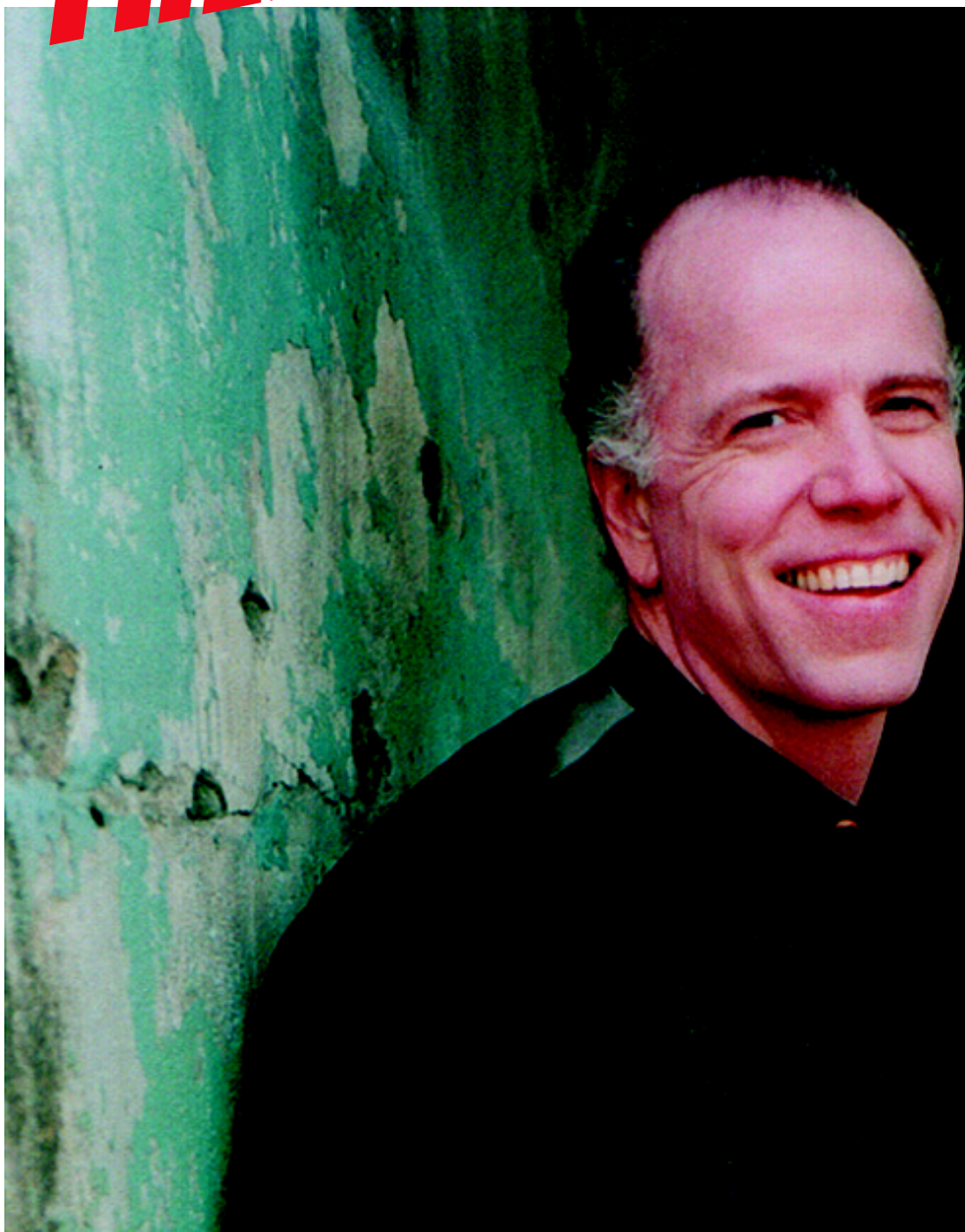


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John McCutcheon in Concert

John McCutcheon wasn't supposed to become a folksinger. He was headed for a lucrative career as a social worker in migrant labor camps. But Woody Guthrie got there first. He heard the songs of the Dust Bowl refugees, the *Grapes of Wrath* stories that crackled on the airwaves of early 1960s radio and knew something else was going on. While still a college student, the oldest of a large Catholic family, John took up the banjo "to help keep myself sane" and went off the deep end. He heard recordings of Roscoe Holcomb and Clarence Ashley, walked out to the end of the college road, stuck out his thumb and never looked back.

He ended up roaming the Appalachians, trading a university classroom for the front porches, picket lines, union halls, churches, and square dance barns of his adopted home. Under the tutelage of some of the greats of traditional Southern music he quickly mastered seven different instruments, became an insightful and powerful singer of traditional songs and honed an ear for a good story. Songwriting, storytelling, social activism all met and finally made sense.

His songwriting, rich in detail and broad in scope, have created a catalog of hundreds of songs covered by performers throughout the world. His classic *Christmas in the Trenches* has been repeatedly cited as "the greatest anti-war song ever written" and is the subject of an annual coast-to-coast special on CBC.

"His concerts are little feats of magic storytelling with the richness of literature."

-Washington Post

John McCutcheon in Concert
Thursday, January 18
7:30 PM
CSUFresno Concert Hall

The music building is on Maple off Shaw; there will be relaxed parking in Lot C directly to the East as you enter the campus on Maple.

Read more about John at
www.folkmusic.com

Tickets: \$20 advance; \$25 at the door
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Online: www.fresnofolkconcerts.com
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JANUARY 2007

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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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The Community Alliance newspaper reserves the right to edit all articles for space and clarity.

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Letter to the Editor

Sincere thanks to all who donated so generously of toiletries, snacks, greeting cards and financial aid to our Holiday Project for women prisoners at CCWF, Chowchilla. Through the kindness of Community Alliance readers, the Inmate Family Council of CCWF, the Fresno Center for Nonviolence's Prison Ministry, the Unitarian Universalist Church of Fresno, and a number of anonymous donors, we were able to fill all 4,000 "Goodie Bags" for the inmates.

The project has been a great success this year, though far more time- and labor-intensive than anticipated.. So successful, in fact, that we hope to make it an annual event. However, to avoid another breathless last minute sprint (from which we are still trying to recover) we hope to spread the work over a longer period of time. We will be accepting donations again starting in January 2007.

Our heartfelt thanks. We couldn't have done it without you.
Maria Telesco
On behalf of all the groups named above.

Homeless People in Fresno Win a Victory - Face New Challenges

By Mike Rhodes

Homeless people won a victory in Fresno when a federal court ordered the City of Fresno to uphold the constitution of the United States. The court order prevents the city from taking and immediately destroying homeless peoples' property.

A couple of days after the court issued a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) against the City of Fresno, no trespassing signs went up near homeless encampments that are located next to a railroad line in downtown Fresno. Geno, a homeless veteran who lives next to the tracks, said "I have lived here for three years and never been bothered by the railroad employees. They would come by and we would talk, but they never told me to move."

Geno says "a couple of weeks after the signs went up, the railroad cops came by and told me to move on." The bulldozer, clean up crew, and police arrived on December 13. Geno, and the other homeless people living in the area were told to get out or they would be arrested and their property would be destroyed. Geno and others openly speculate about if the police are using the railroad as a proxy to continue their illegal rampage against the homeless. The presence of James Betts, the attorney who represents the city on this issue, at this raid fueled speculation about the railroad/city collaboration in these attacks.

The railroad "clean up" went about 50 feet on either side of the tracks. Many of the dozen or so homeless people who were living within 50 feet of the tracks were surprised at the arrival of the crews. Juan, for example, who lives under the overpass near San Benito and H street had not been warned. He said "I just found out about this today." Moments later a bulldozer was sweeping through the area where his tent had been.

As Fresno Police Department (FPD) Captain Greg Garner and officer Rey Wallace watched, the bulldozer sweeps back and forth across the landscape. Geno, who had been told that the clean up would take place the next day asked Garner why the clean up crew was there now. Garner said he did not know and that they (the police) were just there to observe. They claimed they had no direct role in the operation. Garner told Geno that "they (the clean up crew) are here now" and that he better get his stuff moved. He also told him to just move his things on the other side of the retaining wall that is at the end of the railroad company property. Geno said the owner of the lot, on the other side of the retaining wall, does not want them there either. So, Geno asked the ques-



Charles Montgomery's property was destroyed when he lived next to the railroad tracks.

tion you hear a lot - "where are we supposed to go?"

As the "clean up" was in progress, Liza Apper and I talked to FPD Sgt. Bruce Hartman, who said that eventually all of the homeless under the overpass would be moved. He said the City of Fresno owns the land (under the overpass) and the plan is to move them out. Hartman did not have a time frame for this but went on in some detail about the short, medium, and long term plans for the homeless. He talked about plans for another homeless shelter on city land South of the Rescue Mission - in an area on the old Golden State Blvd, where there are a number of old hotels. He said the city owns the property and will level the land and build something there in conjunction with Poverello House. The push on the homeless is to move them to the Southern end of the industrial section of downtown.

There was a significant police presence during this operation - I almost got arrested when I crossed a vacant lot to access the site of the sweep. According to FPD officer Twitty, who detained me, checked for any outstanding warrants, and ran my car license plate number through their system, the owner of the property had complained

Continued on page 18



Roy points to the spot where he says Fresno Police Officers threatened him.



Tapestry of manipulations has unraveled into Iraq civil war

By Amy Goodman

“Every great work of art goes through messy phases while it is in transition. A lump of clay can become a sculpture; blobs of paint become paintings which inspire.”

No, this is not Pablo Picasso speaking, but Maj. Gen. William B. Caldwell IV, spokesman for the Multi-National Force-Iraq, comparing the carnage in Iraq to a work of art in another audacious attempt to paint Iraq as anything other than a catastrophe.

The general’s remarks do bring the great artist to mind. Picasso’s epic painting “Guernica,” named after the city in Spain, captured the brutality of the bombing of that city during another civil war, the Spanish Civil War.

The painting, almost 30 feet wide, is a globally recognized depiction and artistic condemnation of war. Picasso shows the terror on the faces of people, the frightened animals. He shows the dead, the dying, the dismembered. A tapestry reproduction of it adorns the lobby outside of the United Nations Security Council.

In February 2003, before then-U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell gave his major push for war at the United Nations, a speech he would later call a “blot” on his record, a blue curtain was drawn across the tapestry so that the image would not be the backdrop for press statements on the coming war. Immediately, posters and banners of Picasso’s “Guernica” began appearing at the anti-war demonstrations sweeping the globe.

The attempted control of imagery and propaganda, language and spin has been a high priority of the Bush administration. Yes, the Pentagon forbade photographing the flag-draped coffins of fallen soldiers. But the manipulation goes beyond the war.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower once said, “Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket

fired, signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed.” If Eisenhower worked for the government today, he would have to revise his statement. Recently, the Bush administration stopped using the words “hunger” or “hungry” when describing the millions of Americans who can’t afford to eat. Instead of suffering from hunger, the Agriculture Department now says these people are experiencing “very low food security.” While the Bush administration has had some success in covering up the truth, it seems like reality is finally beginning to outpace its efforts.

Take, for example, Hurricane Katrina. A side effect of the Bush administration not responding to that disaster in a timely fashion is that when the network reporters went to New Orleans, there were no troops to embed with. What we saw for one of the first times was the network correspondents reporting from the victims’ perspective. Day after day, unspun, unfiltered. Bodies floated across our TV screens. I remember a young woman reporter interviewing a man whose wife’s hand had just slipped out of his, as she told him to take care of their children. After telling his story, the man waded into the water in shock with his boy. The reporter started to cry. The reports galvanized the country. Could you imagine if for one week we saw those images in Iraq: babies dead on the ground,

women with their legs blown off by cluster bombs, soldiers dead and dying. Americans are a compassionate people. They would say no, war is not an answer to conflict in the 21st century.

The debate now in vogue is whether Iraq is in a civil war. Sectarian violence on a mass scale is acknowledged all around: Gone are the harangues that the media are not covering the “positive stories” or the “good news” There simply is no good news in Iraq .

The Iraqi Ministry of Health estimated 150,000 Iraqis have died since the invasion. An October medical journal article estimated the civilian death toll as somewhere near 655,000.

The U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq has now lasted longer than the U.S. involvement in World War II. Iraqis suffered the most violent day in the entire war while Americans were celebrating Thanksgiving.

Iraq, like Spain in the 1930s, is in a civil war. A civil war started by the U.S. invasion and fueled by the U.S. occupation. The shroud over the U.N.’s “Guernica” tapestry is gone. Now the only shrouds worth noting are those that wrap the victims of the daily slaughter in Iraq.

###

Amy Goodman is the host of “Democracy Now,” which airs in Fresno on radio station KFCF 88.1 FM at 6 and 9 AM (Monday - Friday).



Picasso’s epic painting “Guernica,” named after the city in Spain, captured the brutality of the bombing of that city during the Spanish Civil War.

Local Media Booted by Borders Books

By Dan Waterhouse

A local religious group reportedly frightened Borders Books outlet into ejecting free newspapers, including News Link, the Community Alliance newspaper, and The Undercurrent from its Fresno store.

Employees say that members of an unidentified local religious group came into the store in September and complained Borders was “violating the law” by allowing under-18s uncontrolled access to the free newspapers. The employees added the group complained about the “content” of the ‘papers.

In response to the complaints, employees said all free publications, including the local Catholic gazette, were removed from the store.

Management then posted signs saying “no more free newspapers,” and got rid of the racks in the back of the store. According to Editor Mike Rhodes, Borders management could not find the Community Alliance newsstand when they asked for its return.

The News Link distribution person said that when he went to Borders on November 17th, to leave off that month’s issue, he saw signs announcing “no more free papers.” He said that one of the managers told him the September and October issues had been thrown away. She claimed she had tossed the newspapers in the trash because she “had no contact information.” However, the News Link’s phone number is printed on the paper’s masthead.

Undercurrent editor Carlos Fierro also confirmed that his newspaper had been removed from Borders in September. He said he believes his distribution person was told the free newspapers weren’t being allowed because of “crowded” space.

All three publications have irked the local religious community.

Because it is the sole gay and lesbian media outlet covering the Central Valley from Bakersfield to north of Modesto, News Link is a major irritant to far-Right religious folks simply by existing. News Link has regularly criticized local politicians and religious leaders for their anti-queer attacks.

Community Alliance newspaper routinely covers queer issues and features a monthly column, “Queer Eye....”

which generally focuses on local events and politics from a queer perspective. Its scathing coverage of the so-called “gay conversion” Love Won Out conference at Peoples Church in late 2004 provoked particular ire from local religious conservatives. The conference had been brought to the Fresno area in an attempt to counter the growing popularity of Gay-Straight Alliance groups on local high school campuses.

The Undercurrent gained widespread attention in August of this year when editor Fierro accused the Rev. Jim Franklin, pastor of the fundamentalist Christian Cornerstone Church of promoting a nuclear war in the Middle East, targeting Muslims. The ensuing outcry attracted the attention of the Fresno Bee, which gave the controversy much ink.

In October, the Undercurrent featured a cover that some local Catholics described as “religious hate.” The cover was an image of one of Reza Asseml’s art pieces. Asseml’s work superimposed a picture of the Virgin Mary on a human skull. There was quite a brouhaha on Fresno Famous over that cover.

News Link and the Community Alliance can now be happily found across Blackstone Avenue from Borders, at Barnes & Noble Books.

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Transforming Fresno's Housing Crisis into an Opportunity for Creating a Better Tomorrow

by Dr. Matthew A. Jendian

Do you own or rent your place of residence? How much of your monthly income are you spending on housing? Were you thinking of buying your own home? Have you noticed the price of houses lately? What is the quality of the housing or the neighborhood you are currently living in? What's being done about increasing the availability of safe, decent, accessible, affordable housing in Fresno and how can I be involved?

If you are interested in talking about any of the questions above, then you will want to participate in a housing forum on Saturday, January 20, 2007, 2-4 pm at Mennonite Community Church (5015 E. Olive Ave., Fresno).

The current housing crisis presents us with an opportunity to transform our city and region into a healthy, prosperous, and affordable location to live, work, and play. But, this transformation requires active engagement on the part of we the people!

So frequently, the fourth sector—the general public—is missing from the table in working to address local problems. But, we know the situation is not going to fix itself, and we know the market or government agencies are unable, by themselves, to effectively address the situation. We must get involved and come together locally with the private, public, and nonprofit sectors to move this issue forward and create a better tomorrow.

LOCAL HOUSING CRISIS

The local housing crisis is evident on a number of levels:

1. COST:
 - Between March 2001 and May 2006, ten Central Valley metro areas ranked among the nation's top 25 for rising home prices (Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight 2006). Fresno was #1, since the median home price in Fresno County had risen 145% during that period to \$310,000 in May 2006. A family would need an estimated annual income of nearly \$73,000 to buy the median-priced home, assuming a 20% down payment and a 6% mortgage interest rate.
 - The percentage of Fresno County households able to afford that median-priced house in Fresno County has decreased to 17% as of December 2005—a record low—down from 24% in April 2005, 31% in April 2004, 40% in August 2003, and 60% in 1999 (California Asso-

ciation of Realtors 2005).

- Similarly, the current fair market rent for a two-bedroom and three-bedroom unit is \$726 and \$1,056, respectively, having increased at 37% since 2000 (HUD 2006). A full-time employee would need to earn \$13.96 and \$20.31 per hour to afford the fair market rent for a two and three bedroom unit, respectively.

The percentage of homeowners (with a mortgage) and renters, in the City of Fresno, who face a “housing cost burden” (i.e., spend 30% or more of their monthly income on housing) is 43.3% and 54.3%, respectively (American Community Survey 2005). This means families have less disposable income to spend on other needed items, which is impacting growth of the local economy.

2. QUALITY:
 - Almost half of the housing units in the City of Fresno are rentals (American Community Survey 2005).
 - Of the 76,754 rental units, the majority are over 50 years old (ACS 2005) and, therefore, have an increased potential for substandard housing conditions, which endanger the health and safety of occupants and others.
 - Approximately 23% (over 17,000 units total) are substandard and do not meet the required minimum code regulations.
3. NEED: Housing production has not kept pace with the state and local housing needs, particularly for renter households and low-income owner households.

The City of Fresno, in its Housing Element of the 2025 General Plan, recognizes the desperate need for affordable housing:

- 3,961 new units during FY2003-FY2007 are required to meet the housing needs of Fresno's families living below 80% of the Area's Median Income (i.e., below \$40,650).
- To date, an estimated 893 units have actually been produced, leaving a remaining gap of 3,068 units.

Unfortunately, the goals in the Housing Element and the City's Action Plan have not translated into reality just yet, but the City is making progress due to heightened awareness of the issue and the recent adoption of the 10X10 Affordable Housing Plan:

- Between 2000 and 2003, the City averaged under 100 new units constructed per year.
- Over the last three years, the city is averaging over 300 new units constructed each year.
- As of September 2006, the City of Fresno has 1,013 units under construction or pending.

10 X 10 HOUSING PLAN

The 10 X 10 Housing Plan is a community-based Mayoral Initiative to foster the creation of “10,000 new, safe, decent, accessible, and affordable homeowner and rental units in world-class designed, master-planned growth areas and revitalized apartment and urban neighborhood developments, affordable for a range of very low through moderate income families.”

The 10 X 10 Plan, unveiled at Mayor Autry's State of the City Address on May 25, 2006, was created by members of the Fresno Housing Alliance in cooperation with the Mayor and City staff over a six month period. The Plan emphasizes land-use, planning, and affordable housing policies that will help Fresno become a healthy, prosperous, and affordable location.

The 10,000 new, safe, decent, accessible, and affordable housing units include units that are completed, under construction, permitted or approved in master plans by 2010:

- New means housing developments and rehabilitations that have not already been submit-

ted to or approved by the City's planning department (prior to 2006).

- Safe means housing units are built or rehabilitated to meet the city's building codes, monitored by the city's Building and Safety Services Division to ensure quality construction through the permitting and inspection processes.
- Decent means that the properties and buildings are aesthetically pleasing to the eye and are maintained by the residents, tenants, and property owners and actively monitored by the city's Code Enforcement Division.
- Accessible means including the following eight recommendations for universal design in housing development (Eames 2006):

1. A no-step entry into the house or apartment;
2. A 32 inch clear door frame into the house or apartment and into all rooms;
3. Hallways at least 40 inches wide;
4. The master bathroom should have a 60 inch wide space for a wheelchair to turn around;
5. If there is a second bathroom, a clear space of 30 inches by 48 inches would permit chairs and walkers into the bathroom;
6. Electric outlets should be between 18 and 24 inches from the floor to the center of the plug;
7. Light switches should be no higher than 48 inches; and,
8. Blocking or reinforcements in the wall should be included to permit future installation of grab bars near the toilet and in the bathtub area.

- Affordable means housing for very low (under \$25,400) to moderate (\$25,401 to \$40,650) income households (which constitute 38% and 33% of our population, respectively), but may also include new housing that is priced at or below the median home price for the city.

10 X 10 BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE

In September 2006, Mayor Autry appointed a Blue Ribbon Committee to prepare an Action Plan around the five strategies below to fulfill the goal of 10,000 units by 2010 (presented to Mayor Autry on Tuesday, December 19, 2006).

The Committee is chaired by Keith Bergthold and co-chaired by Councilmember Cynthia Sterling. Other members of the Committee are Dennis Woods (United Security Bank), Jess Negrete (Central California Legal Services), Robert Woods (Generation Homes), Rev. Sharon Stanley (Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries), Veda Stamps (The Ramsey Group), Michael Sigala (City of Fresno), Rev. Paul Werfelmann (Fresno Hope Lutheran Church), Sara Hedgeth-Harris (League of Women Voters), Ned Stacy, Lee Brand (Westco), and Dan Fitzpatrick (Lantana Corporation LLC).

The five strategies of the 10X10 plan:

1. Smart Growth Plan Implementation - Achieve the higher densities of the General Plan to increase affordability, and promote developments that are mixed-use and pedestrian oriented.
2. Urban Reinvestment, In-Fill, and Transitional Housing Developments - Look to other cities for models of reinvestment and continue to proactively address the housing issues of our urban core.
3. Expand Affordable Housing Resources and New Financing - Continue to seek and support additional housing resources.
4. Innovative Local Government Planning, Incentives, Regulations, Permitting, and Enforcement - Fast track City review and approval of affordable housing developments, and adopt stricter code enforcement penalties against slumlords.
5. Coordinate Regional Land Use and Transportation Policies - Participate in the Regional Blue Print process, and lobby the State and Federal Government to financially reward local jurisdictions that regionally plan and work together.

Seeking Shelter

There is a housing crisis in Fresno. The median home price in 2000 was \$104,000 and is now three times that amount, \$313,000. In 2000, 54% of the people of Fresno could afford to buy a home; today it is only 17%. In 2000, the median rent for a two-bedroom apartment was \$404; today it is \$780 per month. Add to this the lack of temporary and emergency housing and it is obvious that there is a serious problem. Affordable housing has not kept pace with the need in the Fresno area.

There are major efforts underway to address this crisis. Come hear about what is being done and how your faith community can get involved in creating solutions to this crisis. Join us at the interfaith forum, “Seeking Shelter: An Interfaith Forum on Affordable Housing”, at Mennonite Community Church on Saturday, January 20, from 2-4 p.m. Sharon Stanley from F.I.R.M, Tony Miranda from Habitat for Humanity and Rev. Steve Ratzlaff, pastor of Mennonite Community Church will share what they are doing to promote and maintain safe, decent, accessible and affordable housing in Fresno. Come find out what you can do to be part of the solution.

Co-sponsored by Mennonite Community Church and the Interfaith Social Justice Collaborative Contacts: Rev. Steve Ratzlaff Mennonite Community Church Phone: 251-5703 Email: ffa1zta@comcast.net Connie Young Interfaith Social Justice Collaborative Phone: (559) 225-2547 Email: ffa1zta@sbcglobal.net

Housing continued from page 4

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY AFFORDABLE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

As the housing crisis has created an opportunity for people and organizations in the City of Fresno to come together to think innovatively about addressing these issues, a parallel movement has evolved at the regional level as well through the creation of the San Joaquin Valley Affordable Communities Initiative (<http://www.sanjoaquinvalley.us/>) in concert with the California Partnership and the Federal Task Force.

This coalition of builders, construction workers, city staffs, lenders, realtors, housing advocates, developers, environmentalists, and community associations has come together through the coordination of Rollie Smith, Director of the Fresno Field Office of HUD, to develop a regional housing strategy.

Through focus groups conducted in eight Central Valley counties and continued meetings, the group has generated a brochure that lists recommendations to local Cities, Counties, and Councils of Government.

Key recommendations of the SJC-ACI include:

1. a regional housing trust to create a permanent, dedicated source of flexible funds for affordable housing
2. mixed-income housing through incentives
3. master-planned communities related to jobs and transportation.

HOUSING: A "ROOT ISSUE"

Sociologically, housing is seen as a "root issue," being integrally connected to a number of other social, economic, and physical issues. For example, addressing our housing crisis can result in enhancing student academic performance, improving public health and safety, attracting and supporting business development, recruiting a quality city and community service workforce, and retaining, attracting, and developing "knowledge workers" in the following ways:

- ENHANCING STUDENT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
 - Transiency related to poor quality

housing and rising housing costs impacts student achievement (nearly 41% of elementary students enroll after the first 2 months of the earliest year-round track and/or exit during the year). (FUSD Mainframe School Log Database 2003)

- IMPROVING HEALTH AND SAFETY
 - Overcrowded and deteriorating housing stock results in increased risk of home-related injuries (e.g., from fires) & respiratory diseases such as asthma, along with poisoning, rodent bites, & exposure to indoor air pollutants and "significantly affects public health" (CDC, "Healthy Homes Initiative," 2006).
- ATTRACTING AND SUPPORTING BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
 - 67% of Silicon Valley CEOs think creating more affordable housing is the best thing state government could do to improve the business climate in California (CEO Business Climate Survey 2006).
- RECRUITING A QUALITY CITY AND COMMUNITY SERVICE WORKFORCE
 - Increasing costs of housing are making it that employees such as police officers, firefighters, and teachers cannot afford to own a home where they work (e.g., cost of housing is among the top reasons cited by declining lead candidates for CSUF employment); the same can be said for students entering higher education and their choice of campus.
- RETAINING, ATTRACTING, AND DEVELOPING "KNOWLEDGE WORKERS"
 - Housing costs increasingly cited by CEOs as the biggest issue facing their employees and the most important

challenge to doing business in California (CEO Business Climate Survey 2006).

Viewing housing in this way means that our housing crisis impacts everyone and affects our collective quality of life. The good news is we can and are doing something about it.

OPPORTUNITIES TO BE INVOLVED

If you are interested in sharing your housing story and learning more about the opportunities to be involved in transforming our housing crisis into an opportunity for creating a better tomorrow, join us at the "Interfaith Housing Forum: Seeking Shelter" on Saturday, January 20, 2007, 2-4 pm at Mennonite Community Church (5015 E. Olive Ave., Fresno; NE corner at Willow). This forum is sponsored by the Interfaith Social Justice Collaborative. For more information, contact Rev. Steve Ratzlaff at 559-221-5703 or ffalzlar@sbcglobal.net.

For a preview of what will be discussed at the Housing Forum on January 20, 2007, tune in to a panel discussion airing on *Grapevine*, hosted by Jim Grant on KNXT-TV (Channel 49), during the weeks of January 1 and 8, 2007 (11:30 am, Mondays; 9:00 pm, Thursdays; & 10:00 pm, Saturdays).


You can also view opportunities to get involved in the Fresno Housing Alliance at <http://www.fresnohousingalliance.org>.

Be part of the housing solution and help shape the direction of our city and the Central Valley!

Dr. Matthew A. Jendian is a member of the Fresno Housing Alliance and a participant in the SJV Affordable Communities Initiative. He is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at California State University, Fresno and Director of the American Humanities Non-profit Administration Program.



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Healthy Gardening for People, Pets and the Environment!

By Judy Stege



Home gardener Nettie Higginbotham happily planted some vegetables in her tiny apartment backyard this past summer, looking forward to cucumbers, lettuce, broccoli, cabbage, and cauliflower. Water, sunshine and Nettie's loving attention did the trick, and plants grew in small earth plots and in planters. But wait! There were

holes in the leaves, and parts of plants missing! Each day in August saw more plants disappearing despite constant attention. When Nettie shared her harvest of lettuce and cucumbers during lunch on her garden patio, she sighed over the holey plants, and laughed with her guests as they waved a net to catch the white butterflies fluttering about, thinking they were the cause of the garden's ruin. Well, invisible garden pests who enjoyed feasting on tender leaves did do away with the garden before the winter vegetables formed. This was the first time in several years Nettie planted a vegetable garden, and she doesn't want it to be the last. When she thinks about the veggies she won't be eating, she affirms, "It's the bugs that did the plants in. I learned a lot, but next year I will have to do something to protect the plants from the butterflies that lay the eggs."

Wednesday, January 17 7 - 8:30 PM

Healthy Gardening for People, Pets and the Environment! An evening talk with Annie Joseph, a leading expert on healthy gardening. University of California Center, 550 East Shaw Ave in Fresno.

Learn how to:

- Manage pests and weeds the least toxic way
- Create habitat for birds, butterflies and beneficial insects
- Build and maintain healthy soil

Class will include materials on various least toxic pest management methods, a color field guide to Garden Bugs and information on the sponsoring organizations. Please RSVP at (559) 456-3292

Nettie, meet environmental activist Annie Joseph, who knows about the habits of garden pests and how to control them. Annie will be speaking January 17 at the UC Center on Shaw, 550 E Shaw avenue at 7 PM about Healthy Gardens. Annie's story is interesting, because she started her career thirty years ago as a maintenance gardener, then went into the retail industry where she trained nursery and hardware personnel to successfully sell pesticides. Pesticides are chemicals developed to kill bugs, and they are effective. However, ten years ago, scientists and environmentalists began noticing that pesticides were killing wildlife and accumulating in the earth and water, including the Arctic

Ocean. Since 2000, medical scientists have been studying the "body burden" of toxic chemicals in humans around the world and are documenting the relationship between these chemicals and the diseases affecting young and old.

In 1997 Annie joined a project called "Our Water Our World", designed to raise public awareness of pesticides that were polluting local creeks and waterways in the San Francisco Bay Area. In 2001 Annie left her job marketing pesticides and began to work full-time to spread the word beyond the Bay Area about how to have a healthy garden without using pesticides. Part of her new job is to make less toxic products visible in retail stores. If you go to www.ourwaterourworld.org, you will see a listing of twenty-two counties, from Humboldt to Los Angeles, where stores like Orchard Supply Hardware (OSH) have agreed to provide fact sheets and shelf labels to make it easier for consumers to choose a non-toxic product. Fresno County is not yet on that list. Annie and health-conscious gardeners concerned about the environment want to change that.

Perhaps you too are a frustrated gardener, wondering how to coexist with those garden bugs. Annie will show why we need some bugs in the garden, and how we can create a habitat for birds, butterflies and beneficial insects to produce healthy flowers and vegetables. She will share how to manage pests and weeds the least toxic way. Call 559-456-3292 today to reserve your seat in Annie's January 17th workshop. You will receive a booklet on successful Integrated Pest Management (IPM) methods and also a color Field Guide to Garden Bugs. Join with The Fresno Coalition Against the Misuse of Pesticides (FresCAMP), the San Joaquin River Conservatory, Fresno County Master Gardeners, and the Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District to help make pesticide-free gardening easier in Fresno.

Animal Factories, Their Pollution, and Your Health

By Center on Race, Poverty, & the Environment

We all know that dairies stink and breed insects, but what people may not know about the massive animal factories now taking over the landscape of the San Joaquin Valley is that they are one of the largest contributors to the smog, particulate matter, and water pollution that seriously endanger public health in the Valley.



The San Joaquin Valley is one of the most polluted air basins in the United States. Valley cities continue to rank in the top five most smog-polluted and particulate matter-polluted areas in the Country, and people have to get involved to demand that the government protect public health. Several local groups are organizing an event to do just that. There will be a Healthy Dairy Community Meeting on Wednesday, January 17 at the CSUF Craig School of Business, Alice Peters Auditorium. This event is sponsored by Fresno Metro Ministry, Coalition for Clean Air, the Fresno – Madera Medical Society, and Service Employees International Union - UHW.

The American Lung Association’s STATE OF THE AIR: 2006 report, released in April 2006, found that Bakersfield, Visalia, Fresno, and Merced are the 1st, 3rd, 4th, and 5th most smog-polluted cities in the nation. Smog is formed when two types of gases – volatile organic compounds, or VOCs, and oxides of nitrogen, or NOx – mix in the presence of sunlight and heat. Animal factories are the largest source of VOCs in the San Joaquin Valley, out-polluting cars, oil and gas production, and pesticides.

The STATE OF THE AIR: 2006 report also found that Bakersfield, Visalia, and Fresno are the 2nd, 4th, and 5th most polluted cities in the nation in terms of long-term exposure to fine particulate matter. The most common form of San Joaquin Valley wintertime particulate matter is ammonium nitrate. Ammonia is a precursor to ammonium nitrate, and a full 85% of Valley ammonia emissions come from animal agriculture.

A document prepared jointly by the California Air Resources Board and the American Lung Association points out that ozone causes and exacerbates a variety of respiratory ailments, including asthma. Children are especially at risk. Exposure to levels above the federal air quality standards can lead to lung inflammation and lung tissue damage. These high levels of ozone can also reduce crop yields and damages paints, fabrics, and plastics.

The American Lung Association’s STATE OF THE AIR: 2006 report points out that: Particle pollution causes a broad range of health problems. Exposure worsens asthma and causes wheezing, coughing and respiratory irritation in anyone with sensitive airways. It also triggers heart attacks, cardiac arrhythmias (irregular heart-beat) and premature death.

Long-term exposure to fine particulate matter, known as PM 2.5, kills 1,292 people each year in the San Joaquin Valley. In spite of the serious air pollution they cause, animal factories were exempted from air pollution controls until recently. Many continue to ignore the law, building even without applying for a permit. Of the 18 mega-dairies that had applied for federal Clean Air Act permits by the end of June 2006, we know of at least 6 that have started construction without the permits. The air pollution from animal factories is only part of the story. They also cause severe water pollution, which is also associated with major health problems.

The Regional Water Quality Control Board (“RWQCB”), in a 1995 report, determined that “[i]ndividually and cumulatively, [dairies] pose a significant threat to surface and groundwater.” A 1996 report by the RWQCB stated that dairy cows are responsible for poisoning hundreds of square miles of underground water, rivers and streams. The typical dairy cow creates as much waste as 20 humans. A 1,000 cow dairy generates 120,000 pounds of manure per day, equivalent to the sewage output of a city with a population of 20,000 people. And this city has no sewage system. Dairies dispose of the waste on the ground with no treatment. The dairies in the Central Valley generate more waste than the entire human population of Texas.

Even well-run dairies contaminate groundwater. A study by Harter et al., published in the Journal of Contaminant Hydrology, studied 44 shallow wells beneath five Stanislaus and Merced County

dairies over four years. Dairies were selected to determine what usually occurs under typical, well run dairies. The size of the dairies monitored averaged 1000 animals per facility.

The national maximum contamination level (MCL), which is the national maximum safe level for drinking water, of nitrate as nitrogen is 10 mg/l. Water samples at the 1,000-cow dairies averaged 59.8 mg/l, almost six times the safe level.

Of the new dairies awaiting federal Clean Air Act permits in the Valley at the end of June 2006, only 2 planned to have less than 3,000 cows.

Current waste management regulations are ineffective to protect groundwater. According to a study commissioned by the State Water Resources Control Board, the “current Title 27 requirements are insufficient to prevent groundwater contamination from confined animal facilities.”

Mega-dairy animal factories continue to build in the Valley. And their numbers are growing, at the expense of your health and that of your children. You can help stop their growth. Get involved!

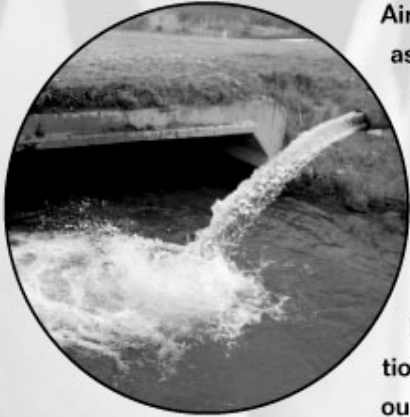
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The Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment can be contacted at: ph 415-346-4179, fax 415-346-8723 or www.crpe-ej.org



What will 50,000 more dairy cows in Fresno County mean for our families?

Mega-dairies are one of the largest sources of air pollution and smog in Fresno County.



Air pollution has given Fresno County some of the highest child asthma rates in America. Mega-dairies are one of the largest sources of air pollution and smog in Fresno County, and the Fresno Bee reports that mega-dairies will bring 50,000 more cows to Fresno County in the near future.

Please join community leaders with the *Fresno Healthy Dairy Commission for a discussion on how we can limit air pollution and ground water contamination from new mega-dairies while maintaining our agricultural economic base.

* The Fresno Healthy Dairy Campaign is a group of Fresno County parents, doctors, caregivers, clergy, and educators committed to protecting our public health. For more information, please contact Susan at 559-265-2308.



Join Us!

Fresno Healthy Dairy Community Meeting
Wednesday, January 17, 7:00 p.m.

CSUF Craig School of Business,
Alice Peters Auditorium
5245 North Backer Avenue
(Woodrow Ave. between Shaw Ave. and Barstow Ave.)

Credo
By Richard Stone

["Credo" ("I believe") will alternate with "Grassroots Profiles". It is intended to bring attention to the perceptions and wisdom of progressive leaders whose (semi)-retirement has dimmed their visibility.]

Lucile Wheaton was a long-time Public Defender, a pioneering woman in a male-dominated arena. "The D.A.'s called me 'No Deal Lucile' " she recalls, referring to her refusal to take plea bargains when she felt that her clients' guilt had not been established or that the charges were unjustly severe. "My job was to be my clients' best friend." She was also involved for years in community-building projects on the West Side and with farm-worker groups.

Now Lucile's time is taken up mostly in maintaining her own and her sister's health and the household they share, though she remains involved with the Unitarian Universalist Church and the Humanist Society.

Lucile says she remembers always feeling a responsibility to lead a life that makes the world better. Her parents were both religious...but from different (and incompatible) faith backgrounds (father Southern Baptist, mother Episcopalian); so she never affiliated strongly with either—or with any other dogma-based religion. But from both, she absorbed the beauty of living with a moral center. "My mother especially valued truthfulness. And I had a contrasting example in my grandmother who often stayed with us and had class pretensions that seemed just frivolous. I remember one day sweeping the porch, feeling proud of taking on a responsibility. A friend came by and invited me to play. I much preferred to keep working, but grandmother was embarrassed that I would choose a menial task over a social opportunity."

Lucile cites growing up in the Depression as another formative factor. Concern for each other seemed natu-

ral and necessary, good fortune something to be shared. "But", she concludes,"I think most importantly, I simply found the life of social activism to bring the most fun."

Lucile's choice of involvements are deep-rooted and long-lasting. She read an article about the Unitarian Church in the 40's, did some research, and joined. Whenever she has gone since then—including Guam– she has joined the local Unitarian fellowship and participated in their social justice activities. Her involvement with the United Farmworkers Union also spans decades. As the wife of an M.D. in Delano, she was in the upper social echelon; but when Cesar Chavez began organizing right in her backyard, she found the truth and justice of the farmworkers' case irrefutable. "I began helping them raise money, and found my friends—many of them wives of growers—distancing themselves. After returning from a vacation I was even asked, 'Is it true you went to Russia?' " So she took off her white gloves, and followed her instincts...all the way to law school, inspired by the example of California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA). "I was getting doors closed in my face; they kicked doors open." Similarly, a visit to Juvenile Hall, and observing the demoralizing conditions there, led her to seek work as a Public Defender.

As to people who inspired her, Lucile invokes the memory of Gandhi (who she remembers hearing about on the news, a figure whose image as a tiny, brown-skinned man in a loin-cloth standing up to the British Empire was as striking then—but much more impacting through time—as the lone figure in front of a tank at Tianamen Square.) She was also impressed by Eleanor Roosevelt, especially in her action to gain a public venue for black singer Marian Anderson to hold a concert at (how about in front of The Lincoln Monument!) after the D.A.R. had forbidden her use of their hall.

Here, today, in Fresno Lucile cites the work of Walt Parry and Edie & Bryan Jessup (of Metro Ministry and

the U.U. Church) as figures whose work she greatly admires.

As aging and health limitations take their toll, Lucile says, "I find time and energy are the same", there being no multi-tasking, spare time or projection into the future. "I find myself at 9:00 a.m. still finishing up my morning routines and thinking, I used to be well into my work at the office by now. But I love living: I find every day a gift and a challenge." Without religious belief to provide comfort for the loss of others and her own approaching mortality, she experiences both sadness and gratitude. "I feel so deeply connected to the world and the life I have lived. The highlight of most days is 'my walk', the same route each day, as soon as it's light. There is such joy in seeing the familiar trees, in ever-changing light; and to be greeted daily by the neighboring cats up and down the street, who wait for me each day. It's odd, when a neighbor moves—even one I don't know—I feel a loss. Each day's walk is like a visit to an old hometown, where a renewed sense of the past interpenetrates the present, so it seems as one."

As final thoughts Lucile remembered two pieces of writing. The first (as excerpted from an article she wrote entitled, "What does Humanism mean to me?"): "I am agnostic. I feel responsibility to live a moral life. I need to share life with others and learn from them...[As a Humanist] I can be who I am without pretense. I can share the friendship of like-minded people. I can try to match the goodness and loving-kindness I find [among fellow] Humanists."

The other is a sentence she offers as her motto: "What a person really wants in life is to find a thing that needs doing, and to do it well."

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Locally Available Alternative Media
compiled by Mike Rhodes

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Peace Now!
By Bill Simon

Unfortunately, Peace Fresno will begin planning for the annual Rally In The Valley: Bring The Troops Home Now at its meeting on Tuesday, January 9. The event is held in March at the anniversary of the Iraq War. If everyone writes their Congressman and Senators and urges them to stop voting to pay for the war, perhaps we won't have to hold it this year. Since the need will most likely still exist, everyone is invited to help us in planning the Rally: Tuesday evenings at 7:00 pm at the Fresno Center for Non Violence, SE corner of Van Ness and McKinley across from City College beginning on January 9.

We are quickly approaching 3000 American military deaths in Iraq. When that day comes, probably in early January, Peace Fresno will meet at the Peace Corner (Blackstone and Shaw) to commemorate the 3000 American military deaths and the 655,000 Iraqi deaths. We will hold the demonstration beginning at 3:30 pm the day after www.icaualties.org records the 3000th death. Everyone is urged to join us on that day. The demonstration will conclude by 6:00 pm.

###

Bill Simon is President of Peace Fresno

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QUEER EYE

Shock-N-Awe

by Dan Waterhouse

The 2006 elections generally brought good news for queers around the country. After 12 years, the Republican Revolution in Washington was ended when the voters rose up in disgust and tossed the bums out of Congress. The Democrats now control both the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Here in Fresno, the race to replace discredited Sheriff Richard Pierce quickly became a microcosm of politics on the national stage. Assistant Sheriff Margaret Mims (the lone Democrat) was facing retired Highway Patrol captain Cal Minor in what was expected to be an easy win for Minor.

Minor was regarded, despite his claims of being an outsider, to be a Pierce clone. Mims' supporters spoke of Minor's ties to many of the same powerbrokers who had backed Pierce eight years ago. Pierce had angered many in the queer community when deputies (including Peace Fresno spy Aaron Kilner) invaded Roeding Park in hunt of gay bathroom sex.

Reality hit Minor in the face election night as Mims was ahead, and the blow-out was in actuality a horse race. The local Republicans were stunned. Then they became bitter. Fresno Republican king-pin wanna-be Mike

DerManouel moaned in agony. His moans included: Arnold Schwarenegger, unions, and Bubba Autry.

"Improbable as it may seem, Arnold received 67% of the vote in Fresno County," DerManouel complained. "Cal Minor received only 50% of the vote." "You tell me - who was out voting for Arnold?" "Liberals." There is no other way to explain the drop off to the other candidates. "I estimate that Democrat turnout was 7-10% higher than Republican turnout - a situation not seen around here for years." And why not? "They got minimum wage, a greenhouse gas bill, all the spending and borrowing they could ever have dreamed of.....and hate the war on terror."

The unions: the Service Employees International Union and Fresno Teachers Association ran a pilot program in urban "Fresno with Spanish speaking precinct walkers targeted at" defeating Assemblyman Juan Arambula's school board slate and "pressing a union slate of school board candidates." This effort increased turnout in urban Fresno - over 60% of it to Mims.

And, Autry: In a race decided by less than half a percent, this mattered. "We now move Autry into the Republican In Name Only RINO—category." Another

RINO, former Assemblyman Mike Briggs (who provided reliable votes for all the bad Davis budgets) actually ran the Mims campaign." Several other GOP elected officials sat the race out." We've made our notes on who they are and when they come hat in hand for re-election endorsements, they should be prepared to be asked why.

I don't blame those other GOPers for sitting this one out. Minor was considered damaged goods in certain conservative circles around town. Minor's supporters reportedly indulged in dirty tricks during the campaign in October. A Mims supporter blogged on the Fresno Bee website that off-duty Clovis cops came into small businesses displaying Mims campaign signs in their front windows, saying that posting signs like that here, may not be good for your business. They did it in a friendly manner, but the business owner only knew that they were officers, badges or not, and took it as a directive.

Speaking of directives. As the vote count entered its second week, voters discovered that some Minor supporters inside the Sheriff's Department believed the voters work for them, not the other way round. An insider blogged on the Bee site, "we asked for your help Fresno County and a blind eye and your back was turned on all of us." The blogger threatened there would be a mass exodus of deputies as soon as Mims took over.

One of the voters came back with (what I thought was) the perfect retort: this is the day that the truth came out about Minor and his (Deputy) supporters. I was under the impression that the Deputies that we as citizens of Fresno County call upon were here to serve and protect US! Not their own self-serving interests and what the payback would be in negotiations for their support. So put your egos and arrogance in check and suck it up and DO YOUR JOB!!!

Manure to Electricity Equals Clean Water, Clean Air, and Cheap Electricity

By David Silva

[Editor's note: There will be a conference in Fresno on January 17 about the valley dairy industry's impact on the environment. David Silva will continue this article and expand on the theme of methane alternative energy generation in the February Community Alliance newspaper]

Lets begin the dialogue on the issue of "manure to electricity converters" this way: They can make our small dairy farms energy independent with methane digester converters that pay for themselves in three years. Our large dairy farms can become energy providers. The

operation of these converters takes manure and thus methane away from our ground water, while it converts it to electricity and methanol. Which also in the process cleans up 40% of the air pollution in our area. The by-product of these Dairy Power Production Programs is methanol which is a clean fuel and does not interrupt our food market but utilizes our waste, not introducing the energy crisis into our food chain.

The Democrats and Republicans along with the Governor got together and put a 4% cap on how many debit/credit meters are allowed in the market. Free enterprise alone would allow nearly 100% because of the great investment. The two parties are obviously told what to do by PG&E and SC EDISON and the Energy Lobby.

David Minton Silva
<http://home.comcast.net/~greensurfer2/greensurfer2.html>
also check www.strausmilk.com for documentation and power point presentations
Comments: <http://dairypowerproductionnow.blogspot.com/>

Assemblyman Bill Maze says he voted unknowingly and has promised he would support taking away the 4% limit. We need to hold him to that. This is the most positive way to contain the pollution of cows and the most advantageous for the people. If ever there was an investment in the future for our area then it would be the guaranteeing of these loans that pay for themselves. This is a solution but we must demand our Assemblymen get real and shed their energy lobbyists.

###

David Minton Silva grew up traveling with the lettuce crops and worked in the summers on his godfather's dairy to get school clothes. He was a founder of the Peace and Freedom Party and is now active in the Green Party.

POETRY CORNER

Who Pays for Freedom
by Robert Martinez

All parents who are poor
Send your sons off to war
There's no future
Their lives are not bright
Why don't you send them off to fight?
Let us continue to manipulate the poor
To go and fight in an unjust war.

All parents who are poor
Don't hesitate send them off to war
Who needs the poor anyway?
They just put a burden on the rest of us
They're easily forgotten
There's not much pain
We never knew their name
So why should anyone complain?

Parents of the poor
Do you value your sons and daughters as much as we?
We need the poor for the troubled times like these
Who else do we send to defend our freedom and policies?
There are more of you than there are of us
So don't be causing all that fuss

Go and spill your blood in foreign lands
Surely we can pay for more flags to be draped over coffins
And hear the sounds of a 21-gun salute
While they lower your coffin we'll send more in your place as substitutes
Parents of the poor
Do not weep anymore

All sons and daughters of the poor
It is an honor to die for your country
We will keep telling you this
We will continue to send our sons and daughters to college
To make this country safer and wealthy for the ones who hold the power

The hour is at hand to defend this land
Always with the blood of the poor
Never one drop of blood from the rich

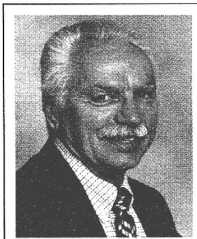


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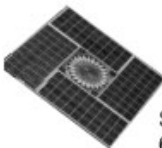


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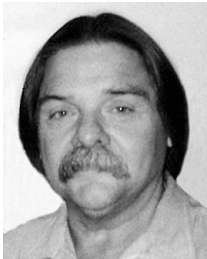


To register call Sherry McClelland at Fresno Adult School at (559)457-6015.

Transferring Convicts Out of State Duping The Public With Smoke and Mirrors

By: Boston Woodard

Insight and analysis from a journalist who is inside the prison system.



Many Californians cheered Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger’s export-a-convict plan that will be sending an estimated 5,000 prisoners to other states. They claim this will reduce the severe overcrowding throughout the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR).

That’s great! whoopi! yea! lets send our criminals to some other state and let them deal with the CDCR’s inability to be responsible. Maybe the receiving states can do a better job of rehabilitating California’s prisoners, a job it can’t seem to get a handle on.

You would think that a prison system fueled with a nearly \$9 billion dollar annual budget would have a mechanism in place to handle any problem. Nope. Not the CDCR. Rather than fix the problem the governor and prison officials want to transfer their problems to other states. The old smoke and mirrors out of sight, out of mind trick.

When Schwarzenegger declared a “state of emergency” saying the overcrowding crisis is getting worse with each passing day, and that, “immediate action is necessary to prevent harm.” who was he attempting to fool with that statement?

One CDCR spokesman said that this is “merely an interim step,” and that the Schwarzenegger administration will go back to the legislature next year to press for “reforms” rejected in this past summer’s “special session” on prison reform.

What many politicians and prison administrators don’t like to discuss, consider, or factor into a solution to the problem, is a real plan to significantly reduce the prison population. But, carefully being looked at for the first time by some politicians are California’s absurd and exorbitant sentencing laws. These laws have lead to the long term incarceration of tens of thousands of Californians who present no danger to public safety.

For example, the Three Strikes law has been warehousing men and women who are serving as many as 25 years-to-life for relatively minor violations of the law; possession of small amounts of drugs, stealing video tapes and petty theft. We’ve all heard the stories and most of us know that the tremendous amount of prison time given to some of these people are just plain vindictive. Many of these commitments should be serving smaller sentences in county jails or rehabilitation facilities in established community programs. Then there are the “old school lifers” who have programmed and jumped through every hoop queued in front of them for twenty, thirty, and in some cases forty years in an honest and sincere attempt to be paroled. But with a corrupt and revengeful in spirit parole board, that’s nearly impos-

sible.

In mid October Corrections Chief James Tilton said that sentencing reform was an issue the governor was willing to pursue. He also said that reforms should not be pursued in response to overcrowding, but rather be made “on their own merits.” Who cares how it’s pursued as long as it is?

According to a 10/8/06 San Francisco Chronicle editorial, “Fundamental reform requires us taking a look at sentencing,” said Assembly Speaker Fabian Núñez in August. The signals that Schwarzenegger and other top officials also are willing to take a closer look at our sentencing laws is a most welcome development.

Deals worked out with GEO-Group based in Boca Raton, Florida, will be paid \$28.7 million a year under a three year contract. Corrections Corporation of America (CCA), with headquarters in Nashville Tenn., will receive \$22.9 million a year. New Castle Correctional Facility in Indiana, the Florence Detention Center in Arizona, the North Fork and Diamondback Correctional Facilities in Oklahoma and the West Tennessee Detention Facility will be the recipients of California’s cash-crop of human beings. Eureka?

This is going to undermine public accountability and shift responsibility for the business of prison administration to profit-driven corporate boardrooms.

The California Correctional Peace Officer’s Association (CCPOA), the prison guard’s union, and Service Employee’s International Union (SEIU) Local 1000. representing other prison employees, say transferring prisoners out-of-state violates the state constitution. Their argument is that the transfers are illegal because it uses private companies for public safety services that should be provided by state employees. The truth is, every convict shipped to another state will be money out of their pockets.

In early November, the State Court in Sacramento shot down the CCPOA and SEIU’s request for an injunction allowing the transfers to commence. A 16 year old class-action lawsuit could have been a reason to stop Schwarzenegger’s plan to ship convicts out-of-state but it fell through. The so called Coleman class-action suit (1990) was successful by improving treatment for mentally ill prisoners. According to corrections spokesman Oscar Hidalgo, “We did a lot of screening to make sure they’re not part of the Coleman class.”

The CCPOA and SEIU were unsuccessful in their attempts to persuade the judge for a temporary restraining order to block the transfers. Sacramento Superior Court Judge Patrick Marlette rejected the motion for the restraining order.

On one hand the unions are whining that their employees are being “beat up” and “overworked” due to “thousands” of job vacancies, and on the other hand, they want to keep California’s prisons cramped and in chaos so their money won’t flow to other states. Go figure.

According to state officials, they expect “more than enough” prisoners will volunteer for the transfers, but if not, CDCR officials said they will force prisoners if need be. Corrections Chief Tilton said at a Capital press conference that he anticipates no difficulty getting enough prisoners to volunteer for transfer out of California but said if need be, “the state will force some to

move, starting with foreign nationals.”

In an October 6, 2006 bulletin distributed throughout the prison system regarding the transfers, it reads: “The information contained in this document has been gathered to provide general information about various aspects of incarceration in other prison systems.”

In the bulletin were many “general questions.” They were questions said to have been posed by prisoners about the transfers. Some of the answers to those questions were:

1.) “You will not be offered a choice regarding where you will be transferred.” 2.) “There are no special considerations made for inmates who participate in the out-of-state transfer.” 3.) “You can anticipate to be subjected to grooming standards [forced to cut hair and beards. etc.]” 4.) “You will be required to pay all restitutions.” 5.) “States in which these out-of-state facilities are located have laws that require out-of-state prisoners to be sent back to California for parole.” 6.) “CDCR inmates will not be allowed to purchase, possess or use tobacco products.” 7.) None of the contracted facilities have the ability to accommodate family visiting,” and the list goes on.

The transfer package has absolutely no incentive for prisoners. Transferred prisoners will be subjected to the same rules and policies that govern most prisons and will be shuffled right back to California on a whim if necessary. California will not be getting rid of criminals, it will be storing them in another state until they return for years of parole. The prison system’s multi-billion dollar budget will continue to grow. It’ll be like shoveling money into a white hot furnace. The transferred prisoner’s beds will be filled before they turn cold.

Something else you never read in so-called “mainstream newspapers” or hear about on network news stations are the tens of thousands of men and women who are warehoused in county jails and community detention facilities throughout the state. These detainees are waiting to be shipped like canned goods to one of California’s 33 prisons as soon as beds are available as a result of the transfers. Reportedly, Los Angeles County alone has an estimated twenty thousand plus prisoners who are presently waiting to be placed in a state prison bed. Los Angeles is just one county. Hiding 5,000 or more convicts in out-of-state penitentiaries won’t even make a small dent in the overcrowding crisis. It’ll be like shoveling shit against a swift in coming tide.

The first 80 convicts that were transferred out-of-state took off from Meadows Field in Bakersfield for a private prison in Tennessee. The CDCR will continue to transfer prisoners over the next year to private prisons in Arizona, Oklahoma, Indiana and Tennessee.

California has been trying to build its way out of an overcrowding crisis for decades unsuccessfully. Now the state is attempting to transfer its way out of the problem. Just like before, it will never happen. They’ll be back!

###

Boston Woodard is a prisoner/journalist who has written for the San Quentin News and the Soledad Star, and edited The Communicator. The Department of Corrections has pulled the plug on all three publications.

New Owners of Fresno Nursing Home Deliver Lumps of Coal to Residents and Staff

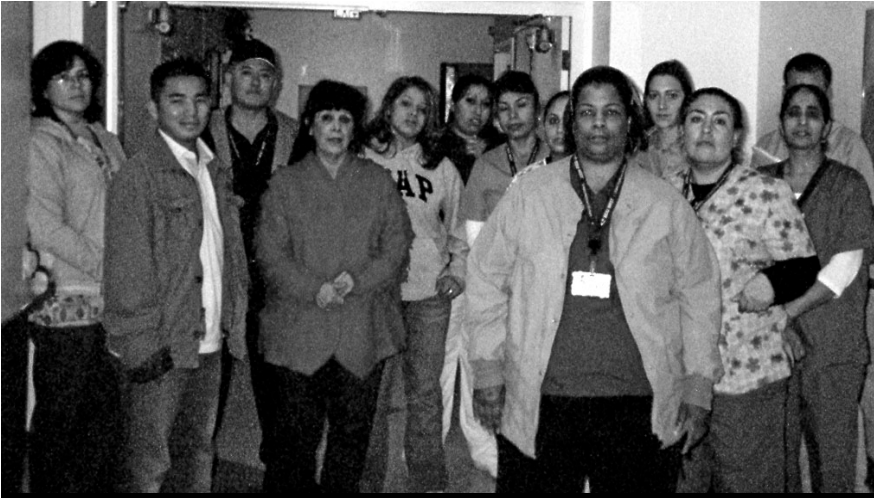
On December 21, 2006 workers from Fresno Healthcare (formerly Golden Cross Convalescent) members of SEIU United Healthcare Workers West, delivered an urgent demand to the facility Administrator: Respect employees and residents, honor our Union contract and immediately restore our pay and benefits. It’s a demand, employees say, they wish they didn’t need to make, but is critical to avoid compromising residents’ care.

On December 1, representatives of new owner, Yeong Lee, met with employees and told them they would need to re-apply for their jobs. Eventually, all employees were rehired but with cuts in pay, nearing a dollar an hour, and loss of vacation hours, sick leave and paid holidays. The cuts, employees say, clearly indicate that Lee has no

respect for staff, residents or their contract.

“Many residents here have no family. We’re all they have and they need us,” said 6 year employee Anita Wiltz. “With caregivers’ wages cut like they were, I’m afraid

Employees vow more actions will follow if Administration ignores their demands. Workers ask concerned community to call Fresno Healthcare Administrator, Eugene Tito at (559) 268-6317 and ask that employees’ wages and benefits are restored.



Workers at Fresno Health Care (formerly Golden Cross) begin protest over reduced wages and benefits. All employees were forced to resign and re-apply for their old jobs. Now, everyone is on a 90 day probation.

staff will have no choice but to find other jobs. What will our residents do when their only ‘family’ leaves them?”

Some elderly Fresno County homeless, their care overseen by the County’s Conservator program, reside at Fresno Healthcare. These residents are especially vulnerable and have no other options for long term care, employees said.

Dietary Aide, Enriqueta Tellez asked facility representatives how she would buy Christmas gifts for her children with her wages cut. “It’s so disrespectful, so mean spirited. I guess we got the Grinch instead of Santa Claus this year,” she added.

Word on the Street

by Wendy Russell

It seemed such an absurd Question to ask for this month's Word on the Street. Had things really changed that much? True - I had been out of town a while, having just returned from seven weeks on the wild frontera, the jungle and beach frontier on the Osa Peninsula of Costa Rica, so maybe some new fact had come up, maybe something like, As a strange result of global warming Fresno's hot summers and even those daily sunny spots that shine however briefly and no matter how cold - will now be gone forever. I just couldn't believe that the Editor's idea for this month's Question was:

What do you think of the plans to build a nuclear power plant in Fresno?

Figuring those plans to build a four billion dollar nuclear power plant west of downtown would fizzle out quickly once folks knew all the facts, I decided I needed a Back Up Question to avoid a blank page where Word on the Street should be:

President Bush has decided he needs until January to come up with an Exit Strategy for Iraq. What would your Exit Strategy be?

I headed out to the Tower District on a cold sunny day to get the answers. Brrrr! I shiver. And my throat has that weird hot thickened feeling that I now know comes from living in our polluted valley air. I didn't have this in the jungle. In fact, my husband's life-long sinus problems disappeared within hours there too.

Deciding to combine the search for fresh organic veggies with my search for answers, I head west on Olive avenue and stop in at Grandma's All Natural Market and Herb Nursery.

First I ask DUANE, busy at work behind the wooden counter, the official Question; What do you think of the plans to build a nuclear power plant in Fresno?

Duane laughs.

What will we be called? Chernobyl West? Didn't I hear that Diablo Canyon got shut down this morning with some problem? And what will we do with the radioactive waste? He laughs again... I just can't... More laughing, then he stops and gets serious. I'm making fun, but it really is frightening.

Just what I was afraid of - people think the idea of a power plant here in Fresno is a big joke! So I ask Duane the alternate Question;

President Bush has decided he needs until January to come up with an Exit Strategy for Iraq. What would your Exit Strategy be?

If he needs until January then he's a very very slow reader! I think the different portions of the Iraqi population, the Kurds, the Shiites, the Sunnis, should be allowed to form their own states. This has been discussed



Kevin

already. We need to pull the troops out - all those thousands of deaths and injuries - how many more? No more please. I heard - I think on Amy Goodman's show - that the policeman that emptied two clips into that young man in New York had just rotated out from Iraq. We'll have 100,000 National Guard coming back - and the VA (Veteran's Administration) is so ready to handle them - NOT!

We were both quiet a while. I was picturing those soldiers coming back, all the mentally wounded...

After buying golden beets and fresh chard, I continued down Olive Avenue, and walked into the hydroponic store, figuring there would be some serious answers for us regarding energy. I spotted KEVIN HILL, my friend and a damn fine musician too. They were unloading bags of expanded clay pellets (used for hydroponic growing) from a truck.

What do you think of the plans to build a nuclear power plant in Fresno?

That's INSANE! In this day and age there are so many types of alternative and renewable energies that it's absurd to turn to nuclear power - but what can I say? - once again that old school junta of militant conservatives are beating their heads on a suicidal brick wall - metaphorically!

Kevin laughs. We all laugh with him. I asked him the other, more Serious Question; What would your Exit Strategy be?

I think that the Middle East is an extremely difficult can of worms to open. The simplest thing to say is that we never should have gone in there, but now that we

are there and have held elections, maybe we should just pull out our troops and set up U.N. security forces to keep the peace - which is why the U.N. was set up in the first place, isn't it? And we should help rebuild as well, without just sending in exploitative corporations to further pillage a war-torn country. I guess I would stress that there is no simple solution. War is always a bad idea.

I turned to another employee, CHAD, a married father of three, and ask for his Exit Strategy;

LEAVE! His clear blue eyes lock onto mine. I'm no military strategist, but I think it's too late to ask that now. Now that they realize it was not good strategy it seems almost as silly as your first question to now ask about an exit strategy. Now that we've messed it all up what are we going to do about it? And I think it's sad that a lot of the parents of soldiers killed in Iraq are still justifying the war and the lives lost. That quote/unquote continuing the mission crap.

Even though he had already said it was silly, I asked Chad; What do you think of the plans to build a nuclear power plant in Fresno?

I think its a bad idea in a valley full of sunshine. I don't know how deep you want to go on this but I just spent the last ten years in Switzerland and saw the effects of the Chernobyl disaster and the children of those parents as well.



Chad

I interrupt - what do you mean you saw the effects of Russia's Chernobyl nuclear power plant disaster in Switzerland? Chad answers,

Because of the United Nations being in Switzerland a lot of protesters from all over the world come to Geneva to get their voices heard. There was an anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster a few months ago and so there were big protests commemorating that.

As I left the hydroponic store I was thinking about deformities and early deaths, scorched earth and weird diseases. Of California's six nuclear reactors, four have already been decommissioned due to excessive risks and high costs, so that now only two are actually working. I remember how in Costa Rica solar panels perch on roof tops, dot the beach landscape and scramble up hillsides and I wondered just how many solar panels would four billion dollars buy? I chuckled, picturing all the inventive but rinky-dink waterwheel energy systems hard at work in Costa Rica. How I missed waking up and going to bed with the sun. And how you just get used to moving your laundry drying on the line as the sun moved, to maximize drying potential - and how life is slow enough to do that in Costa Rica.

When I come up from my memories of that fresh new land, I am standing in front of the Hemp Shak. I go inside and ask SHANNON, mother, artist and shop owner, the official Question; What do you think of the plans to build a nuclear power plant in Fresno?



Duane



Shannon

Not a good idea. Fresno needs to support environmentally and ecologically sound practices for producing energy. We don't need a nuclear power plant. Not here. Focus on hydroelectric power, wind power, solar power and hemp for fuel, food and fiber.

She was the first to not just laugh at the Fresno Nuclear Energy Group's plan but I still asked her the Alternate Question; President Bush has decided he needs until January to come up with an Exit Strategy for Iraq. What would your Exit Strategy be?

Just bring the troops home now and hope it's not chaos in Iraq after our American presence is absent.

It's getting dark as I leave the Hemp Shak, continuing east down Olive. I see a man in full army fatigues pushing along an empty wheelchair so I stop to ask JOSE VILLANUEVA;

President Bush has decided he needs until January to come up with an Exit Strategy for Iraq. What would your Exit Strategy be?

I don't think we need an exit strategy. We should first train those people to take over on their own. We are just nice Americans - always helping foreign people. It's a melting pot here. We don't discriminate and we respect all people. We should work to keep America #1 because the Arabs want to beat us and take over - Russia, China, Iran, Iraq - they all want to be #1 just like America. But really, God is the only controller. He's the real Commander in Chief.

Jose is walking because he's recovering from a heart attack and walking is good for him. I asked him about his army fatigues. Yes, he had served in Viet Nam.

I came back! He says happy and emphatically. Then his face crinkled up into tears. I know what those boys (in Iraq) are going through. Which of course got me crying too. I could see he was caught in a nightmare trap of his own memories as he continued, ...alone, hot, rain rain rain, wet all the time... you pray to God every night that you won't be killed. It's all there in your brain and it stays with you forever.

Sigh... I just couldn't ask him the silly Question about a nuclear power plant in Fresno.



Jose



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FCNV Page Editor: Brandon Hill

THE WELCH REPORT

By Jack H. Welch, M.D.



BAKER TO BUSH: GAME OVER!

The blue-ribbon Iraq Study Group (ISG), led by former Secretary of State James Baker and Rep. Lee Hamilton, calls for a pullback of American combat forces in Iraq marking, if implemented, the beginning of the end of the war in Iraq. The ISG's recommendations are a stunning blow to the administration of George W. Bush.

"Faced with the ISG consensus, backed by a determined Democratic majority in Congress that was catapulted into power by an American electorate sick of the war, President Bush will have no choice but to capitulate. Early in 2007 American troops will start to come home." It marks a sweeping, irreversible change of course for American foreign policy, and a lethal blow to Vice President Dick Cheney and the remaining population of neoconservatives inside the administration. The policy will be carried out by Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, a former member of the ISG, who will purge the Pentagon of neocons and Rumsfeld loyalists.

The ISG's decision represents a formal recognition by the American foreign policy establishment that Bush's misguided war of aggression in Iraq is lost. A war meant to secure a preeminent place for the US in the oil-rich Persian Gulf is ending with America in retreat, leaving a shattered Iraq, a resurgent Iran, and a Saudi Arabia bitter with American bungling. "A war that was meant to enhance Israel's regional might is ending with what is likely, now, to be a reinvigorated push for a diplomatic solution to the Palestinian issue that will come at Israel's expense in Syria, in Lebanon and in the Occupied Territories."

An estimated six hundred thousand dead Iraqis later, the US will depart from Iraq leaving behind a nation whose citizens will be struggling to rebuild their society for decades. The US invasion of Iraq is an illegal war that destroyed a nation that had never attacked the US, that did not have any weapons of mass destruction, that had no ties to al-Qaida, that had no connection to the September 11 attacks, and which initially was a small impoverished country with a decimated army. The civil war in Iraq may indeed get worse and last for years.

The wreckage of Bush's Middle East policy lies in front of him. As Jordan's King Abdullah has pointed out, the Middle East faces not one but three separate civil wars: Iraq, Lebanon and Palestine. The Iranian ayatollahs are flexing their muscle throughout the region, training Shiite rebels in Iraq, backing Hezbollah in Lebanon. Israel is stiff-arming the Palestinians, even as it issues dark warnings about bombing Iran's nuclear installations. Afghanistan is spiraling out of control.

The ISG can't guarantee that the repercussions of the US occupation of Iraq don't spiral out of control. "The civil war in Iraq could wind down, with the help of massive outside diplomacy and the constructive involvement of Iraq's six neighbors, or it could escalate, leaving another million Iraqis dead, and it could pull in Iran, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia and others. "Iraq is now a basket case, and the world community—the UN, the Arab League, Iraq's neighbors, and powers like China and Japan—will need to step in. Kofi Annan, the UN secretary-general, has offered to host a national reconciliation conference for Iraq's warring sects and ethnic groups." This and other similar initiatives will be needed
(Source: Robert Dreyfuss 30 November, 2006 Tom Paine.common sense; contributing editor at the Nation, and writer for Mother Jones)

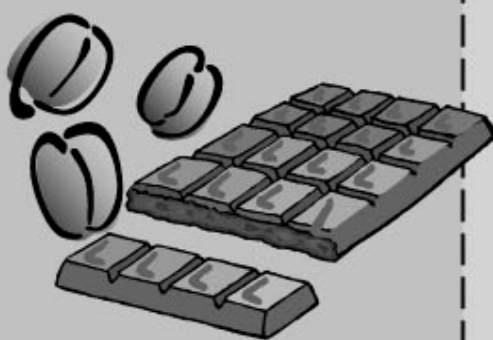
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Second Wednesday Video Series:

January 10th

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Noon & 7:00 p.m. – FCNV

Join us for a potluck at 6:30 p.m.

Stir it Up

Wednesday January 10th, 3 p.m. 88.1 FM
Dan Yaseen will be discussing the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.

Coming in February...who killed the electric car?

Discussion led by John Dunning, former GM employee working directly on the EV1 electric car project.

Wednesday, February 13 - Downtown Library



WOMEN’S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

WILPF Fresno, PO Box 5114, Fresno, CA 93755
WILPF page for January 2007 Compiled and edited by Jan Slagter

Graphic by Lincoln Cushing

CALENDAR

Thursday, January 4th: WILPF monthly meeting

Thursday, January 18th: Noon 1:00 Campus Women in Black CSUF Speaker’s Platform

Thursday, January 18th: 7:00 PM, Chris Eacock on California Water Policy. Geography, Science, Distribution, Projects, Agribusiness. Unitarian Universalist Church 4144 North Millbrook. Info call Lydia: 435-7360 Co-sponsored: WILPF & UU.

Thursday, January 18th: Join Raging Grannies in Washington D.C. to lobby congress to stop the war (see Marilyn Byrne’s article, this page)

Wednesday, January 24th: 3:00 PM WILPF Stir It Up KFCF Radio 88.1 FM

Sunday, January 28th: 11:00 AM Report on WILPF-sponsored Uprooting Racism workshops Unitarian Universalist Church 4144 North Millbrook.

Peace Community Craft Fair by Jan Slagter

Once again, WILPF hosted a very successful Annual Craft Fair. The proceeds from the event will be used to fund WILPF’s programming for the year.

It’s the spirit of the people who are here represents a common reaction to my question, What brings you here? from interviewees Saturday December 2nd at WILPF’s annual Peace Craft Fair. Genie Baranoff, of Peace Fresno, named it, my favorite event. It’s a microcosm of what the world should be: a respite, even if it’s for just one day. As Joan Poss stated succinctly, My community is here. Jim Compton-Schmidt clarified: Every liberal in this part of the county is here.

Ingrid Carmean handled all the time-consuming technical arrangements, including booking the church, arranging for tables, and contracts with vendors. She’s a marvelous technician and manager, having handled these tasks for several years. Characteristically desirous of little attention for herself, Ingrid’s response to my question was simply, I care.

Lynn Graham, who worked on organizing people to bring food and silent auction contributions, came carrying extra soup from Food Not Bombs and to sing as a Raging Granny. And the Grannies were out in increased numbers this season. Thirty matronly-attired and quirkily festooned women. And they are a hit wherever they go. Just ask the students who heard them perform at CSUF’s Take Back the Night event in October.

Thanks to Ellie Bluestein, Joan Poss, and Alvora Trujillo, along with Lynn for organizing the food and other donations.

Thanks to Rose Rowe for supervising the Silent Auction. Thanks to the several shifts of beautiful soup servers and kitchen workers, among them our out-going quarterly President, Jean Hays, and our incoming quarterly President, Lynn Jacobsson. Our appreciation to Meta Schettler, our treasurer, who worked all day, and thanks to those who helped set up and those who helped clean up. And thanks to Jerry Bill who supplied the peace Cranes tree.

The many different musicians who sang and played created a peaceful, welcoming atmosphere, a very great contribution to the fair’s success. Thanks for the gift of your time and talents. Of course, thanks to those who donated the sound equipment and their time for the day.

Ellie Bluestein, our branch founder, was, of course, a moving force when the Fair began some 40 years ago. She favored me with a bit of history. Over time, the event has moved from a member’s house, to the Presbyterian church which used to be downtown, then the Armenian church near First and Tulare, followed by the Wesley Methodist church, to the location where it has been held for at least the past 20 years, the big red Congregational Church on Van Ness. The menu has evolved, too. At first, founding WILPFers baked a turkey and a ham, and

served sandwiches. When the fair was downtown, some members thought security was needed, and so Blanche Nosworthy and Jennifer Williamson slept in the church. Ellie wondered what they thought they might do had a burglar appeared.

The number of vendors and variety of items offered has increased so that now vendors are located not only in the big hall and two classrooms, but also in the courtyard. Ingrid sends a thanks to the God of the Sun and the vendors for making the courtyard such a beautiful site. One of the courtyard vendors, Renee Rasmussen, is a gourd artist. In fact, there were three gourd artists at the fair this year. Renee said she came back because she had such a good time here two years ago. Everyone’s mellow. People like to be educated on what I make. The clientele is in love with the types of artifacts I sell.

Sophia DeWitt sold exquisitely decorated cards of hand-made paper, crafted by women from Laos, called the craft fair a good place to do alternative shopping, see friends, and support artists. As Richard Stone opined, It makes a difference that most of the things are hand made. It has a different feel to it; while, at the same time, the atmosphere has no competitive vibe.

Janet Capella, as has been her specialty, devoted the day to a white elephant sale, along with Laura Fultz and Olga Salazar. They shared a room with the children’s craft corner which Marilyn Byrne staffed all day, and it was humming. Thanks too to Alvora and Masha for making the craft corner work.

With a more complex menu of a great variety of soups, breads, and desserts WILPF members and others bring, a more demanding kitchen routine is required.

For several years, the amazing Julie Young has master-minded the kitchen, and I do mean masterminded. Julie said she loves it, and she likes to boss people around. But anyone who has worked on this detail with her, as I have, knows bossing is not part of her style. She makes it flow smoothly, without apparently even directing the action. Soups are heated and sent out to be served, breads are sliced, and desserts plated, seamlessly, while at the same time, dirty dishes are cleared, washed, and returned for another use. Elizabeth West also worked tirelessly, all day, on this central task. Elizabeth names her dedication, wanting to payback a little. WILPF’s intern this year, Whitney Grandi, worked energetically in the kitchen, after her early arrival to help set up the dozens of tables. Stan Poss was also observed, attached to his own apron strings, deep in the zen of towel on plate.

Speaking of food, to all those who brought soups and baked goods and produce for sale: We sold them all! Ingrid notes that a special touch this year was three desserts on a plate.

Pat Wolk, veteran raffle ticket seller extraordinaire, attributes all her success to wearing wacky hats well, along with boldly approaching everyone she sees, bearing Fresno Folklore flyers in addition to raffle tickets. Camille Russell also donned a raffle hat this year, when she wasn’t flyering for Peace events. Vickie Fouts worked on the raffle, with her assistant Tommie Jones, 7, who named pulling raffle tickets her favorite part of the day.

Bette Petersen, Poppy Lane Press publisher, debuted her new book, A Stone in the Soup: A Hmong Girl’s Journey from Laos to the United States at the Craft Fair. Author Dorina Lazo Gilmore, and photographer, Josh Hires, were there to sign the book on this, the first day of its release.

Two shoppers comments catch the Craft Fair from a consumer’s view. Doug Gordon, free speech defender from GAP protest days, says he finds unique holiday presents here, that allow him to match people I know to cool stuff. Patsy Montgomery, Planned Parenthood organizer and newly-elected chair of Fresno Democratic Club, labeled the Fair a good place to put my money, and to support women as well as support organizations that support the peace movement.

Announcements:

Outgoing quarterly president, Jean Hays, travels to Nairobi, Kenya this month with Global Exchange to par-

ticipate in the World Social Forum. Look for her report in a future WILPF page.

Lynn Jacobsson assumes WILPF quarterly presidency this month. Lynn is active in Health Care for All. Look for her discussions of this campaign in these pages.

Vickie Fouts, immediate past president of WILPF has two articles in the recent national Peace and Freedom magazine. Look for information in the near future on plans for extending the work of the Uprooting Racism workshops.

Book Review by Ellie Bluestein

Improper Bostonian: Emily Greene Balch, Mercedes Randall. Balch is one of the founders of WILPF, and its second International President, friend and co activist with Jane Addams. Brilliant scholar and teacher at Wellesley College, who was fired for her outspoken opposition to WWI and become a full time international activist for peace, meeting with world leaders and trying to persuade them to negotiate instead of warring. The story of the early international WILPF women who boldly confronted world leaders with their arguments at a time when women did not even have suffrage. She remained strong and outspoken until she died at the age of 94 and was the second American woman to receive the Nobel Peace Award, in 1946. The author, Mercedes M. Randall tells the story relying on Balch’s diaries, notes and speeches. An interesting insight into the lives of many of the international WILPF activists, their relentless efforts and the incredible strength of their convictions. I have the book and would be happy to share it. Call Ellie if you’d like to read it. 229-9807

RAGING GRANNIES ANNIVERSARY by Marilyn Byrne

The Raging Grannies returned to the Peace Community Craft Fair to celebrate a year of singing for peace and social justice. Last year at Craft Fair the Grannies began what was to be the first of many performances. During this year there has been a real growth in the group both in numbers and in the strength of their voices.

Our grannies have had a full year of activities. Sunday December 10th we sang for No Nos Vamos Comit e supporting them in Human Rights March against injustice. Valentines Day after singing in front of our recruiter’s offices we march in and tried to sign up. We joined Peace Fresno at a Peace Rally held on the CSUF Campus. On the Fourth of July we joined Interfaith Alliance to sing for peace and community. We sang opposing violence against women at “Take back the Night” sponsored by Women’s Alliance on the CSUF campus.

We average one performance a month meeting to practice every other Monday. Meeting and singing fills a need to take a stand against both injustice and war. It is comforting to have a place to meet with like minded people who understand each others pain. By singing we are taking a stand and making a physical contribution against policies and principles that are presently ruling our country. Some of us are hopeful of meeting in Washington D.C. with other Raging Grannies to remind our new Congress of their commitment to the mandate of people that elected them to stop this war.

We Need a Few Good Women

National Raging Grannies have come up with a plan to remind our Congresspeople what voting and the November elections means to us. Our President in the matter of the Iraq war is clearly stalling. While going through the motions, he hasn’t changed his ideology. Democrats were voted in to replace many Republicans in office because we the people are so opposed to this war. Now the momentum we have created is slipping off into oblivion even as we read this piece. To ensure that our voices be heard we are traveling in numbers to Washington D.C. specifically to meet with our Senators and Representatives January 18th to remind our Congress of their commitment to the mandate of the people that elected them. Now, in the eleventh hour, if the Democratic majority is replaced by a Republican Governor appointing another Republican to replace an ailing Democrat Senator, we had better call foul louder than we did for the last two major elections when Bush stole the presidency. Consider the cost of this trip as an investment in our country. Any one interested in joining the Grannies for this trip call 438-1336 or email me at skippy41@csufresno.edu

Politicians Toying With Black History In Fresno

By Rev. Floyd D. Harris Jr

[Editors note: This article, first published on Indymedia (see: <http://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2006/12/19/18338896.php>) got the immediate attention of Fresno mayor Alan Autry. The day after the article was published, the mayor was on the phone telling Rev. Harris that he is not a racist or KKK member. He even claimed that he was more black than Harris]

As we come around to black history month again it's business as usual with the city and county of Fresno. The same old lying politicians from our local government playing with African American history. The government has done a wonderful job of manipulating people into believing that they care about oppressed people, but in fact the government receives more profits by making sure the American people are clueless as to what their social needs are.

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."

*- Martin Luther King Jr.
US black civil rights leader & clergyman (1929 - 1968)*

We all know that Dr Martin Luther King Jr. was a man who gave his life to fight for justice for black people, following God's teachings. Dr. King gave his life like just as Jesus died on the cross, and he died for all people. Now every year you march in the streets of Fresno to celebrate the history of Dr. King and all the sacrifices he made, along with other civil rights leaders. There are tons of injustice taking place in the City of Fresno - from police brutality, homelessness, dismantling of the Human Relations Commission, high unemployment, AIDS, inadequate public education, environmental racism, the lack of a living wage, bad air quality, bad water, and no health care for many of the poor.

The City of Fresno received an All American City award in June 2000 but the problem with the award is it does not include poor people. Just this past year, 2006, the ACLU, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights, and the Heller Ehrman law firm had to come into Fresno to file a temporary restraining order and a permanent injunction in order to stop the relentless attacks on Fresno homeless residents. Clothing, medication, tents, blankets, and personal possessions such as, family photographs and per-

sonal records have been destroyed. The California State Chapter of The National Action Network under the leadership of state President Rev. Floyd D. Harris Jr. brought youths from NAN to clean up the homeless area and set a precedent, to show the city of Fresno that they didn't have to destroy those belongings.

NAN organized a sleep-out on the steps of Fresno City Hall, along with other local and statewide organizations, to bring more attention to the problems we are having here in Fresno. We first formed a prayer chain in front of city hall to pray for our leaders. We gave out socks, coats, shoes, food etc. to replace things that had been destroyed by the Fresno Police and Sanitation Department. We sang

songs to uplift the spirit of everyone to let them know that there is still hope and we will not let the flame of justice go out.

If Dr. King were alive today I know he would have



Fresno mayor Alan Autry speaking at the 2001 MLK march. Some participants at the event think we need more of Che Guevara's politics and less of George Bush's.

anyone's birthday. We will not march to feel good or to get some exercise, but we will march to demand FREEDOM, JUSTICE, PEACE and EQUALITY for all people.

The people in power want to get close to you so you will not hold them to public accountability. I protest against Police Brutality 365 days a year but on Dr. King's birthday I'm expected to march hand in hand with the politicians who are making life hell for my people and who don't give a damn about God's people We Sing "WE SHALL OVER COME SOME DAY." The statement that Malcolm X said is very true - he said, there is too much singing going on in America and not enough "SWING." I'm not a HYPOCRITE. I don't eat from the oppressor's table. He or she has nothing that I want but liberation for my people. When you have people in political office who cannot stand up for you when you are being abused then those representatives need to be recalled.

Nothing has changed in America but one thing, the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) have taken off their white sheets and put on blue suits and a necktie. White supremacy, Jim Crow, Willie Lynch are alive and flying around in America and Fresno California. These people now sit in a position of power in the government offices, Lawyers, Judges, Police Officers, Doctors, Congressman and Pastors. They will lead the way when you are marching down the street or participating in the City of Fresno 22nd Annual Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King



Mayor Alan Autry, Lt. Governor Cruz Bustamante, and City Council member Cynthia Sterling march in the 2003 MLK parade. Rev. Floyd D Harris Jr questions whether marching with these politicians is in the true spirit of the holiday.

been on the front lines with us in Fresno denouncing The Fresno Police Department, Mayor, City Manager, Sanitation Department and the representative from District #3 for violating the constitutional rights of poor people. You will see all of these people who say they believe in Dr. Martin Luther Kings Jr.'s life in the front of the march and the microphone every year speaking about how wonderful he was, while they act totally opposite of Dr. King's legacy. If we are going to march for the celebration of Dr. King, then let's march for something that will bring justice to the community. Stop letting the government dictate how we organize or celebrate

Jr. Celebration 2007 Living the Dream: Let Freedom Ring for Peace, Justice and Healing for all.

I want you to look back on the past year and ask yourself these questions:

- Living What Dream?
- Living What Freedom?
- Living What Peace?
- Living What Justice?
- Living What Healing for all?

We as people of color have not received a Dream, Freedom, Peace, Justice, or Healing for over 400 years in America!

###

Rev. Floyd D. Harris Jr is the California State President National Action Network www.nancal.org



The National Action Network was in the 2004 MLK march. All photos by Mike Rhodes

"I swore never to be silent whenever human beings endure suffering and humiliation. We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented."

—Elie Weisel

PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Friday, January 5
6:30 - 8:30 PM

The Reedley Peace Center presents the Documentary: *Why We Fight*. This film describes the rise and maintenance of the United States military-industrial complex, while concentrating on wars led by the United States of the last fifty years and in particular on the 2003 invasion of Iraq. It alleges that every decade since World War II, the American public has been told a lie to bring it into war to fuel the military-economic machine, which in turn maintains American dominance in the world. This film will be introduced by Andrew Valencia, formerly president of Reedley High School's Students for Peace and currently a student at Stanford University

Light potluck at 6:30. Program begins at 7 pm. This event is sponsored by the Reedley Peace Center and will be held at the Fellowship Hall of First Mennonite Church, on 'L' street between 12th and 13th streets in Reedley. Admission is free. Contact Don Friesen by email at dfriesen0@gmail.com

Friday, January 5
8 PM

Full Circle Brewing Co. Presents *The Dixons*, Soulful Funk. \$5 cover, 620 F St. Downtown Fresno 559-264-6323 www.fullcirclebrewing.com

Sunday, January 7
3 PM

Central California Peace Council meeting at the Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N Van Ness. For more information call Richard Stone at 266-2559 or e-mail richard2662559@yahoo.com

Monday, January 8
1 PM

The Living Wage Committee meets on the second Monday of the month at SEIU 1279 N Wishon (north of Olive). Call Lloyd Barnett for information at 435-0618.

Wednesday, January 10
12 Noon and 7 PM

The Fresno Center for Nonviolence Monthly Video Series: "*Sir, No Sir*." Soldiers who opposed the Viet Nam war, refused to fight, or were conscientious objectors. Potluck at 6:30 PM prior to evening showing. Discussion to follow evening showing. February video will be "Who Killed the Electric Car?" The FCNV is located at 1584 N Van Ness.

Friday, January 12
12 Noon - 1 PM

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr Commemoration Garlanding Ceremony. Fresno County Courthouse Park, (1100 Van Ness Avenue), at the statue of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. For more information see the MLK box on this page.

Friday, January 12
5 PM and 8 PM

Fresno Filmworks presents "Army of Shadows" at the Tower Theatre. Jean-Pierre Melville's 1969 epic about the French Resistance, never before released in the U.S., was named by the New York Film Critics Circle as Best Foreign Film of 2006. Tickets can be purchased at the Tower Theatre Box Office, 815 E. Olive Ave., The Movies, 1435 N. Van Ness Ave., WineStyles in Fig Garden Village, and at the door, for \$10; \$8, for students and seniors. For more information call the FFW info line, 221-0755, or go to www.fresnofilmworks.org

Friday, January 12
Reception to begin at 5:30 PM
Program will begin at 6:30 PM

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Unity Committee and Fresno City College Theatre of Arts wi1 be Hosting a Reception and Awards Presentation at the Fresno City College Theater Lobby. For more information see the MLK box on this page.

Friday January 12
5:30 PM

Pizza and drinks at Community College Church at 5550 North Fresno north of Barstow. A film about Alternative Energy will be shown at 6 PM. Discussion follows. Contact person is Laurie Tidyman- Jones at 227-7757.

Friday January 12
8 PM

Full Circle Brewing Co. Presents *Phedras Hooked on Jazz* \$5.-cover, 620 F St. Downtown Fresno 559-264-6323 www.fullcirclebrewing.com

Saturday, January 13
Community Breakfast served at 8:30 AM
The program will begin at 9:30 AM

The Rev. Dr Martin Luther King, Jr. Community breakfast will be held at the Veterans Memorial Building (Independence Room), 453 Hughes Avenue (corner of 5th street & Hughes Ave). For more information see the MLK box on this page.

Saturday, January 13
3:30 PM

The Central Valley Progressive PAC meets at the Center for Non Violence, 1584 North Van Ness at Mc Kinley. We have a section of the By-laws to update as well as election of officers for the years 2007-2009. The minutes and By Laws are located with in the members login for

your perusal. The amendments and deletions are there too. Do check it out and give us some input. Hal Hynds has updated www.cvppac.com . New pictures have been inserted. What do you suggest as our next challenge? The dairies that threaten our valley's air and water quality? Are you up on the 14 square miles of the South East Growth Area? What is your concern? Contact Lydia Flores 435-7360 or www.cvppac.com

Saturday, January 13
4 PM

The Rev. Dr Martin Luther King, All Faith Service will be held at the Fellowship Baptist Church, 2529 E. Belmont Ave. at Angus, Fresno, CA.Contact: Kapoor Sudharshan, (559)435-2212.

Special Martin Luther King Day Events

Friday, January 12
12 Noon - 1 PM

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr Commemoration Garlanding Ceremony. Fresno County Courthouse Park, (1100 Van Ness Avenue), at the statue of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Please bring flowers. Contact: Dr. Sudharshan Kapoor (559)435-2212 or Gail Gaston (559) 681-3140.

Friday, January 12
Reception to begin at 5:30 PM
Program will begin at 6:30 PM

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Unity Committee and Fresno City College Theatre of Arts wi1 be Hosting a Reception and Awards Presentation at the Fresno City College Theater Lobby. Fresno City College Music Recital Hall, Room-135. The Dr Martin Luther King, Jr. Unity Committee, Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the Fresno Human Relations Commission and other nominees will be recognized. Please come out, honor and celebrate with us. Fresno City College, 1101 F. University Avenue, Fresno CA. Contact: Dr Jean Kennedy (559)270-1023 or Julia Dudley (559)352-1444.

Saturday, January 13
Community Breakfast served at 8:30 AM
The program will begin at 9:30 AM

The Rev. Dr Martin Luther King, Jr. Community breakfast will be held at the Veterans Memorial Building (Independence Room), 453 Hughes Avenue (corner of 5th street & Hughes Ave.), Clovis, CA 93612. Members of the Community are invited to enjoy a delicious breakfast while listening to speakers and entertainment. Cost for the breakfast is \$5.00 per person. Keynote speaker: Brendel Jackson (FUSD Administrator) Contact: Caroline Carlson, Clovis Police Dept (559)324-2416 or Ed C. Bailey (559)304-5772

Saturday, January 13
4 PM

The Rev. Dr Martin Luther King, All Faith Service will be held at the Fellowship Baptist Church, 2529 E. Belmont Ave. at Angus, Fresno, CA.Contact: Kapoor Sudharshan, (559)435-2212

Sunday, January 14
5:30 - 6:30 PM

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Candlelight Vigil African American Museum Outdoor Stage. 1857 Fulton Street, Fresno, CA. 93721. Candlelight Vigil to be held in commemoration of the Reverend Dr. King. Contact: Pastor John Sims (559) 351-9524 or David Howard (559) 277-9552

Monday, January 15
9:30 AM

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. March and Food Drive to End Childhood Hunger in Fresno. Marchers will assemble at New Generation Holiness Church at 552 Tuolumne. A "Mountain of Food" to end childhood hunger will be collected at the church. The March will take place from Tuolumne and A streets to Warnor Theater, 1400 Fulton Street. The March will begin promptly at 10 AM. Contact: Enrique Reade (559) 940-2159 or James Lett III (559)284-6420

Monday, January 15
11 AM

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration Program will be held at Warnor Theater, 1400 Fulton Street, Fresno, CA 93721. An inspiring and enjoyable program will be hosted by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr Unity Committee. Contact: Ed C. Bailey (559) 304-5772 or Woody Miller (559) 448-6890

Thursday, February 8
Reception 4:30 - 6 PM
Program: 5:00 PM

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Student Art Exhibit, Essay and Speech Winners Reception ADMISSION IS FREE. Fresno County Office of Education 1111 Van Ness Ave., Fresno. Artwork created and displayed by students from Fresno Unified, Clovis Unified and other Fresno County School Districts at the museum on Tuesday, January 30, 2007 through Sunday, February 21, 2007. Contact: Thomas Russell (559) 327-9353 or Shirley Hargis (559) 265-3060.

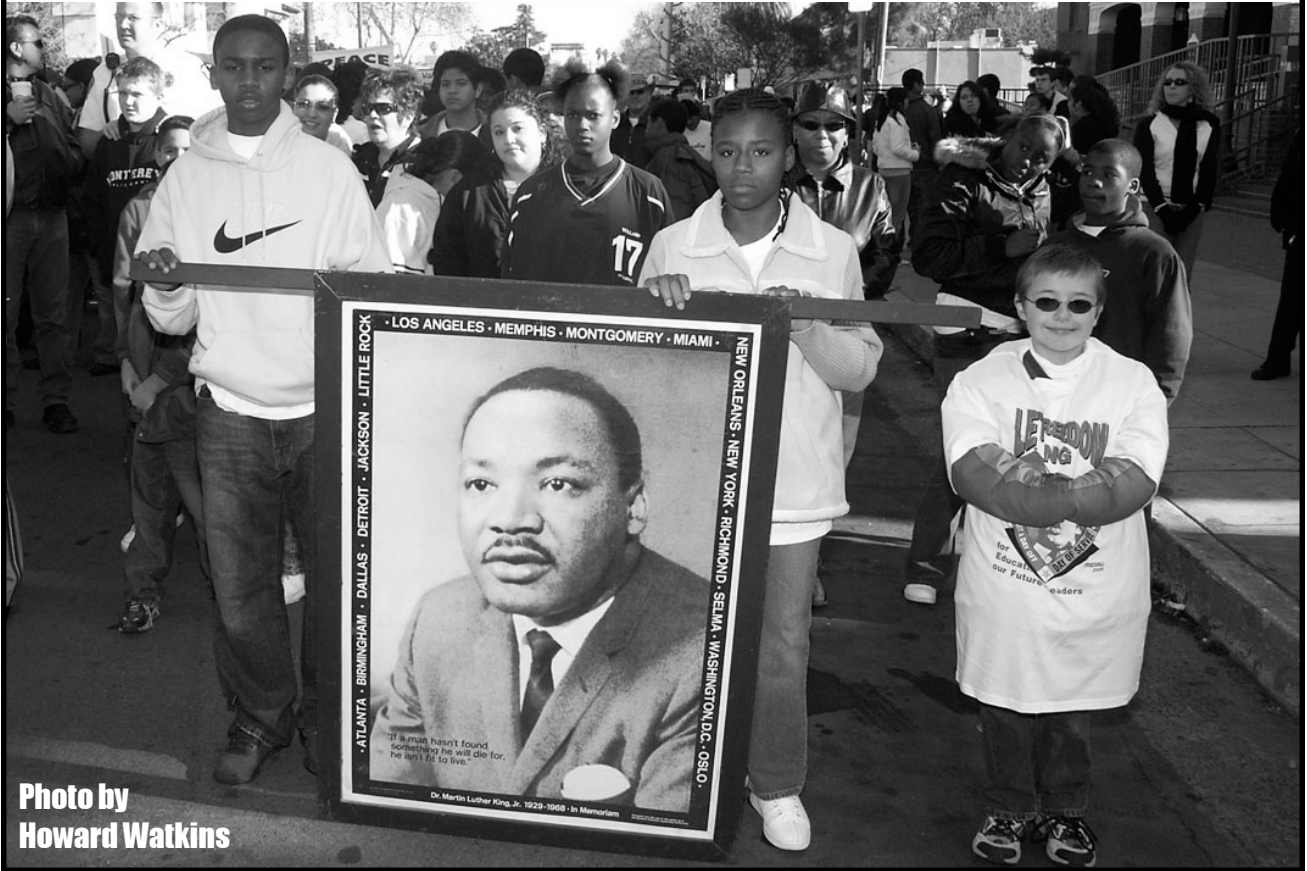


Photo by
 Howard Watkins

PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Saturday January 13
8 PM
Full Circle Brewing Co. Presents Patrick Contreras “Violin on fire!” \$5.-cover 620 F St. Downtown Fresno 559-264-6323 www.fullcirclebrewing.com

Sunday, January 14
5:30 - 6:30 PM
The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Candlelight Vigil African American Museum Outdoor Stage. 1857 Fulton Street, Fresno, CA. 93721. For more information see the MLK box on opposite page.

Monday, January 15
Deadline for articles and calendar items to the February, 2007 Community Alliance newspaper. Send information to AllianceEditor@Comcast.net

Monday, January 15
9:30 AM
The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. March and Food Drive to End Childhood Hunger in Fresno. Marchers will assemble at New Generation Holiness Church at 552 Tuolumne. For more information see the MLK box on this page.

Monday, January 15
11 AM
The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration Program will be held at Warnor Theater, 1400 Fulton Street, Fresno, CA 93721. For more information see the MLK box on this page.

Wednesday, January 17
7 PM
Fresno Healthy Dairy Campaign will hold a public meeting at the CSUF Craig School of Business, Alice Peters Auditorium. Did you know that:

- Animal operations are one of the largest sources of smog in the Central Valley?
- A single cow produces 20 times the amount of waste that a person does! This waste is frequently stored in manure lagoons that often leak and contaminate groundwater?
- Inflated land values in Southern CA is impetus for transitioning to valley
- Dairies are buying large tracts of land in Fresno County?
- Fresno County has fewer standards than Kern, Kings, Tulare counties?

Wednesday, January 17
7 - 8:30 PM
Healthy Gardening for People, Pets and the Environment! An evening talk with Annie Joseph, a leading expert on healthy gardening. University of California Center, 550 East Shaw Ave in Fresno. For more information see page 6

Thursday, January 18
6:30 - 9:30 PM

The movie: *America: Freedom to Fascism* will be shown. This film, which is neither left, nor right-wing is a startling examination of government. It exposes the systematic erosion of civil liberties in America since 1913 when the Federal Reserve System was fraudulently created. Through interviews with U.S. Congressmen, a former IRS Commissioner, former IRS and FBI agents and tax attorneys and authors, Aaron Russo connects the dots between money creation, federal income tax, and the national identity card, which becomes law in May 2008. This ID card will use Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) chips, which are essentially homing devices used to track people. This film shows in great detail and undeniable facts that America is moving headlong into a fascist police state. Wake up.

This film is a part of the Progressive Thursday series sponsored by the Fresno County Green Party. The event will be held at Round Table Pizza at 5763 N First Street (SW corner of 1st and Bullard). For more information call Larry Mullen at (559) 227-0293.

Thursday, January 18
7 PM
Chris Eacock, Project Manager, at the Bureau of Reclamation will speak to the basics of water. He has given this talk to high school students and those requiring background to understand the impact of State and Federal Water Projects. Chris Eacock will review geography and the science as it pertains to water distribution in California- which is a huge system. Both the natural and man made flows will be explained. Chris Eacock has been with the Bureau of Reclamation 24 years. He holds a degree in Agriculture. This is a great opportunity to fortify ourselves to be better able to decide how we need to store, use and share water to prepare for the future. This will be background material needed to make some decisions when the state and federal projects come up. Water is not only a local issue but a state issue. The presentation will take place at the UU Church of Fresno, 4144 North Millbrook Avenue, 1/2 block south of Ashlan. It is open to the public. Child care provided upon request. Information: Lydia Flores 435-7360

Thursday, January 18
7:30 PM
JOHN McCUTCHEON returns. If you’ve missed his sold out performances, now’s your chance. The Fresno Folklore Society has booked him into the CSUFresno Concert Hall. For more information, see page 1.

Thursday January 18
8 PM
Full Circle Brewing Co. Presents Inner Ear Poetry Jam \$5.-cover 620 F St. Downtown Fresno 559-264-6323 www.fullcirclebrewing.com

Saturday, January 20
2 - 4 PM
Seeking Shelter: An Interfaith Forum on Housing will be held at the Mennonite Community Church, 5015 E Olive Ave in Fresno. For more information, see page 4

Wednesday, January 24
6:30 PM
Yosemite Through the Eyes of a Buffalo Soldier, 1904. Auberry Branch Library 855-8523. National Parks Ranger Shelton Johnson will present a living history program highlighting the African-American soldiers who patrolled Yosemite and Sequoia National Parks early in the 20th century. The soldiers built the first trail to the top of Mount Whitney and other trails in the parks. Johnson has earned many awards for this program and been featured in a PBS documentary by Ken Burns. Pre-registration required.

Sunday, January 28
9 AM and 11 AM
Seven Unitarian Universalists attended the Women’s International League of Peace and Freedom workshops on *Uprooting Racism* this spring. The seven UU’s have met together to express their findings to the congregation in this Sunday service. Linda Mack is the Lay Leader, Lydia Flores is the Anchor. Darcy Williams and Nancy Hatcher will be the main speakers. In an hour those who attend will understand the effects of racism and what needs to be done to uproot it. This service is a kick-off for a study group on Racism. Anyone may participate. The UU Church is at 4144 North Millbrook, ½ block south of Aslan. Everyone is welcome. Church school or nursery are available for all ages. Info. Lydia Flores 435-7360

Tuesday, January 30
7 PM
A Trio of Valley Authors at the Woodward Park Regional Library 433-3135. Retired Fresno Bee journalists and longtime friends Woody Laughnan, Perry Huffman and Eddie Lopez will share stories and memories from their recently published books. Copies of the books will be available for purchase and signing after the program.

Thursday, February 1
7:30 PM
The Fresno Poet’s Association presents Philip Levine at the Fresno Art Museum, 2233 N First. For more information see www.fresnopoets.org for further information or call 226-1528.

Thursday, February 8
Reception 4:30 - 6 PM
Program: 5:00 PM
The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Student Art Exhibit, Essay and Speech Winners Reception ADMISSION IS FREE. Fresno County Office of Education 1111 Van Ness Ave., Fresno. For more information see the MLK box on opposite page.



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Community Alliance
P.O. Box 5077 • Fresno, Ca 93755



Juan was given a couple of minutes to move his property before the bulldozer rolled through.



Geno is a homeless veteran.

Homeless continued from page 2

that I was trespassing. A more cynical Community Alliance newspaper reporter might think this was harassment or interference with our first amendment right to gather the news.

Roy, another homeless man who lives in this area told me that immediately after I left on the first day of this sweep several police cars pulled up onto the vacant lot. He said they told him to get his stuff out of there or he was going

to be arrested. Roy said they told him that after they arrested him they would destroy his stuff. Roy, who lives on the vacant lot (not on railroad property) was clearly shaken and moved his tent a short distance away.

Charles Montgomery told me that his property had been destroyed by someone in a bulldozer as he camped near the railroad tracks. See <http://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2006/11/05/18326764.php> for a description of that incident. Montgomery said that his dentures had been destroyed in that incident. "How am I going to pay

for new dentures? Those cost me over \$2,000."

After a two day stand off, the clean up crews swept through the area picking up trash and then disappeared. The threats and intimidation had not worked. Most of the homeless were able to stand their ground, and Geno's American Flag continues to fly over his home.



Juan moves his things as the bulldozer operates behind him.



Garner and Wallace

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FRESNO FRIENDS MEETING
Silent Worship Sunday 10-11 AM
2219 San Joaquin, Fresno

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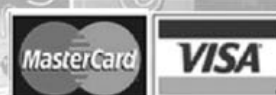
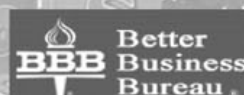
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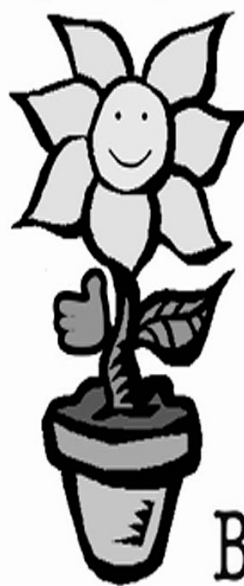
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Military Commissions Act of 2006

A Collaborative Forum

By Stephen Malm

The panorama of erosions to our civil liberties since 9/11 and human rights in general is well known and widespread. Domestic surveillance, the privacy encroachments of the Patriot Act, prisoner torture and abuse, all operate under the guise of necessary measures to combat the war on terror. At the forum on the new Military Commissions Act held by Peace Fresno and the La Raza Students Association of San Joaquin College of Law, speaker and Scholar of Rhetoric Jim Bartram may have said it best: The response to calling September 11 an attack on our freedom: they hate us because of our freedoms, was to take away all of our freedoms — so there was nothing left that needed attack.

Howard Hendrix, teacher at Fresno State and widely read science fiction author, approached the broader philosophical issues of privileging state and corporate power over individual liberties. Hendrix noted, the war to confine the open mind is older than the war on terror, but the war on terror has provided a convenient new front on which to wage that older struggle. Accordingly, one core policy choice of the Bush administration was to frame its response to the 9/11 attacks in terms of a global war rather than as a criminal law-enforcement effort, which meant that the law regarding torture would have to be made to fit this new paradigm. Currently, said Hendrix, The tool most widely being used to get inside the private space of consciousness is fear. The elimination of habeas corpus is merely an obvious case of privileging state power over individual liberty. Hendrix added, “No doubt that terrorism is real, but I do not believe the war on terror is being waged in a fashion mutual to our civil liberties.”

According to Catherine Campbell, forum participant and prominent local civil rights and appellate attorney, the Act gives the president unprecedented power to detain and try people as part of the War on Terror in military commissions. Broadly, the Act does three things:

1. It strips the right of unlawful enemy combatants to habeas corpus (the traditional right of detainees to challenge their detention).
2. It gives the US president the power to detain indefinitely anyone US or foreign nationals whom it deems to have provided material support to anti-US hostilities and to use secret and coerced evidence that may be classified or obtained by torture or other degrading treatment.
3. Moreover, the Act gives US officials immunity from prosecution for torturing detainees who were captured before the end of 2005

The significance of stripping away the right of habeas relief cannot be overstated. There is no court review of detentions a detainee will not be allowed to contest either the reasons for detention or the conditions of confinement. The right of appeal exists only after

Imagine that you are shopping in a large department store and are detained by store security for shoplifting. Under the courts martial and MCA plan, you would be assigned a lawyer who works for the store to defend you. If you hired your own lawyer, the store’s lawyer would be co-counsel.



A forum on the new Military Commissions Act was held in Fresno last month by *Peace Fresno* and the *La Raza Students Association* of San Joaquin College of Law. Above, attorney Catherine Campbell makes a point.

conviction and the appeal may only question whether the process by which the conviction was obtained complied with existing law, including the Act itself. As such, any alien detained who is determined to be

lawyer, the store’s lawyer would be co-counsel. The judge would be corporate counsel, and the jury would be five store executives. If that doesn’t work for you, you probably wouldn’t want to be a defendant under the MCA.” Said Heffelbower, “A finding by a military tribunal that a person is an enemy combatant is dispositive. Ambiguities may allow citizens to be swept up by this Act.”

This December 10 saw a well attended event moderated by Constitutional Law Professor

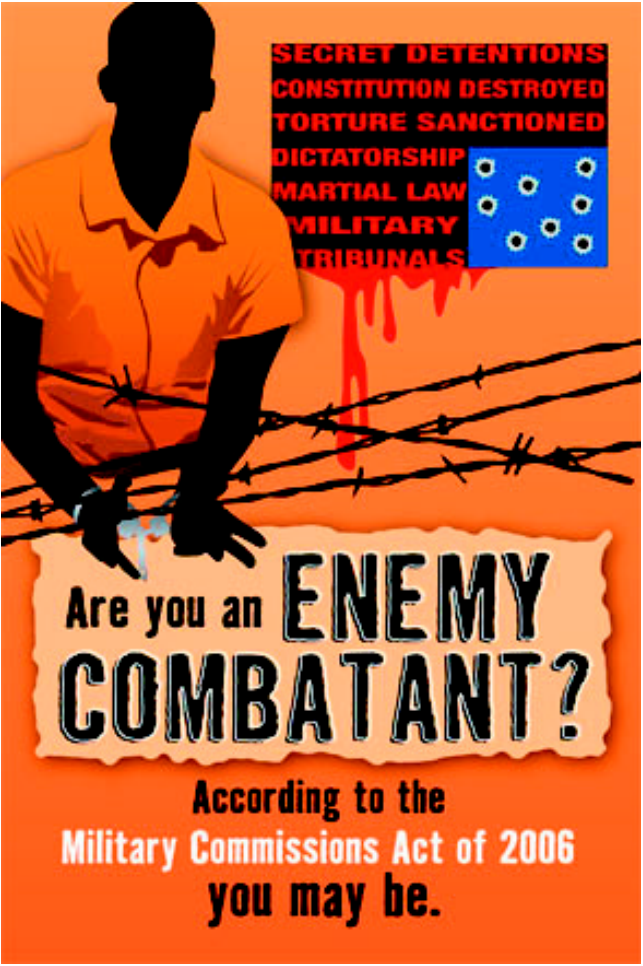
Jeffrey Purvis who remarked that the forum was an opportunity to educate ourselves. Our project as citizens is to create ordered liberty. Echoing Supreme Court Justice Frankfurter who made the point that citizens must rely upon themselves, and not solely the courts, to protect their civil rights, Professor Purvis quoted: “Appeal must be to an informed, civically militant electorate. In a democratic society like ours, relief must come through an aroused popular conscience that sears the conscience of the people’s representatives.” Responding to audience questions about what approach was best to rollback restrictions on our freedoms, Professor Purvis asserted, “We can no longer look to our Supreme Court for protections. We’d better find a legislative strategy.” Howard Hendrix added quickly, “our country is not, love it or leave it, but — if you love your country, hold it up to its highest ideals. You’re doing the job of terrorists with this erosion of rights, undercutting our own basis of liberty.” Bartram confirmed, “We are teaching students, not the meaning of freedom, but how to wear freedom like a flag.”

The underpinnings of our freedoms was a theme not ignored by the panelists. Freedom does not flow at the discretion of governments, stamped, granted and packaged, subject to their whim, but follows as a condition of basic human needs. Lacking sufficient protection, the value of our common humanity is diminished. “Why should we grant rights to criminals and terrorists, is the attitude of some,” said Professor Purvis. “We have this pattern of the expansion and contraction of criminal rights in this country,” noted Hendrix, “People should wake up. Habeas corpus protects even a child against the unlawful actions of the state,” said Attorney Campbell.

The organizers of the event expressed regret that no government representative agreed to attend to set forth the government’s point of view. Keep your eyes open for future forums on this and other issues. Relief must come through an aroused popular conscience that sears the conscience of the people’s representatives and the opportunities to educate ourselves as an informed, civically militant electorate are there.

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Stephen D. Malm is a 4th year law student at San Joaquin College of Law and is a member of Peace Fresno and the La Raza Students Association there.



an enemy combatant or who is awaiting determination of that status may be detained indefinitely because he or she is not given access to habeas relief. A detainee could be incarcerated for years, or even for life, without ever getting to the stage where appellate remedies are available. Campbell further noted, there are those who have argued forcefully that the vagueness of the law, the contradictions of the law, would allow for the suspension of rights of US citizens

Duane Ruth-Heffelbower, attorney and former Captain in the US Air Force Judge Advocate General Corps, now director of graduate academic programs at the Center for Peacemaking and Conflict Studies of Fresno University, declared, “So if a tribunal created by the Secretary of Defense declares you to be an unlawful enemy combatant, you have no recourse and can be tried under the Act. Imagine that you are shopping in a large department store and are detained by store security for shoplifting. Under the courts martial and MCA plan, you would be assigned a lawyer who works for the store to defend you. If you hired your own



The Forum was Moderated by Constitutional Law Professor Jeffrey Purvis. Photos on this page by Mike Rhodes