individual plaintiffs has been homeless for all or part of the last twelve months. Five of the plaintiffs continue to be homeless and are presently living outside. Four are residing in shelters or transitional housing and two have found permanent housing. Merin listed the primary goals of the lawsuit as follows:

1. A requirement that City and County law enforcement agencies provide actual notice to homeless people of an intended clean-up of camping sites in a reasonable period of time before a sweep.
2. A requirement that property taken from homeless people be stored at a location reasonably proximate to the place from which it was taken and that homeless people have an opportunity to retrieve their property within a reasonable period of time.
3. Compensation to homeless persons whose property has been taken and destroyed by City and County work crews.
4. A prohibition against citing homeless people for unlawful camping when they are sleeping on City or County property during the night or early morning hours.
5. Convenient, accessible, secure storage space in which homeless persons may temporarily leave personal possessions.
6. Clean, maintained portable toilets and sinks located convenient to where homeless persons sleep.
7. Easily obtained free public transportation passes for homeless persons.
8. Garbage dumpsters in which homeless persons may deposit their refuse convenient to where they sleep.
9. Funding for additional shelters, services for the homeless and permanent housing.

The lawsuit charges that the practices of the City and County are an ongoing violation of rights secured to the homeless plaintiffs by the Eighth, Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution.

The case is Lehr et al. v. City of Sacramento et al and County of Sacramento et al. filed in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of California.



Homeless people and their allies in Sacramento have filed a lawsuit to defend homeless people's civil rights. A similar lawsuit, to stop the City of Fresno from taking and immediately destroying homeless peoples property, is expected to be heard in Federal Court this summer.



Vince Lavery will be in Fresno this month

HE'S B-A-A-C-K

It's been about a year and a half since Vincent Lavery—one of Fresno's most outspoken voices of conscience—absconded to Ireland taking his trove of ideas, critiques and dramatic oratory. Well, ye miscarriers of justice, take note—Vince is back.

Vincent will be paying a visit to his long-time home early this month, and several events have been planned in his honor and to take advantage of his unique perspectives and talents:

—Sat. Feb. 9th Vince will be speaking at The Studio in North Fork, at a festive event taking place between 3-7 p.m. including music and a pot luck dinner. His subject will be: Sleeping with the Elephant, one man's view of how the U.S. looks to other members of our global village.

—Sun. Feb. 10th A welcoming reception for Vince including Irish music and readings of Irish literature, with a pot luck dinner. At the Community Mennonite Church, NE corner of Olive and Willow, starting at 6:30 p.m.

—Mon. Feb. 11th Vince will give his talk (see Sat. above) at the new Unitarian Church, on Alluvial just west of Willow, starting at 7 p.m.

—Wed. Feb 13th Vince will be present at two screenings of the film "Children in the Crossfire", based on his experiences setting up a summer program for Protestant and Catholic children from Northern Ireland during the peak of the conflict there. Showings at 12 noon and 7 p.m. at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence

—Wed. Feb 13th Vince will be interviewed on Stir It Up, KFCF 88.1 FM, at 3 p.m. on matters political and cultural.

Throughout his stay, Vince will be welcoming calls and visits from friends, and can be reached through the Center for Nonviolence at 237-3223.

Protect Your Civil Liberties

By Bill Simon

The Greater Fresno Area Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union - Northern California continues to be busy. On January 11, the Chapter cosponsored a "Restore the Bill of Rights and Close Guantanamo" Demonstration with Peace Fresno, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and the National Network in Action at the Federal building. To see the action, check out these links: on Sun Mt: <http://www.sunmt.org/jan13chron08.html> and on Indymedia: <http://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2008/01/11/18471801.php>.

On January 24, we held a Social Meeting at the Landmark Restaurant so that ACLU members could meet the board members and informally discuss their concerns. It was also a chance for nonmembers to learn what the ACLU is all about. That's ten days after this article is being written, but I'll confidently say it was a great success and everybody had a great time.

The next Board Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 13, 6:30 pm. The location is still to be determined, but we will announce it on the email Community Alliance Community Calendar and on our webpage (below). Members and the public are always welcome at board meetings.

You can contact us by mail at 4974 N Fresno St., Fresno, CA 93726-0317 or by email at simonaclu@sbcglobal.net. Check out our webpage at: http://www.aclunc.org/action/chapters/greater_fresno_chapter.shtml. For advice if you have legal issues involving civil liberties, call the ACLU Civil Liberties Counselor: 1-415-621-2488.

New Year brings renewed efforts for peace and justice

December was a busy month as we shared our message of "PEACE ON EARTH" outside Toys R Us and Wal-Mart, inside the main Military Recruitment Station in Fresno, on the peace corner during our Annual Santas for Peace demonstration.

New Year, old war. We closed out 2007 with Congress capitulating by giving \$70 billion to the Bush Administration. Peace Fresno held a news conference to express our disgust at Congress. The coverage was good, but we need to keep the pressure up. Congress will have another chance in the spring. We must re-double our efforts to force our elected representatives to say "NO TO WAR!"

January brought new opportunities to share our message of peace and justice. Standing in the rain at the corner of Blackstone and Shaw on the first Friday showed motorists that we are not fair weathered progressives. On January 11, members of ACLU-NC, WILPF, and Peace Fresno gathered in front of the new Federal Building to demand "Close GITMO Now!" "End Torture" and "Restore our civil liberties."

On February 18, we invite you to join us in the **Presidents' Day Peace March** to send a loud message to our neighbors and all presidential candidates. The march begins at noon. We will march from the Tower Theatre to the new Federal Building (on Tulare Street in Fresno) and rally for peace.

The annual **Rally in the Valley** is set for March 15. Save the date!

Now is the time to demand restoration of civil liberties. Now is the time to end this war and prevent the next war. Let's continue the struggle for peace and justice together.

###

Scott Key is the president of Peace Fresno. He can be contacted at president@peacefresno.org or 487-2515.



Kucinich finds \$700 billion for health

sunmt.org/jan2chron08.html

**Annually Americans spend on health care
\$2.2 TRILLION**

\$1500 Billion

\$700 Billion

**2/3
ACTUAL
HEALTH CARE**

**1/3
INSURANCE
COMPANIES**

**ALL \$\$ GOES TO
ACTUAL HEALTH CARE
UNDER SINGLE PAYER SYSTEM**



sunmt.org/dec30chron07.html



**Coming: SunMt 25 year celebration
March 22, 2008 • Noon — dusk
The first Fresno county solar electric building,
plus other ways to hug Big Mama while doing
media for social, enviro and economic justice
See: updates on SunMt passive solar
adventures sunmt.org/soldesign.html**

Poetry Corner

I am pleased to present a work by another of our prison-poets, Bernard Henderson, of (Un)Pleasant Valley State Prison. Bernard has worked hard to turn this piece from "expressive therapy" into a poem...this is the second full re-write he has sent.

BLACK STONE

My name is Onyx.
An ageless spirit
my voice and breath
not bounded by the
Niger River,
I am the conviction
of a timeless pen.

My name is Onyx.
a gem, hewed from
years of struggle and
indifference. I am
a well-set stone, in a
world where
injustice remains indigenous.

My name is Onyx.
I carry the flawless
gleam of resilience
rising through the
plight of years
for existence.

My name is Onyx.
I am the polished
beauty
of a black stone.

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the arts has taken on a resurgence not seen since the 1960's.

Most importantly for Fresno and the artists? Money is being made.

No, really, read that sentence again.

Money is being made by local artists. By local actors and singers and directors and writers and people who work at porn shops and people with cancer and belly dancers. Lots of belly dancers.

Nunis stepped aside after watching his baby walk (tho he continues to produce shows, delving now into film and web arts). John Jordan, a longtime proponent of the arts and a natural leader, stepped up to become Executive Director of the Board. Yes, the Board. As in Board of Directors.

As in a core group of volunteers who spend an entire year planning this two week event. Local people. Blake Jones, known for his theramin abilities and his band The Trike Shop. Local teachers like Devon and Jayne, turned performers thanks to the Rogue. (Jayne, known as Airplane Jayne for her prowess with a parachute, will be talking about her sex life...or lack of it, and why she keeps a gun by her bedstand...and that time she had to use it.)

A local Physical Therapist, Andrea DeZubiria gathers friends each year to explore the edgy realm of performance with her "Baba for Now" troupe (no word if there's scotch involved in their creative processes).

Volunteer venue managers turn Diana's two dance studios on Fulton into black-box performance spaces, where top-level artists like Mia Paschal take solo performances to new heights. Her riveting performance last year mixed poetry and soul-singing with aching portrayals of a life filled with painful skin cutting, just so she could feel. Her newest work is called "Along the Path of Larks and Swallows." While a woman of slight build, Mia chooses the largest venue for the Rogue, as very little can contain her performance energy.

Meanwhile, local names you know have a place to perform where they know they'll be seen and, again, will actually make money (remember the part about all box office funds going to the performers?). Pieter Moerdyk takes you on his life's journey through acoustic song...and what a journey it's been. This amusing lithe man with the long hair and cowboy hat is one of the most soft-spoken and loving people you'll know, yet

grew up in the apartheid of South Africa and spent years as a prison guard. His tales of being an illegal street musician in Europe, how he became an American, and his travels (and travails) in the Far East have been mused onto paper, and he keeps his audiences small in the Ashtree Gallery.

While Lydia and her Tanjora dance troupe and Ely's Ananka Belly dance company have been Rogue regulars, this year Mahzjai brings 'Bellydance Fusion' to Fresno for the first time ever. Performing at Dianna's North space, they are mixing traditional cabaret (flawlessly done by Ananka) and tribal and gypsy stylings (perfected by Tanjora) into an artistic cocktail of Bellydance.

Craig VonBerg and his trio are considered founders of the Fresno jazz music scene (Brian Hamada's drums and John Lauggenburger on bass? priceless), and will likely fill the corners of



"Heavy Sugar Jazz Improv", (no separate company name), performing at the Starline Performance Venue, 833 Fern. Karen Marguth, Kevin Hill, Rich Severson, Gary Newmark and special guest pianist from Sacramento, Jason Wanner. Jazz. All ages welcomed. Rated G

Look at the other Fresno references pulsing through the Rogue: FresYES Theaterworks (a collection of short works). Saroyan in Hell Players at the Starline (yes, they'll deliver food to your table...it's also the only mainstage venue with a full bar). Teatro Immigrante (with Agustin Lira). And, of course, Mallory Moad.

One of the original genius minds of Fresno, Mallory is likely the one true performance artist in the New York vein, using the audience, technology, and whatever



"Pentecostal Wisconsin" performed by Bashful Scandinavian Productions (Ryan Paulson), at the Starline Performance Venue, 833 Fern. A solo comedy, part storytelling, part stand-up, part musical comedy. Rated PG

Dianna's South performance space (the North space can hold 125, the South about 75). This amazing, unpredictable trio has a synergy that's really hard to describe...and maybe that's how it should be.



"American Squatter," performed by Aspen Comedy Works, (Barry Smith) at Starline Performance Venue, 833 Fern. American Squatter is a multi-media comedy. Rated PG-13



"Know Headache, Know Pain (No Headache, No Pain)" performed by Mallory Moad's Daredevil Kitchen, (Mallory Moad) at Ashtree Studios, 1035 N. Fulton, This is a multi media piece combining live performance and projected video. It is not appropriate for children. Rated R

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

2007
AN INCOMPLETE, SUBJECTIVE, AND ALTOGETHER INADEQUATE YEAR IN REVIEW
PART THE FIRST

JAN. 30: TOURING A CATERPILLAR PLANT, BUSH "JOKINGLY" TRIES TO RUN OVER REPORTERS WITH LARGE TRACTOR.
RUN--OR I'LL SQUASH YOU LIKE THE BUGS YOU ARE!
A HEARTY LAUGH IS ENJOYED BY ALL.

FEB. 18: WASHINGTON POST EXPOSES SHODDY CONDITIONS FOR VETS AT WALTER REED. CONSERVATIVES DRAW ONLY LOGICAL CONCLUSION: GOVERNMENT RUN HEALTH CARE DOESN'T WORK!
--AND WHO COULD HAVE EVER SEEN THAT ONE COMING?

MARCH 9: AFTER YEARS OF ASSURANCES THAT THE PATRIOT ACT WOULD NEVER EVER BE ABUSED, WE LEARN THAT THE FBI HAS BEEN ABUSING THE PATRIOT ACT.

APRIL 11: OOPS! THOUSANDS OF SUBPOENAED WHITE HOUSE AND R.N.C. EMAILS HAVE BEEN "INADVERTENTLY" DELETED!
THESE COMPUTER MACHINES ARE JUST SO DARNED COMPLICATED!
WHEN HE SAYS "HELLO," WE'LL JUST LOOK THE OTHER WAY! THAT'LL SHOW HIM!

APRIL 19: ALBERTO GONZALES TESTIFIES THAT HE HAS A REALLY BAD MEMORY!
SORRY--WHAT DID YOU SAY MY NAME WAS?

APRIL 26: RUDY GIULIANI WARNS THAT AMERICA WILL BE AT RISK FOR A "NEW 9-11" IF DEMOCRATS WIN THE WHITE HOUSE.
VOTE FOR ME--OR YOU'RE ALL GOING TO DIE!

APRIL 29: MITT ROMNEY SAYS HIS FAVORITE NOVEL IS "BATTLEFIELD EARTH." A MAN-ANIMAL GAINING LEVERAGE OVER A PSYCHLO?
HAH! THAT WILL NEVER HAPPEN!

MAY 21: DEMOCRATS CAVE ON WAR FUNDING, BUT VOW TO BE VERY, VERY SURLY AROUND THE PRESIDENT.
PEOPLE MIGHT GET THE WRONG IDEA!
WE WIDE-STANCERS ARE OFTEN MISUNDERSTOOD! SUCCEEDS FOR 13 WEEKS; AFTER THAT, NOT SO MUCH.

JUNE 11: LARRY CRAIG IS ARRESTED FOR SOLICITING SEX IN AN AIRPORT BATHROOM; TRIES TO KEEP INCIDENT QUIET.
BE AFRAID! BE VERY AFRAID!

JUNE 21: BILL O'REILLY WARNS OF PINK-PISTOL-PACKING LESBIAN GANGS ROVING AMERICA'S CITIES, FORCIBLY INDOCTRINATING CHILDREN INTO THE HOMOSEXUAL LIFESTYLE!

JULY 23: IT'S DEMOCRACY IN ACTION, AS PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES ARE QUESTIONED BY AN ANIMATED SNOWMAN! WHAT I WANT TO KNOW IS, COULD ANY OF YOU FEEL ANY MORE DEBASED THAN YOU DO AT THIS VERY MOMENT?



“Party of One,” performed by Noel Williams, (Noel Williams) at Dianna’s Studio of Dance (South Venue), 726 North Fulton. One woman Pochinko style clown show with audience participation, physical comedy. For adult audiences. Rated PG

magic rises from her head (and that head has QUITE the headache this year) to blitz the audience into adoration.

Veni Vidi Vici again offers their back patio as a café venue (full bar and food for the smaller crowds!), and with the name ‘Inflight Nymphs,’ this unique group of female artists will likely sell out by title alone. “Wait-



“Pipe on the Hob: a Celtic Mix” performed by Pipe on the Hob, at Spectrum Gallery, 608 E Olive. A mix of fast and slow acoustic Celtic music performed on fiddle, harp, hammered dulcimer and whistles with vocals.

‘SPRAWLZILLA VS. MAIN STREET’

— where else would you be able to sing along to a catchy song called ‘Operation Rezone’?

Ha! Some puny little 15-year-old Kingsburg High sophomore and her crusty old songwriting dad think they can take ME on? They think their pathetic little songs will save Main street and Downtown from it’s inevitable slow Death-by-Sprawl?

Hahahahaha! Join me as I humiliate them publicly in their embarrassing little flower-child operetta. And don’t think that dressing in a Swedish peasant outfit and singing about ‘love’ is going to melt MY heart OR stop me from greasing the heels at City Hall to assuage my desires.

— —signed, Mr. Practical

Local songwriter Blake Jones takes a two week break from his well-loved local pop band The Trike Shop (the same folks who went to Liverpool this past summer), and joins his daughter Chelsea and their friend Todd Severson in creating ‘Sprawlzilla vs. Main Street’ — a musical production dealing with the troubles of sprawl, and the enduring dream of ‘Main Street’.

Will singing clever songs, dressing in funny clothes and writing haiku transform the Fulton Mall into a vibrant and ‘happening’ center of activity? Will it keep Kingsburg and other surrounding Valley towns from slipping into the well-worn pattern of faceless sprawl? Yes! Yes! A thousand times, yes! Come see the show as it debuts at the Rogue Festival. All shows are at Veni Vidi Vici and cost \$4. Show times are: Saturday, March 1st at 1pm; Sunday, March 2nd at 3:30pm; and Friday, March 7th at 7:00pm.

ing to Stand” has the women complementing each other’s work by frequently changing instruments and exhibiting musical versatility. Their rare sound in known to be emotionally provocative, politically profound (they picked the right season for that!), and meanwhile musically serenading.

While these performers rake in some local money, out-of-towners will be dining and drinking up the Fresno atmosphere and appreciation as they provide rarely seen works to the Central Valley. Barry Smith wowed and amused (and scared) crowds with his “Jesus in Montana” performance/power-point last year, and this year brings the Critic’s Choice Award Winner (Vancouver) to the Starline. A true, multi-media comedy, Barry walks us through is journey from squeaky clean suburbanite to filthy squatter in late 1980’s London, with stop-offs at punk rock, a clean-freak father, local legend Tony Hawk, and a community college ceramics course.

Kien Lim returns from Malaysia by way of London, this time bringing both his unique deep voice and deeper lyrics and this world, this life, through alien eyes alive in photographs. His version of ‘alien perspectives’ will hang alongside him in the Ashtree studios gallery while he performs “The Free Show,” the only chance for Rogue followers to hear music for free. Free. No money.

Which really? Isn’t much different from the prices for the actual shows. Ranging from \$3 dollars to just \$7 dollars, the legacy of Nunis original scotch-stained vision lingers. Many performers won’t allow audience members in late to their shows (a Nunis staple from 20 years past), and merchandise will flow along with unusual promotion ideas (don’t be surprised if you’re being

entertained while standing in line at the Spectrum Gallery on Olive by someone performing in an hour at Palomino’s Restaurant just a couple blocks away).

Donald Trump? Please.

Downtown Rivers? Oh, c’mon.

Clovis Big Hat Days? Well, sure.

But the Rogue...ah, the Rogue. Never before assembling so many performances, so many different styles, so many stories (and so many bellies). In the center of Fresno. To benefit the actual performers.

It’s unheard of to this day. Unless, of course, you’re drinking scotch.

For more information on the Rogue Festival, visit www.roguefestival.com or watch for one of the Rogue Maps. You can’t tell the players without a program! Tickets go on sale at the door only, so get in line early. First come-first see. However, most shows are performing at least three times, so plan your weekends carefully.



“Elemental Dance,” by the California Arts Academy, at the Severance Building, 1401 N. Wishon. A classical and contemporary dance interspersed with spoken word performance. Rated G



Sprawlzilla vs Main Street is a melodramatic operetta about ‘sprawl’ and ‘the idea of mainstreet’. Songs about sprawl; can you think of any more clever way for this group to achieve super stardom? The show deals with the ideal of mainstreet vs. the community-killing sprawl status quo. It includes such sure-to-be-hit songs as: ‘Operation Rezone’ and ‘There’s Less & Less of This Wild West.’ You won’t want to miss this one!



WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

WILPF Fresno, PO Box 5114, Fresno, CA 93755

All content paid for by WILPF

Graphic by Lincoln Cushing

January marked the release of WILPF's 2008-2010 International Program.

Here are the highlights:

Nearly 100 years ago, women from a diversity of cultures and languages came together to study and make known and eliminate the causes of war. They resolved, acted and organized; they worked for peace and freedom by asserting the right and the responsibility of women to participate in decision-making on all aspects of peace and security. Their insight in 1915 remains valid today; in order to achieve peace and freedom, the causes of war must be eliminated; economic and social systems based on profit and privilege must be transformed to societies based on political and economic equality, participation of women and men, and justice for all regardless of race, sex or creed. The economy of war against human beings, against nature, particularly as we face the climate crisis, must be switched to an Economy of Peace, to provide satisfaction to human needs, while being friendly to the environment.

What are peace and freedom in 2008 and how are they to be realized? There are not rhetorical questions with obvious answers when terms such as "security" and the so-called "war on terror" are manipulated and leveraged to reduce civil and political rights, and drain human and financial resources from delivering economic, social and cultural rights and security for all. Using words such as "safety" and "protection" military security concepts and weapons profiteers develop machines that threaten and violate the human right to life and freedom. In the name of "democracy", powerful actors make profits at the expense of our planet and its finite resources, and the rights of future generations to exist. In the name of increasing women's role in peace and security, more women are militarized and sent to war zones, which is a distorted application of resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

Our work continues through WILPF's international program to empower women, eliminate war and militarism and build a strong United Nations system, through which international law, cooperation among peoples and environmentally sustainable development can be achieved.

Program Priorities for 2008-2010

1. Challenge Militarism: challenge security concepts, end conflicts and promote disarmament. Objective: Provide WILPF and broader NGO community with information, evidence and lobbying tools for increased and focused protest of military security concepts, institutions and spending, and urging for human and economic resources to be converted to human, economic and environmental security needs. WILPF will work with sections and the Peace and Security Working Group, will increase our visibility by making statements that clarify our positions on specific conflict situations underway, emphasizing the impact on women and their role in peace-building, expanding on the causes of conflict, and the financial, political, environmental and the opportunity costs from investing in war and not peace, in military security and not human security.

WILPF will participate in the Abolition of Military Bases Network for closure of such bases around the world. We will disclose military spending, publicize figures, show the alternatives, and utilize gender budgeting, compared to peace research budgets.

2. Invest in Peace: Challenge corporate globalization, divert military resources to economic justice and environmental sustainability Objective: Increase tools and information available to WILPFers on the economic and environmental impact of the military, and make clearer the feasibility and urgent need to build a society bases on economic cooperation, not competition, on human rights, not exploitation of human and financial resources, and responsible use of our finite environment.

3. Strengthen the United Nations system and multilateralism. From the outset WILPF called for an "organization of the society of nations" and in 1919 welcomed the establishment of the League of Nations and actively followed its work. In 1948 WILPF was in the first group of NGOs to receive consultative status with the United Nations.

4. Building WILPF. In order to advance our program aims and objectives, a strong, visible and vibrant membership is needed. WILPF will reach out to women in regions and countries where WILPF is not present, cooperating with the strong women's movements that exist and sup-

porting the building of new sections and increased WILPF membership.

*** **

Members of the WILPF Legislative Committee met with County Supervisor Phillip Larsen on January 16. Topics discussed included water issues. Mr. Larsen favors the building of new dams for water storage, and is looking into the use of treated waste water for household uses, including drinking water. He is very enthusiastic about more use of solar power in the Valley. The committee felt the meeting to be an important step in establishing a dialogue with various elected county officials. As of this writing, they are scheduled to meet with a representative from the office of State Senator Dean Flores on Jan. 30.

On Jan. 11 WILPFers and the Raging Grannies took part in a demonstration, co-sponsored by Peace Fresno, ACLU, and the South Valley Peace Center to let our current administration know that we want the prison at Guantanamo Bay closed permanently! Three orange jumpsuit-clad "detainees" sat in front of the Federal Court House in downtown Fresno while a list of our losses of various Constitutional Rights was read.

NEXT WILPF MEETING: Monday, Feb. 26 at 7:00 p.m. at the Fresno Center for Non-Violence.

Women in Black dates: At CSUF Free Speech Area - Jan.31, Feb. 28, Mar. 27, April 24 at Court House - Feb. 6, March 5, April 2

Friday January 18 the Raging Grannies participated in the 23rd Annual Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Opening Garland Ceremony 12-1:00 PM at the Fresno County Courthouse Park at MLK Bust, 1100 Van Ness. We sang "Getting Together," When Everyone has "Equal Rights," and the Raging Grannies" - Marilyn Byrne

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WANT TO GO TO CUBA? HERE'S HOW

By Gerry Bill

(NOTE: A PUBLIC MEETING ABOUT WHAT IS INVOLVED IN GOING TO CUBA WITH PASTORS FOR PEACE WILL BE HELD MONDAY, MARCH 10, 7 P.M., AT THE FRESNO CENTER FOR NONVIOLENCE)

Ever wonder what a trip to Cuba would be like? Being in Cuba is of course a fantastic experience, but the journey itself can be just as exciting as arriving at the destination.

I want to tell you about one way to get to Cuba. This method is not for everyone, but for those who do choose this way of getting to Cuba will prove to be an unforgettable experience.

I refer to the annual Pastors for Peace Caravan to Cuba. The caravan happens every summer, usually in July. I went last July on what was the 18th US-Cuba Friendshipment. This summer I will be participating in the 19th Friendshipment, and you are invited to join us.

Let me explain how the caravans work. The caravan has several functions. First, it brings some hard-to-get medical supplies into Cuba. Secondly, it provides a community education function in the US as the caravan makes stops along the way. Thirdly, it is designed to be an act of civil disobedience, challenging the unjust, immoral and illegal US blockade of Cuba.

The aid is picked up and carried through the US and Mexico in a variety of vehicles, mainly trucks and busses. The vehicles follow 14 separate routes from the Canadian border down to McAllen, Texas, stopping in 125 communities along the way (including Fresno). At many of the stops the vehicles pick up aid—primarily medical equipment and medical supplies. Cuba has a great medical system, but there are shortages of certain kinds of supplies.

Being a caravanista means you are a volunteer worker constantly helping to load and rearrange the aid in the vehicles. It means making proper inventories and labels for the aid. It also means helping with the unloading and reloading of aid at the US-Mexico border crossing, and unloading it again in Tampico, Mexico, where the aid is put into shipping containers destined for Cuba. Last summer we had 90 tons of aid.

Being a caravanista also means you are a volunteer community educator, participating in the information programs we present in the host cities along the caravan route. This is one of the most exciting parts of being on the caravan—getting to know people all across the country who are involved in Cuba solidarity work.

Finally, being a caravanista also means participating in a very large act of civil disobedience. The caravans are intended to challenge our government's forty-eight year old blockade of Cuba, and to do it in a very public way. As we cross the border from the US into Mexico we have Pastors for Peace Caravan to Cuba painted all over our busses and trucks. We all wear matching t-shirts with a message about the Friendshipment. There is no sneaking across the boarder—rather, it is done openly right under the noses of the US Customs agents who are responsible for stopping exports to Cuba. There is a similar scene at the US border when we cross back into the US after the Cuba trip.

I found the whole process—US caravan, border crossing, Mexican transit, Cuban visit, and reverse border crossing—to be exhilarating. I want to do it again in 2008, and hope to bring you along with me.

There will be an information meeting about the 2008 caravan to be held at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence on Monday, March 10, 7 p.m. Please join us.

NEW LOCATION!!

Fair Trade Products now available at

Tower Velo Bicycle Shop

Help support farmer co-ops in Latin America, Africa, and Asia with a purchase of Fair Trade coffees or chocolate.

1435 N Van Ness Ave, Fresno 93728

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Open Noon to 7 pm Tues-Sat

STIR IT UP

Host Brandon Hill will talk with Vincent Lavery about Lavery's experiences since his return to Ireland. Vincent had been host of this show for many years.

Wednesday, February 13, at 3 - 3:30 PM,

KFCF 88.1 FM

CHILDREN IN THE CROSSFIRE

The Film Profiling Local Activist
Vincent Lavery's Children's Committee 10

Children in the Crossfire examines the plight of the youngest victims of Northern Ireland's never-ending religious strife. Amidst the speeding bullets and burned-out buildings, a group of Catholic and Protestant children courageously join Children's Committee 10. This organization is dedicated to mending age-old political and social chasms by having the children spend a summer together in America with host families.

Special Guest: Vincent Lavery

Wednesday, February 13th
Noon & 7 pm @ the FCNV
(1584 N. Van Ness, SE Corner of McKinley and Van Ness) / Potluck @ 6:30
Discussion to follow evening showing

The FCNV is a Host Organization

to many non-profit groups in the Fresno community.
We provide a safe meeting place and media resources to the groups using our facility, including:

- Youth Link
- Project: Male
- CVAAS
- CVPPAC
- Teatro Immigrante
- Peace Fresno
- WILPF
- CVCRC
- CCCJC
- Community Alliance

An Irishman Returns!



Vincent Lavery Is Back!

- Sunday, February 10th: 6:30 pm: Reception with Irish Readings and Music Join the Center for Nonviolence as we welcome Vincent Lavery with a reception. Vincent will be joined by thespian Bob Navarro with witty Irish Prose. Irish music by Pipe on the Hob. Free Event. (Voluntary donations will go to support the Fresno Center for Nonviolence) Community Mennonite Church - 5015 E. Olive Ave (corner of Willow).
- Saturday, February 11th: 2 - 5 pm: Sleeping with the Elephant: One Man's View of the Role of the U.S. in our Global Village Unitarian Church - 2672 E. Alluvial Ave (just west of Willow)

Crisis Continues in Pakistan

By Dan Yaseen

At 6:15 a.m. on December 27, 2007, my brother in Karachi, Pakistan, called to tell me that Benazir Bhutto had been assassinated. I started my day watching GEO News, a Pakistani Urdu news channel, which is still banned in Pakistan but it can be accessed online. Then I turned on CNN and Fox News. I was surprised by the wall to wall coverage of Benazir Bhutto's assassination.

While Pakistani police were busy cleaning the assassination site with powerful hoses, the "experts" on CNN and Fox News had already blamed Al-Qaeda and Islamic extremists. What astounded me was the portrayal of Benazir Bhutto in the U.S. media. I did not recognize the Benazir Bhutto they were talking about. She was being sanctified by the media. We were told that she was the only hope for democracy in Pakistan.

The Pakistani government also pointed fingers at Al-Qaeda and Islamic extremists, but it did not do an autopsy, required by law in such circumstances. It did not allow the doctor who declared her dead to speak to the media. In the next three days the government gave three different explanations of her death; she died of 1) shrapnel from the bomb, 2) a gunshot bullet 3) hitting her head on the lever of the sunroof.

The current crisis in Pakistan started in March 2007 when Musharraf dismissed the Chief Justice of Pakistan, Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry. In response to protests by lawyers, the Supreme Court reinstated Chaudhry in July. Then under a U.S. brokered deal, Musharraf agreed to let Benazir Bhutto, exiled leader of the Pakistan Peoples Party, come back to Pakistan with the hope of forming a Bhutto/Musharraf led government. But Bhutto's return on October 18, 2007 was marred by the explosion of a bomb that killed 140 supporters and just missed her during a procession from the Karachi airport.

Civil unrest continued and Musharraf declared a state of emergency on November 3, 2007. He suspended the Constitution and dismissed the Supreme Court. Only four of the seventeen judges agreed to take the oath for the new Supreme Court under the Provisional Constitution Order (PCO). The judges who refused to take the oath were put under house arrest. Musharraf hand picked more judges to form the new Supreme Court. He also shut down some private TV channels. This led to protests by lawyers, journalists, and some students. Benazir spoke out and was also put under house arrest for few days. She blamed Musharraf for not providing her with proper security and charged that the government refused to make an appropriate inquiry into the October 18 bombing.

What is the real story of this beautiful, strong woman and what political interests did she represent? Would she have been the savior of Pakistan?

Benazir Bhutto did lead her party, Pakistan Peoples Party, to victory in two elections and she became Prime Minister twice. Both times she was dismissed for corruption and incompetence. She was still popular, but she was no democrat. She inherited the leadership of PPP from her father and declared herself "chairperson for life."

Her first term began in December 1988 following General Zia ul-Haq who came into power by deposing Benazir's father Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Zia died in an airplane crash in 1988. In an election after Zia's death, Benazir Bhutto, at age 35, became the first female Prime Minister of an Islamic country. She lasted 20 months. It was at the end of the Soviet-Afghan War. The U.S. spent over \$50 billion to supply arms and equipment to Mujahideen fighting Soviets in Afghanistan. The Pakistani intelligence agency, Inter-Services Intelligence, and some elements in the Pakistani Army were the conduits via CIA to recruit and train fighters who Bush now calls "terrorists" but Reagan called "freedom fighters."

Benazir's second term began in October 1993 and lasted 3 years. It ended up with a dismissal amid accusations of nepotism and undermining the justice system. Her second term also coincides with the rise of the Taliban and their capture of Kabul.

Benazir Bhutto's husband, Asif Ali Zardari, is now co-chair of the Pakistan Peoples Party with their 19 year-old son, Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari. Zardari was a minister in Benazir Bhutto's cabinet and was known as "Mr. 10%" in Pakistan. He was getting 10% of every contract issued by the government. The couple embezzled over \$2 billion.

Pakistan's history and geography shed some light on Benazir's assassination, the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, and on the current political crisis. Pakistan, a very



We were told that Benazir Bhutto was the only hope for democracy in Pakistan.

young nation, was carved out of British India in 1947 as a home for Muslims, but has yet to become the democratic country envisioned by its founders. In the beginning Pakistan was influenced more by United Kingdom, but in the last 50 years the Pakistani government has been profoundly affected by U.S. foreign policy in the region.

Pakistan is surrounded by Iran, Afghanistan, China, and India. To the southeast are Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam. To the north is Central Asia including the other "stans" – Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. To the west is the Middle East with huge reserves of oil and the current focus of the Neocon's hegemonic agenda.

The history of U.S./Pakistan relations starts in 1950 when Pakistan's first Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan visited the U.S. and addressed a joint session of Congress. Pakistan signed treaties with the U.S. in the 50's, one was the South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and the



Pervez Musharraf is the current President of Pakistan, and former Chief of Army Staff of the Pakistan Army.

other Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) – modeled after NATO. They were mutual defense treaties. In spite of the treaties, the U.S. refused aid to Pakistan twice, in 1965 and 1971, when the U.S. decided to remain neutral.

In 1960, an American U2 spy plane, flown by Francis Gary Powers, was shot down by Soviet planes over its territory. The spy plane flew from Peshawar, Pakistan.

During the 60's, Pakistan was under the military dictatorship of Ayub Khan, who worked very closely with the U.S. He was succeeded by another military general Yahya Khan. Thirteen years of military rule ended in 1971 with a military defeat and the loss of East Pakistan, which became Bangladesh. Benazir Bhutto's father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, was elected the president of Pakistan.

Between 1971 and 1977, President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto mobilized the socialists and progressives in Pakistan by coining the phrase "Islamic Socialism." The concept had been around long before Bhutto started using it. Some people believe that socialism is close to Islamic teachings of equality and sharing the wealth. While other Islamic scholars and politicians equate socialism with atheism.

As Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's socialism was moving Pakistan away from the U.S., the U.S. was glad to aid and support opposing Islamic parties. For the first time Pakistani Islamic parties were energized. They had had very little influence in the 1950's and 1960's.

In 1977 Bhutto was overthrown by General Zia ul-Haq. Zia ul-Haq was the best ally Islamic parties ever had in Pakistan. The legal system in Pakistan is based on English Common Law and Islamic Law. Zia ul-Haq promised to usher in an Islamic system and did introduce several ordinances based on Islamic law.

On December 25, 1979 the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. Pakistan under the military rule of General Zia ul-Haq was already working with the CIA. Pakistan's military intelligence agency, Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) became very powerful and played a key role in the Soviet-Afghan War. During the 1980's with over \$50 billion in U.S. money, billions more from Saudi Arabia, with the full consent, support, and cooperation from the CIA, the ISI recruited and trained thousands of fighters from several Islamic countries. Thousands of madrassahs, Islamic schools, were opened all over Pakistan with the sole purpose of creating Islamic fighters. These were the Mujahideen that fought against the Soviet Army in Afghanistan and ultimately forced the Soviet Union to withdraw from Afghanistan in May 1989.

In the 1990's Pakistan's ISI created Taliban with the approval of the CIA. After the Soviet Union's withdrawal, Afghanistan was in chaos during the early 1990's. Different warlords fought each other and destroyed much of Kabul until the Taliban started their assault in 1993 and took control of Kabul in 1996.


U.S. military aid to Pakistan keeps strengthening the Pakistani Army – an Army that has imposed martial law four times. When Pakistan has been under military rule, the U.S. has had better relations with Pakistan – more military aid and more cooperation. During the 1960's, it was Ayub Khan, in the 1980's it was Zia ul-Haq, and now it is Pervez Musharraf. The decade of the 90's saw democratically elected governments of Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif until Musharraf overthrew Nawaz Sharif in a military coup in October 1999.

Pakistan was sanctioned by U.S. Congress under the Pressler Amendment during the 90's. Military aid was reduced and the sale of F-16 fighter aircraft was suspended after Pakistan had paid \$650 million. Bill Clinton tilted heavily towards India and on his visit to Southeast Asia in 2000 he spent 6 days visiting India and Bangladesh and 6 hours in Pakistan.

When Musharraf took power in October 1999, the U.S. condemned the imposition of martial law, but Bill Clinton was not interested in Pakistan. On January 20, 2001 George W. Bush became President of the United States. After 9/11 everything changed for Musharraf. He was given a choice, "You are with us or you are with the terrorists." Musharraf chose the U.S. and has been receiving \$150 million a month since. The U.S. media portrays Pakistan as an ally in Bush's "Global War on Terror," but Musharraf and the Pakistani media consider Pakistan a frontline state in the war on terrorism.

The situation in Pakistan remains grave. Bhutto's return and assassination, along with Musharraf's suspension of the Constitution, have exacerbated the political crisis. The U. S. government and the Pakistani military/leadership are increasingly interdependent as Bush's "Global War on Terror" continues. We can see that the current situation follows a long history of U. S. involvement in the affairs of Pakistan, but it is hard to see that the people of either country have benefited.

Dan Yaseen is an Editorial Board Member of the Community Alliance. He is a native of Pakistan whose family still lives there. Dan has lived in the U. S. for over 33 years and in Fresno for 18 years. He can be contacted at danyaseen@comcast.net



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2672 E Alluvial Avenue, Clovis

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Information: <http://Fresno.humanists.net/>

December 26TH

(A report back on the holiday “Goodie Bag” project)

By Maria Telesco

Gift wrappings in the trash, beside the uneaten fruit-cake. The tree that looked so festive yesterday now the barren ghost of Christmas past. Returns, unwanted, thrown carelessly in the big chair over there, awaiting their journey back to the store: wrong color, wrong size, wrong everything. Better hurry and clean up, because in a couple of days, we’ll be swamped. The letters, cards, phone calls will come from the mouths and hearts of the women in Chowchilla, messages of gratitude for their Christmas gifts.

Now they’re here, some carefully printed, others in delicate cursive, one nearly illegible, all sincere. In pencil, they come. In ink, they come. Decorated with tiny hearts, they come.

“ . . . we spent all Christmas Day flaunting our wonderful little treasures. It was wonderful how everyone’s faces lit up like the blinking Christmas tree lights . . . ” (Mary Ann)*

“ . . . a very sincere ‘thank you’ for being so thoughtful and generous . . . ” (Pat)

“THANK YOU SO, SO MUCH . . . ” (Carla)

“ . . . my sincere gratitude for the gift bags that were so lovingly put together for us . . . you went [above] and beyond the call of duty, to see that we had some joy . . . you brought some light into our darkness . . . ” (Flora)

“ . . . thank you for putting a smile on our faces . . . it was definitely a good surprise . . . God bless you . . . ” (Pam)

When kids are small, they play, not with the new, way too expensive toy, but with the box it came in. Something similar happens in prison. “ . . . We enjoyed them so much, especially the ZipLoc bags that they came in . . . it was very nice to get a variety of cards . . . the hygiene items were great . . . candy is always a hit.” (Arlene)

Nearly all the women expressed special thanks for the plastic bags. Up until a couple of years ago, family members and friends could send quarterly “care” packages from home. Along with requested food items, music CDs, make-up, writing paper and such, most boxes included a handful of zippered bags. The ladies use them to cook food in their cells, as well as to store leftovers, and to protect clean underwear. They have only open shelves for their belongings, no drawers, so the bags bring a smidgin of civilization and order into their cells and dormitories.

I admit we all complained about the work involved in filling a cardboard box with what felt like a ton of “stuff,” and putting it into the mail or UPS before a deadline date. The CDCR refers to them as “30 pound” boxes, but that includes the packaging. Vendors include about 28 pounds before adding the packaging

materials. It’s safe to go about a half pound below that limit. If the prison’s scale does not agree with that of the shipper, the prison’s scale trumps. So the reality is that a “30 pound” box really contains only about 27½ pounds of “stuff.”

We would whine to “our” prisoner that it took a lot of wear and tear on our feet and wallets to rush from Target to K-Mart, then to the Dollar Store, then onward to whichever supermarket had cheese and Beef Jerky on sale, then a quick run to Rite-Aid to the vitamin sale. Finally to the post office, breathe a sigh of relief, and brace one’s self for the next quarter. Exhale.

“Cook in their cells?”, you ask. Yes. Put water into a medium size plastic bowl. Take a large plastic bag, open a can of chili, put the chili in the bag, put the bag in the water. Heat the water with a “stinger” – isn’t that what they call it? – and pretty soon the water will get hot, and so will the chili. Mmmm, Mmmmmmmm, GOOD! Some would disagree. They would put the unopened chili can right into the hot water. A matter of taste.

Now we must purchase the boxes from an “Approved Vendor,” which lightens the load on both feet and pocketbook. They do have a pretty good selection of food and hygiene supplies, but they are expensive. The prison system bosses in Sacramento chose this method because they had the notion that we snuck drugs into the prison via the home-grown boxes. Unlikely. Oh sure, a few did, but most of us didn’t. It turns out that drugs still get in, and they keep talking about ways to eliminate that menace, but so far unsuccessfully. And no plastic bags are included in Vendor boxes.

“I’m always so amazed at what nice items are contained in each gift bag. My favorite was the Colgate 360 toothbrush. It actually has little rubber thing-ies on the other side of the brush, for one’s cheek and tongue. I have never seen a toothbrush like this offered by the Vendors. I do so appreciate this little toothbrush.” (Lucille)

“Thank you so much for the Christmas treat bags . . . They were WONDERFUL. I got an excellent toothbrush, so maybe now I won’t lose any more my teeth. God bless you all.” (Marlene)

“**FAN-TAB-U-LOUS!** What else is there to say?” (Ginny)

“You all remind me of Matthew 25 [in the New Testament, ‘I was in prison and you visited me.’] (Gloria)

“ . . . thank you for . . . thinking of us women here in prison on Christmas. I really appreciate your gifts, they mean a lot to me” (Veronica) “Thank you for the time and thought you all put in to making our Christmas brighter. Love (Michelle)

“I want to thank you and let you know that I know somebody cares about [us] during the holidays. Thank you so much.” (Leticia) “Thank you so much for my gift from you all. We all thank you. God bless you.” (Lupe)

“I appreciate my Christmas gift. Thank you for keeping the ladies in your hearts. It means a lot to me. I’m so grateful for the support.” (Diane)

And finally: “I’ve been down 21 years. This is the first gift I have ever received. You have touched my heart. Thank you, thank you, thank you.”

When we were done bagging, I felt relief. Whew! It’s over. For now. As soon as we catch our breaths, we’ll be ready for the next round, so don’t stray too far. In a few weeks, we will be right back, begging and cajoling everyone for more greeting cards, toiletries, edibles – and maybe even a new item or two. So hang around. We couldn’t have done it without you, and we can’t do it without your help next time either.

Heartfelt thanks, Peace and Good Will to everyone. You deserve it.

Some names changed for inmate privacy.

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Maria Telesco is a retired nurse. She volunteers in several projects that benefit women prisoners, including obtaining donations of toiletries that will make their lives a little less bleak. She can be reached at maria.telesco@sbcglobal.net.

The Prison Quiz Challenge

(Prepared by Camy Matthay for the Wisconsin Books to Prisoners Project)

1. Approximately how many prisoners are there in the world?
 - a. 400,000
 - b. 800,000
 - c. 9,000,000
 - d. 17,000,000
2. Approximately how many prisoners are there in the U.S.?
 - a. 500,000
 - b. 1,000,000
 - c. 2,000,000
 - d. 7,000,000
3. What is the current ratio of prisoners to “free” adults in hee U.S.?
 - a. 1 prisoner per 2,000
 - b. 1 prisoner per 1,000
 - c. 1 prisoner per 100
 - d. 1 prisoner per 50
4. There are now more prisoners in the U.S. than which of the following:
 - a. farmers
 - b. police officers
 - c. lawyers
 - d. all of the above
5. Between 2003-2005, over1,000 deaths were reported by state and local agencies during arrests. What percentage of those deaths were homicides by law enforcement officers?
 - a. 10%
 - b. 35%
 - c. 55%
 - d. 70%
6. Of the total 300 million U.S. citizens, around 18% are non-whites. What is the percentage of non-white prisoners?
 - a. 15%
 - b. 25%
 - c. 40%
 - d. 60%
7. What group is being incarcerated at the fastest rate in tile U.S.?
 - a. African-American men
 - b. Women
 - c. Latin Americans
 - d. Native Americans
8. Currently, what percentage of prisoners can we expect to be released?
 - a. 25%
 - b. 65%
 - c. 70%
 - d. 95%
9. What is tile percentage of formerly-incarcerated people that are still unemployed after a year?
 - a. 25%
 - b.35%
 - c.50%
 - d.60%

10. Physical contact only occurs through a security door, when restraints are removed, or tile subject is strip-searched. Monitoring is conducted via video cameras and listening devices. Water and light are provided via remote control. All feeding occurs through tray slots. These conditions are typical in:

- a. factory farms
- b. research labs
- c. public schools
- d. solitary confinement

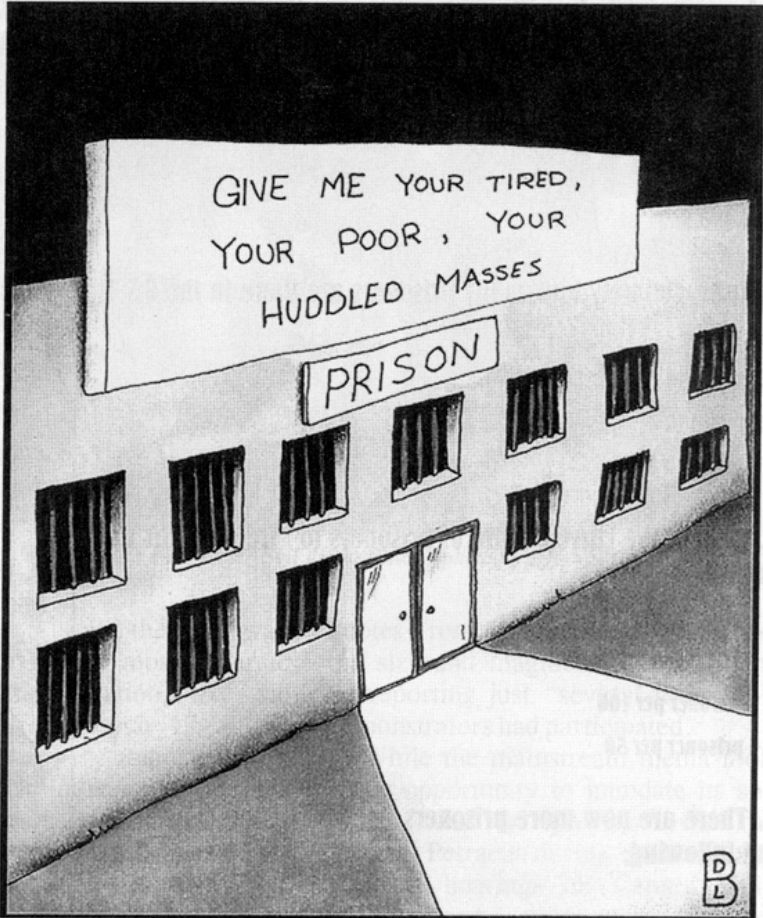
11. Are dogs used for “cell extraction” i.e., getting unwilling prisoners out of their cells, in domestic U.S. prisons?

- a. no
- b. yes
- c. only in federal institutions
- d. only on Sundays
- e. When the dogs are hungry

12. Which crime will get a stiffer sentence?

- a. embezzling \$5,000,000
- b shoplifting a donut

Answers to the prison quiz are on page 18.



The Prison Quiz Answers

1. (C) 9,000,000
Source: www.prisonpolicy.org
2. (C) 2,000,000
Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics Correctional Surveys 2005
3. (d) 1 prisoner per 50. Actually it is worse, 1 in every 32 adults is now in prison, or 3% of the U.S. adult population, with more than 700 new inmates joining them weekly.
Source: U.S. Bureau of justice Statistics (BJS)
4. (D) All of the above a + b + c = 2.5 million.
Sources: a. 960,000 farmers www.epa.gov ; b. 840,000 police and detectives, www.bls.gov ; c. 735,000 lawyers www.bls.gov
5. (C) Homicides by law enforcement officers made up 55% (1,095) of all deaths during arrests by state and local agencies.
Source: U.S. Bureau of justice Statistics (BJS), 10/07 Deaths in Custody Reporting Program NCJ 219534, www.ojp.usdoj.gov
6. (d) More than 60%. For black males in their 20s, 1 in every 8 is in prison or jail on any given day.
Sources: www.cia.gov ; www.sentencingproject.org ; Pam Oliver’s Racial Disparities in Criminal Justice, UW Sociology website: www.ssc.wisc.edu
7. (h) Women’s prison populations went up 757 percent since 1977. The rapid growth of women’s incarceration at nearly double the rate of men over the past two decades is disproportionately due to the war on drugs.
Sources: www.prisonpolicy.org
8. (d) 95%. However, 2 of every 3 adults released will return to prison within 3 years.
Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics
9. (d) 60%
Source: WI State Journal. Note: 65% of employers would not hire a person with a criminal record, regardless of the offense.
10. (d) Solitary confinement. Furthermore, exercise in most extended control facilities is limited to 3 to 7 hours (in one-hour intervals) per week, generally in an indoor space or small, secure, attached outdoor space.
Sources: Supermax Prisons: Overview and General Considerations, January 1999/Technical Assistance #98, National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice & Kevin Pyle, Lab USA: Illuminated Documents (Brooklyn, New York, Autonomedia, 2001)
11. (b) Policies in Connecticut, Delaware, Iowa, South Dakota and Utah allow guards to use “aggressive, unmuzzled” dogs to compel uncooperative inmates to leave their cells. Dogs may be ordered to bite prisoners if they resist.
Source: Human Rights Watch, October 2006, www.hrs.org
12. (b) Steal a 52 cent donut, get 15+ years; steal millions and you get about 4 years.
Source #1: St. Louis Post dispatch, 2007: Scott A. Masters, the “doughnut man,” was accused of shoplifting the pastry and pushing a store worker who tried to stop him. The worker was unhurt. But with that shove, his shoplifting turned into a strong-arm robbery. Masters faces 5 to 15 years in prison for his crime. In fact, because Masters has a prior record, he could get a sentence of 30 years to life.

Source #2: Houston Chronicle, Sept. 28, 2006: Kristen Hays and Tom Fowler. Andrew Fastow, who had conspired to help Enron manipulate earnings while skimming millions of dollars for himself, after pleading guilty to two counts of conspiracy, got 6 years. Fastow could shave up to nearly 2 years from that term with time off for good behavior.

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Alternatives to Violence Project comes to Fresno

By Pat Hardy

Fresno is the focal point for launching a Central Valley Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) program with a weekend workshop being offered February 22-24. Workshop participants will enjoy a hands-on, experiential, conflict-resolution workshop connecting deeply with others, laughing, sharing and listening while learning ways to reduce conflict in the world, classroom, family or at work.

Participants don’t need to take notes, they just come prepared to discover new ways of approaching disagreement. AVP workshops explore the power everyone has to change hostility and destructiveness into cooperation, community and justice. AVP workshops draw participants and trainers from all religions, races and walks of life.

A workshop filled with laughter?!

What does laughter have to do with conflict resolution?! Is it possible to enjoy oneself in a workshop that deals with the serious subjects relating to non-violence? “You bet ya” chuckles Alternatives to Violence Project/California Steering Committee President Pat Hardy and part of a Outreach Team operating in Fresno, “and I learn more about myself in every workshop.”

Volunteers do laugh and play while discovering ways to handle conflict in a workshop that is recognized internationally as successful in reducing violence and creating community among such diverse people as the killers and victims’ families in Rwanda’s genocide or the racial divisions of prison gangs.

Lisa Pierson, who attended an mini AVP workshop at the Chicano Correctional Workers Association conference, declares “ In just a couple of minutes listening to another participant in one exercise, I realized that I didn’t know her and who she really was didn’t have anything to do with the my original opinion of her. The workshop opened my eyes to the value of REALLY listening. I can’t wait for the full workshop.” Her friend Maria Ramirez after hearing Lisa, observed “We really need this so we can work better together.”

Designed and offered by prisoner and community teams

Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) began in New York in1975 as a collaboration between Quakers and inmates in Green Haven Prison interested in working with youth gangs and teens at risk. This successful, ongoing program facilitated by teams of inmates and community volunteers quickly spread throughout New York State prisons and then to other states as a prison program and as a community program for people from all walks of life.

According to Outreach team member George Ramos “AVP/California prison and community workshop program has expanded four-fold in California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) prisons in the past three years.” The

department’s interest is based on solid research that a Basic 20-hour workshop reduces violence up to 60% inside the prison and 45% reduction in recidivism upon release, as well as on the anecdotal observations of prison staff. Since early 2005 AVP volunteers have offered monthly workshops at Central California Women’s Facility in Chowchilla with a Valley State Prison for Women adding a program in 2007.

AVP offers 20-hour workshops in 13 of the 33 CDCR facilities with 10 more wardens eager to have the program introduced in their prisons. In order to do this, AVP/CA needs to train volunteers to facilitate the workshops, so a team of three facilitators have volunteered to focus on outreach starting in Fresno.

Why Fresno?

“I love Fresno” enthuses Katherine Youngmeister, Berkeley AVP facilitator and member of the AVP/CA Outreach Fresno team, “Fresno is a wealth of organizations that understand the concept of nonviolence and peacemaking, so is the logical place to begin a valley-wide AVP program.” Local groups and individuals are being particularly welcoming and supportive. Polly Victor of the Fresno Friends Meeting (Quakers) has been particularly helpful in opening doors and helping the AVP/CA Outreach Team become familiar with Fresno. Maria Telesco, who seems to have her hand in everything, also is opening doors throughout Fresno including the Fresno Center for Nonviolence.

Also particularly helpful have been Metro Ministries (providing meeting space), Debbie Reyes of Prison Moratorium Project, Pastor Steve Ratzliff of Mennonite Community Church, Cathy Caples and Mike O’Hare of the Volunteer Center of Fresno County, Cal State University Fresno’s Dr. Bernadette Muscat-Department of Criminology, Islamic Cultural Center’s Director Kamal Abu-Shamsieh, Dan Yaseen and Scott Key of Peace Fresno, Maria Ramirez of Council of Mexican-American Women, Lisa Piersen and Esther McIlwain at Avenal State Prison and Myrna Martinez of American Friends Service Committee. Additional assistance is coming from Ron Claassen of Fresno Pacific University’s Center for Peacemaking and Conflict Studies,

With eight prisons in the San Joaquin Valley, only the two women’s prisons now have the standard monthly AVP workshops. Volunteers from Los Angeles, Santa Barbara and the Bay Area are driving to the Valley to facilitate in these prisons which is not mindful of resources and is not tapping the incredible Fresno expertise. AVP/CA wants to change that.

Requests from other San Joaquin Valley prisons remain unmet, because of a lack of trained volunteers in this area. Encouragement from Sacramento to include AVP as part of prison’s self-help offerings continues to spur these wardens’ requests.

A grass-roots based organization

AVP is an all-volunteer, grass-roots-based organiza-

Continued on page 21



Alternatives to Violence Project Workshop graduates receive certificates in Blythe. Photo by Backbone Media.

PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Friday, February 1 • 5:15 PM

Cineculture Club presents: Do the Right Thing (1989). Director: Spike Lee . USA. 120 min. English. Rated R.

This film will be shown in McLane 121. Parking is relaxed after 4:30PM on Fridays in area parking lots. Check the campus map to see which parking area is most convenient. <http://www.csufresno.edu/univrelations/map/>

Saturday, February 2 • 9 AM

The Kennedy Club will meet at the Fresno Breakfast House (Bullard and West). The speaker will be a political analyst dealing with the initiatives on the February 5 election. For more information call (559) 439-8140. The Kennedy Club meets the first Saturday of each month for political discussions.

Sunday, February 3 • 5 PM

We don't BURN Heretics - We Welcome Them! Atheist, Secular Humanist, Rational Skeptic, Agnostic – would you like to be welcomed too? The Central Valley Alliance of Atheists and Skeptics meets every month to discover ways to promote a secular, rational viewpoint throughout the Central Valley. We invite like minded people and their supports to be a part of our new organization: Phone: (559) 892-0102 Website: www.cvaas.org

Thursday, February 7 • 7 PM

ANDREI KRYLOV. Russian Guitar—Classical/Flamenco. Andrei Krylov, guitarist and composer, studied guitar, arrangement and composition in the Music School and the Music College in St. Petersburg, Russia and now is living in Ottawa-Gatineau, Canada. Andrei has recorded and performed for Russian, US and Canadian Radio and TV channels. He has composed original music for films in Russia and USA. This house concert is sponsored by the Fresno Folklore Society. Where: John Alden Photo Studio 2003 N. Van Ness at Weldon Tickets: \$15. Seating limited to 50 persons. Purchase tickets online www.fresnofolkconcerts.com - or contact Pat Wolk 431-3653 Web Site: www.andreikrylov.com or hear and see him on youtube.

Friday, February 8 • 4 PM

Student Art, Essay, and Speech Exhibit Reception 4:00PM / Program 5:00-6:00PM Location: Fresno County Office of Education. Artwork created by students from Fresno & Clovis Unified, & other Fresno County (lobby area) - 1111 Van Ness Ave. School Districts displayed January 29-February 22 Contact: Thomas Russell (559) 327-9353, Shirley Hargis (559) 265-3060, or Sue Baloian (559) 265-3098. This event is a part of the 23rd Annual Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration.

Friday, February 8 • 5:30 PM and 8 PM

Fresno Filmworks presents “The Price of Sugar” at the Tower Theatre. Bill Haney’s award-winning documentary, narrated by Paul Newman, exposes the inhumane treatment of Haitian migrant workers in the Dominican sugar industry. As inspiring as it is disturbing, the film profiles Father Christopher Hartley, the charismatic priest who has devoted himself to organizing the cane-cutters. Tickets (\$10; \$8, for students and seniors) can be purchased at the Tower Theatre box office, 815 E. Olive Ave., JA Photography, 2003 N. Van Ness, and at the door. Tickets can also be purchased online through PayPal at www.fresnofilmworks.org . For more information call the FFW info line, 221-0755, or go to www.fresnofilmworks.org .

Friday, February 8 • 7 PM

David Borofka, professor of composition, literature, and creative writing at Reedley College and author of The Island and Hints of His Mortality, which won the Iowa Short Fiction Award will be reading excerpts of his latest works. Starbucks at Shaw & Armstrong (2195 E. Shaw Ave. - Clovis).

Saturday, February 9 • 2-5 PM

Come and hear Vincent Lavery at “The Studio” in North Fork (downtown North Fork, across from the Library) Vincent will speak on “Sleeping With An Elephant: One Man’s View of how the United States looks to other members of our Global Village. Also hear renowned Thespian Bob Navarro read some witty Irish prose, together with Irish songs by local musicians. FREE ADMISSION. (Voluntary donations will go to support Radio Station KFCF, 88.1 FM)

Saturday, February 9 • 3:30-5 PM

Fresno County Supervisor Susan Anderson will be the speaker at the Central Valley Progressive PAC meeting. Susan represents Supervisorial District 2, serves as Vice-Chair of the Board, and is up for re-election on June 3, 2008. Members and the public are welcome to hear and ask questions of Susan as she discusses major issues facing Fresno County. The meeting is at the Fresno Center for Non-Violence (1584 N. Van Ness Ave. (at McKinley), Fresno. For more information, visit www.cvppac.org or call 559-435-7350.

Sunday, February 10 • 6:30 PM

Join the Center for Nonviolence as they welcome Vincent

Lavery with a reception at the Community Mennonite Church, 5015 East Olive Avenue, corner of Willow. Vincent will be joined by thespian Bob Navarro with Witty Irish Prose. Irish music by local group Pipe on the Hob. FREE ADMISSION. (Voluntary donations will go to support the Fresno Center for Nonviolence)

February 10th and 11th • 7 PM

The women’s studies student group at CSU-Fresno, POWER, is putting on the Vagina Monologues. Please join us for this captivating play two nights only February 10th and/or 11th at the Satellite Student Union. Doors will open at 6 pm and the play will begin at 7. Ticket prices for students are \$5 and \$10 for the general public.

Monday, February 11 • 5:15 PM

Cineculture Club presents: The Story of a Displaced Child

Producers: Invisible Children, Inc. 60 min. English. Not rated. Only 15 years old, there isn’t a part of his life that hasn’t been affected by the war in Uganda. But a life that has been marked by tragedy is defined by resilience, and despite reasons to lose hope, Sunday perseveres. This is the story of faith that overcomes suffering.

Post-screening discussants: representative from Invisible Children and Lance Omeje (from Uganda, teacher at Yokomi Elementary School)

This film will be shown in McLane 161. Parking is relaxed after 4:30 PM on Fridays in area parking lots. Check the campus map to see which parking area is most convenient. <http://www.csufresno.edu/univrelations/map/>

Monday, February 11 • 7 PM

Come and hear Vincent Lavery at the Unitarian-Universalist Church, 2672 E. Alluvial (just West of Willow) “Sleeping with the Elephant: One Man’s View of the Role of the U. S. in Our Global Village. Being a neighbor of the United States – after all we are all neighbors in this Global Village – is like going to bed with an Elephant – all it has to do is sneeze, and it blows you out of bed. FREE ADMISSION.

Wednesday, February 13 • 12 Noon & 7 PM

Monthly Every Second Wednesday Video Presentation at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N, Van Ness. “Children in the Crossfire,” film about the groundbreaking organization that Vincent Lavery founded, Children’s Committee Ten. Vincent will be present to discuss the film. FREE. The evening showing will be preceded by a potluck at 6:30 PM.

Wednesday, February 13 • 3 PM

The Fresno Center for Nonviolence monthly second Wednesday radio program, “Stir it Up” on KFCF 88.1 FM. Host Brandon Hill will talk with Vincent Lavery about Lavery’s experiences since his return to Ireland. Vincent had been host of this show for many years.

Thursday, February 14 • Valentine’s Day

Did you know that the original Saint Valentine was an anti-war priest engaged in Civil Disobedience? Read more here:

http://www.pictureframes.co.uk/pages/saint_valentine.htm
<http://wilstar.com/holidays/valentn.htm>

Friday, February 15

Deadline for articles and calendar items to the March, 2008 Community Alliance newspaper. Send information to AllianceEditor@Comcast.net

Friday, February 15 • 5:15 PM

Cineculture Club presents: Wrapped in Pride: The Story of Kente in America

Director: Kindra Orr. USA. 30 min. English. Not Rated. “Once reserved for African royalty, kente cloth has become a familiar pattern in American culture. [This] half-hour documentary ... looks at how this tradition textile crossed the Atlantic from the West African Republic of Ghana and made its way into everyday American life.” -Container. Post-screening discussant: Dr. Yaw Oheneba-Sakyi (Professor, Africana Studies)

This film will be shown in McLane 161. Parking is relaxed after 4:30 PM on Fridays in area parking lots. Check the campus map to see which parking area is most convenient. <http://www.csufresno.edu/univrelations/map/>

Saturday February 16 • 7:30 PM

THE STAIRWELL SISTERS at Severance Studio. Wishon and Floradora in the Tower District. S.F.'s all gal urban old-time tear-down. They're hot! San Francisco's all-gal urban old-time teardown, THE STAIRWELL SISTERS, have amassed a rowdy repertoire of timeless tunes plus a solid standing of smart, original material that is winning praise on a national level. Old-time music lovers of every generation enjoy their energetic musicianship, tight vocal arrangements and red-hot buckdancing. Co sponsored by the Fresno Folklore Soci-

ety and California Arts Academy. Advance \$15; \$20 at door. For information and tickets call—559-222-6539 or visit www.calartsacademy.com

Monday, February 18

Peace Fresno and other community groups will sponsor the “President for Peace and Justice” march. This event will take place on President’s Day and call presidential candidates to work for peace and justice. Save the date! More details to follow.

Wednesday, February 20

The Homelessness Marathon will be broadcast from Nashville Tennessee. For more information, see: <http://www.homelessnessmarathon.org/>

Friday, February 22 • 5:15 PM

Cineculture Club presents: Talk to Me (2007)

Director: Kasi Lemmons. USA. 118 min. English. Rated R for pervasive language and some sexual content. A film about Washington, D.C. radio personality Ralph “Petey” Greene, an ex-con who became a popular talk show host and community activist, and Dewey Hughes, his friend and manager. The movie spans the time period May 1966 to January 1984, ending with the late Greene’s memorial service. Post-screening discussant: Dr. Malik Simba (Professor, History)

This film will be shown in McLane 161. Parking is relaxed after 4:30 PM on Fridays in area parking lots. Check the campus map to see which parking area is most convenient. <http://www.csufresno.edu/univrelations/map/>

Friday evening to Sunday afternoon- February 22-24

Create a Culture of Peace with the Alternatives to Violence Project in a hands-on, activity-based workshop where you’ll connect deeply with others, laugh, share, listen while learning ways to reduce conflict in your world, your classroom, family or at work. Take no notes. For more information visit our website www.avpcalifornia.org or call Mary at (559)246-9833.

Thursday, February 28 • 9 AM -5 PM

National Network In Action Presents: 2nd Annual Celebrating of the 40th Anniversary Civil of the Rights Movement. “Looking Back To Move Forward”

Touring Black History Pioneers, Fresno. Location: Free AME Baptist Church 806 Collins, Fresno, CA. (Bring canned food donation)

Thursday, February 28 • 12 Noon -1 PM

Women in Black will hold a silent vigil at the CSUF free speech area. Women in Black is a world-wide network of women committed to peace with justice and actively opposed to injustice, war, militarism and other forms of violence. As women experiencing these things in different ways in different regions of the world, we support each other’s movements. Co-sponsored by: POWER, Campus Peace & WILPF. Please call Meta Schettler 278-4593 or email mschettl@csufresno.edu for more information or see www.womeninblack.org to learn more about Women in Black worldwide.

February 28 - March 8

The Rogue Festival - Celebrating Independent and Performance Art. For more information see: <http://roguefestival.org/>

Thursday, February 28 • 9 AM -5 PM

National Network In Action Presents: 2nd Annual Celebrating of the 40th Anniversary of the Civil Rights Movement. “Looking Back To Move Forward” Touring Black History Pioneers, Fresno. Location: Free AME Baptist Church 806 Collins, Fresno, CA. (Bring canned food donation).

Speaker Bishop Hartfield/Black History Movie Night - * 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Friday, February 29 • 5:15 PM

Cineculture Club presents: Special engagement! International Experimental Film Festival from France: Eight videos of the Image Contre Nature 2007 selection - 91mn

<http://surlaroute.p-silo.org/120raisonsdedisparaitreA.php>These films will be shown in McLane 161. Parking is relaxed after 4:30 PM on Fridays in area parking lots. Check the campus map to see which parking area is most convenient. <http://www.csufresno.edu/univrelations/map/>

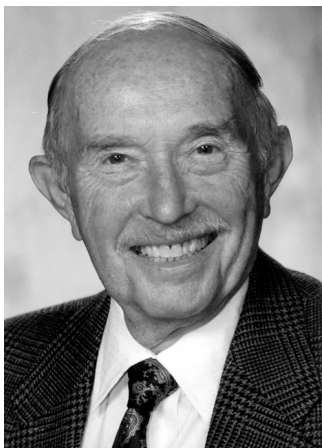
Saturday, March 1 • 10:30 AM

African American March for Justice: Marchers assemble at 9:30 am Rally 10:30 am Mary Ella Brown Community Center * 1350 E. Annandale Ave Fresno, CA 93706 (Bring canned food donation) March begins at 10:30 am End at the Free AME Church, 806 Collins Fresno, CA. Program begins 12:00 noon— Awards Ceremony. Donations Payable To: Fresno Center For Nonviolence, Vendor Tables available: \$20.00. For more info. call Patricia Miller at (559) 803-0006 Patricia12miller@yahoo.com or visit www.nancal.org

From the Greenhouse

by Franz Weinschenk

Along with legislation to boost the miles per gallon for American cars by 40 percent which the President actually signed, the biggest news last month was the huge, two week-long climate change conference in Bali, Indonesia. More than 2,000 delegates from 189 countries participated. Organized by the UN, this was a major follow-up to the original Kyoto climate control agreement that was signed in 2005 by 141 countries who pledged themselves to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by 7 percent of 1990 levels by the year 2012.



Even with irrefutable physical evidence all around us — for example, the fact that the amount of ice lost in Greenland last year alone equals twice the amount of ice in the Alps — and even with more dire predictions from impeccable scientific sources such as the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, it looked like the US, which never signed Kyoto in the first place, was once again going to drag its feet and oppose anything substantial to turn around global warming.

From the beginning, Bush and Cheney have scoffed at the idea that global warming exists, and even if it does, they insist the US won't do anything about it until developing nations like China and India do something first. Local Republicans, both those stationed in Washington (Radanovich and Nunes) and in Fresno (Autry and Duncan) consider Kyoto a big joke as they march in lockstep with huge oil and big coal to the tune of "drill and bill" and "burn and earn" — the planet be damned.

But toward the end of the conference, a number of cracks started to appear in the stone wall which America's lead negotiator Paula Dobriansky had fashioned. Delegate after delegate emphasized the seriousness of global warming that the world can no longer ignore. They emphasized that climate change is a fact — not debatable any more — and that much of it is brought on by human behavior. Hurricane Katrina, they said, demonstrated to the world the depth of human suffering that can result from the flooding of a city. They reminded everyone that our Supreme Court handed Bush a hefty setback when it ruled that carbon dioxide needs to be considered a "pollutant" and therefore is subject to regulation.

On top of that Dobriansky was probably feeling a little lonely inasmuch as her staunch ally, Australia's Prime Minister John Howard, wasn't around to help her any more since he's been replaced by a flaring liberal, Kevin Rudd. To make matters even worse, two days before the conference closed, who should show up but Nobel Peace laureate Al Gore, who delivered an impassioned speech often interrupted by wild applause. "I'm going to speak an inconvenient truth," he said. "My own country, the United States, is principally responsible for obstructing progress here in Bali. We all know that. . . . We all know that!"

Then on the last day of the meeting things got even more emotional. The developing countries such as China and India asked the richer nations, who, they argued, had so much more to do with the mess the world is in than they did, to help the poorer nations clean up their act both technically and financially. Every time Dobriansky tried to counter that argument, she was booed and hissed. A big blow came when the Europeans threw their support to the developing nations; Papua New Guinea, South Africa, Mali, Brazil, Jamaica, Uganda, Tanzania all spoke in support of India. Things got so tense that at one point that the chairman of the conference, Yvo de Boer, left the podium in tears. And then in a real breakthrough, Dobriansky relented and announced, "We will go forward and join the consensus." A moment of disbelief and then tumultuous applause, after which the Indian delegate thanked the US for "coming on board."

This doesn't mean that the developing nations will get everything they are requesting, but all parties have

agreed that by 2009 they'll try to negotiate the following: A new treaty in which every country on the planet pledges to reduce its emissions of greenhouse gases by one-half by the year 2050, with the wealthier nations assisting the developing nations to meet that challenge.

"This is a real breakthrough, a real opportunity for the international community to successfully fight climate change," said Chairman de Boer.

We can only hope that he's right, but many remain skeptical. Bush will probably give what happened in Bali a little lip service and then pass the problem on to his successor.

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Franz Weinschenk has been a teacher and school administrator in Fresno for over fifty years. He can be contacted by e-mail at franzie@SCCCD.org

Another Hobson's Choice Election

By Ruth Gadebusch

Supposedly to allow Californians more influence in selecting the presidential candidates, the legislature moved the primary elections to February. Then, to benefit themselves, they placed a proposition on the ballot to allow current office holders, who otherwise would have been termed out, to run again. Such consideration of the voters!



Make no mistake about it, I am opposed to term limits, believing that the election itself is the time for term limits, or extensions, as the case may be. The current measure is ballyhooed as increasing term limits, which continues to be a popular idea to be milked for all it is worth. In reality, it allows the current office holders to erase their previous time, thereby getting 12 years free and clear beginning with the June election for some thirty-odd members. I will vote against it but I do not want my vote interpreted as support for term limits.

Then there is the funding proposition for community colleges, another good group that deserves greater support but not in this manner. Like the former Proposition 98 which dedicated money for K-12, it ties the hands of the legislature, thereby exacerbating the state's financial problems. Again, I will be forced to vote against something I truly believe in.

Presidential candidates were supposed to have to pay more attention to California with the moved-up primary; however, it isn't working that way. Not surprisingly, a lot of other states also wanted to play the game. Isn't it time for some national consistency in how we elect a president? Why should two rural, thinly populated states have so much influence? Of course, if we voters didn't get too carried away jumping on the bandwagon that problem might solve itself. Though as long as the Electoral College exists we will not have one vote for one person. The Electoral College is designed to give control to thinly populated states at the expense of the densely populated urban states, and that is just what it does.

As for the candidates themselves, one party appears to have a bunch of opportunists — not that all aren't to some degree, but even more so for this party — ready to change their stands to whatever direction the wind is blowing. Several do have, to say the least, completely odd-ball, unfair, unworkable tax proposals with the expectation that the voters will love the idea of little, or no, taxes. The country can be run on magic!

One candidate was liberal when he was elected governor of a liberal leaning state, only to convert to conservatism to appeal to the power base of the party. Another mentions "9/11" at every opportunity, even inventing opportunity, and now disavows his sanctuary city (for immigrants) that he espoused when mayor. One with an impeccable military record supports the Iraq war and other preemptive war. He, along with several other candidates of his party, wants to control women's reproductive life. At least he is honest, which

is more than we can say for those who so readily change their views, and he has some humane feelings for the many illegals in the nation. Still, by and large, he is anathema to us liberals.

As for the other party, it has a plethora of interesting candidates with varying degrees of qualifications. The problem there is the danger of getting hung up on race and gender. For months, women had thought there was a possibility, even probability, of a female in the highest office of the land. Along came an exciting young African American offering the alternative of the first African American president — shades of the 14th Amendment fight all over again. What are we who believe in equality to do? Both have similar platforms, but one has more experience.

Ah, experience, what does it matter when so many are calling for change? Be assured that experience does not preclude change. In fact, it could well ensure viable change, beyond the idea of change for change's sake. Even the candidates of the president's party are calling for change. The question is just what kind of change.

Alas, two of the better qualified for dealing with this nation's sorry reputation in foreign policy have already been forced out of the race. Interesting enough, in this dust-up between the first woman and the first black president very little has been said about the possibility of the first Hispanic president. Despite his Anglo name, this Hispanic has a depth of experience both domestic and foreign. Alas, charisma all too often trumps experience.

As often happens, many of us will be voting for the lesser of the evils, but evil nevertheless. A Hobson's choice, indeed.

[Editor's note: A Hobson's choice is a free choice in which only one option is offered, and one may refuse to take that option. The choice is therefore between taking the option or not taking it. The phrase is said to originate from Thomas Hobson (1544-1630), a livery stable owner at Cambridge, England, who, in order to rotate the use of his horses, offered customers the choice of either taking the horse in the stall nearest the door—or taking none at all.]

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Ruth Gadebusch is a former naval officer, 13 years as a Fresno Unified School District Trustee, Vice-President of the Center for Civic Education, Community Activist.

We Want Police Accountability

By Ashley Clemens

The topic of an Independent Police Auditor (IPA) operating within the city of Fresno has been greeted with much controversy. Though it has received consistent support and contributions some fear that this system will completely overpower the Internal Affairs Department, while others are hesitant to destroy an already flawless system, still others are worried about the additional cost for the city. Despite these many concerns, the IPA will only function toward one goal: to improve our current system by providing an outside voice and input that will ultimately bring progress to our police department for years to come.

On Wednesday October 17th, 2007, Fresno Pacific University hosted a public forum. The discussion—does Fresno need an Independent Police Auditor? The purpose was not to persuade one way or the other, but instead, "attempt to open the issue to the public."

Former Fresno City Councilman Chris Mathys explained at the forum there are plenty of avenues already in place that people can take when they feel a police officer has violated their rights. Basically he said if it isn't broke don't fix it. However, although many take this same view, those who have experienced the violence and have filed a complaint disagree.

It is human nature to protect our family members, our loved ones. As police officers are constantly in the line of fire—it is a high-risk job, and they have to often depend on their coworkers for protection. Consequently, when working in a police station, the officers that they work with become their brothers.

That being said, just as family members wouldn't investigate their loved ones with an unbiased outlook

OPINION & ANALYSIS FROM THE GRASSROOTS



This forum was held last October at Pacific University. It asked the question: Does Fresno Need an Independent Police Auditor? The Forum did not advocate a position, but did attempt to enlighten people about the position of an Independent Police Auditor, what it would do, etc. Photo by Howard Watkins.

when they are on trial, it is difficult for Internal Affairs—the department within the police station that investigates complaints on fellow police officers—to investigate their brothers fairly. This sometimes fogs their quest for justice.

Bringing an Independent Police Auditor into Fresno is a perfect solution. Organizations such as the Central California Criminal Justice Committee along with Mayor Alan Autry have attempted to bring an auditor into Fresno for years. However, to no avail. Despite the constant conversation and support behind an IPA, many citizens of Fresno still have never heard of an IPA or are ill informed as to its true purpose. We aren't trying to replace the current system, just improve it. Although some assume an IPA would replace the Internal Affairs of the police department, that isn't so. They will collaborate with each other, the IPA making recommendations to the Internal Affairs along the way, bringing the fresh outlook that is needed to the investigations.

Although an IPA does cost the city additional money, in the end, it saves the city money. When discussing her duties to the audience at the forum Barbara Attard, San Jose's IPA, said that she not only helps with complaints, but also makes suggestions that improve the station as a whole, tlinead as a direct result, prevents the city from having to pay a lot of money when some-

thing goes wrong. A lot of things can be prevented if they just catch the problems early, which has saved the city a lot of money.

The benefits by far outweigh the costs. Mayor Alan Autry, who supports an IPA in Fresno, has set aside money in the proposed budget—it has been denied. For the past eight years, the members of the CCCJC have brought this proposal to city council only for it to be denied every time. These avenues have been exhausted. In regard to the forum, numerous people were willing to speak in favor of an IPA; however, it was very difficult to find anyone to speak against it. The members of city council who voted against an auditor refused to speak at this forum to explain their reasoning behind their votes. There are so many people who are for an IPA. Despite their different beliefs they each came to the same conclusion yet the very few who are against it have won the battle every time. We must protect ourselves. It is now time to put this matter into the hands of the people. When you go to the polls, vote for candidates who are in favor of an IPA in Fresno. For more information visit <http://www.cccjc.org>.

Ashley Clemens is a Freshman majoring in Business marketing at California State University Fresno.

Violence project continued from page 18

tion composed of local area councils of facilitators and a national umbrella group, AVP/USA. AVP/USA provides resources for these local groups including training manuals, discussion email and conferences. In California there is also a statewide Steering Committee leading efforts to bring AVP workshops to all CDCR prisons and to establish local area councils in communities near the prisons. AVP/CA is independent from CDCR receiving all financial support from private sources.

The basic premise of AVP is that the local area council of facilitators is the primary unit, the heart of the program, making the decisions on which prisons and which community programs to support. Local Councils (functioning on the consensus model) make decisions on workshop schedule in prisons and the community, train and mentor new facilitators and one another and on the quality of facilitation and direction of AVP in their area.

Local area councils (for example, Berkeley and San Diego) often support each other by sharing facilitators and methods, so the new San Joaquin Valley Council will have, not only training, but support.

Currently volunteers are traveling from the Bay Area, Grass Valley, Los Angeles and Santa Barbara working with local groups to establish a San Joaquin Council of Facilitators. Once facilitators are trained and the council established they will take over the existing workshops at the women's prisons in Chowchilla and open AVP programs in other prisons in the valley. AVP/CA is in the Central Valley to invite community people to join in this powerful experience, starting by taking a Basic workshop on February 22-24.

Participants can treat themselves to this workshop purely for personal growth or make it a first step toward facilitating Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) workshops in prisons, the community or classroom. Fee depends on the ability to pay (\$25-100) with no one turned away for lack of funds.

Interested participants should register with Mary at 559/246-9883 or marysinc@yahoo.com. Even if you can't attend this workshop, more will be offered, let Mary know and we can contact you when more come available. For more information about the workshop and AVP, check out their website at www.AVPCalifornia.org

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Pat Hardy is the President of AVP/California and a 16-year facilitator in prisons and the community. She can be contacted at 800/905-6765.

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cvppac.org

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559-435-7360

Fresno County Supervisor Susan Anderson will be the speaker at the February 9, 2007 meeting of the Central Valley Progressive PAC. Susan represents Supervisorial District 2, serves as Vice-Chair of the Board, and is up for re-election on June 3, 2008. Members and the public are welcome to hear and ask questions of Susan as she discusses major issues facing Fresno County. The meeting is 3:30-5:00 pm at the Fresno Center for Non-Violence (1584 N. Van Ness Ave. (at McKinley), Fresno. For more information, visit www.cvppac.org or call 559-435-7350.

he said that he had done nothing wrong. Ramon was pushed to the ground and handcuffed. The complaint describes the scene:

An officer yelled “I got him! I got him!” to the others, some of whom giggled and laughed. Officers grabbed Ramon by his hands, cuffed now behind his back, and pulled up. His shoulder and arm were injured, and he suffered immediate, sharp pain. An officer placed Ramon in a police car, where he waited for an indeterminate time. While there he saw an ambulance come and take away the body of his son, Sammy.

Ramon, now with his arm broken in three places, was taken to the emergency room of a local hospital where he was interrogated by the police. The lawsuit that has been filed in the federal court in Fresno will also address the issue of the injuries Ramon sustained the night his son was killed. The case was moved to Fresno in an attempt to get a fair trial.

The police officers involved in the shooting of Sammy are expected to say that they believed their lives were in danger. The knife in Sammy’s hand could have been there because the startled young man grabbed something to protect himself and his girlfriend from the intruders breaking into his house in the middle of the night. That is what the court will decide: whether or not this was a wrongful death.

There have been other police shootings in Modesto in



This demonstration in Modesto was held to protest the police shooting of Sammy Galvan. The Galvan family hopes the jury trial in Fresno Federal court will bring justice to Sammy's death.

recent years. In an incident that happened on September 13, 2000, an officer with the special weapons and tactics team shot and killed 11-year-old Alberto Sepulveda. This happened during a drug raid at the boy’s home. An investigation found that the shooting

was an accident and the Sepulveda family was paid \$2.55 million by the city and another \$450,000 by the federal government for its role in the shooting. According to Modesto Anarcho, nine people were fatally shot by the police in Modesto between 2000 and late 2006.

According to organizers of the October 22 Stop Police Brutality demonstration in Fresno, more than 44 people have been killed by this city’s police since 1997. When asked if any of these cases resulted in a wrongful death judgment by the courts, Ellie Bluestein, who has worked for years to establish an Independent Police Auditor in Fresno, said, “I’ve never seen a police shooting declared a wrongful death, but then I’ve only lived here since 1964.” In one case four young Fresnans allegedly stole beer from a market in southeast Fresno. They drove a short distance away, and then their van was pulled over by the police. All but one of them surrendered, stepping out of the vehicle. Julian Celaya got into the driver’s seat and tried to drive away, but he

was shot to death in a wall of gunfire; witnesses say 30 to 40 shots were fired. A young man 25 years of age accused of stealing two 12-packs of beer was shot to death, and the police were found to have used justifiable force in the situation.

The death of Everardo Torres, who had his life stolen on the night of October 27, 2002, is another tragedy. Torres was arrested, handcuffed, and put into the back of a Madera police car. A short time later, police officer Marcy Noriega came over to the car, pulled her service revolver, and shot him to death. Noriega says it was all a big mistake, she thought she was using her Taser gun. Torres’s family says Everardo was murdered by the police, and they want justice.

The Sammy Galvan case will be watched closely by those concerned with justice and police accountability. For more information about police accountability issues in the Fresno and Modesto area, contact:

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Sammy Galvan was killed by Modesto police in August 2004. A wrongful death lawsuit will be heard in the federal courtroom in Fresno. The story which starts on page 1 and continues here is about the circumstances of Sammy's death, police accountability, and the struggle for justice.

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