

NUCLEAR POWER MELTDOWN

JOHN HUTSON SPEAKS AT STATEWIDE HEARING

Energized Advocates Halt Plans for Fresno Nuclear in 2007...

By David Weisman

Nuclear watchdogs, consumer groups and faith-based organizations successfully rallied to stop the proponents of nuclear power from resurrecting a half-century of unfulfilled promises and outdated technology. Here in California, they set their sites on Fresno, where Fresno Nuclear LLC, spearheaded by John Hutson, announced they would be the first to construct a new nuclear power plant. Of course, there was a tiny obstacle to overcome: California's 30-year moratorium on nuclear power that prohibits any new nuclear plants until the federal government has approved and demonstrated a permanent solution to the problem of high level radioactive waste.

The only proposal for dealing with the waste—burying it in Yucca Mountain, Nevada—is more uncertain than ever. Politics, science and economics all seem to doom this project. This didn't deter Assemblyman Chuck DeVore (R-Irvine) from introducing legislation in Sacramento last winter that would have overturned the moratorium. The bill was heard before the Natural Resources Committee, and Mr. Hutson was a witness for Mr. DeVore. This challenge galvanized a coalition of environmental, religious and consumer groups, and Mr. DeVore's bill failed to pass out of the committee, throwing down a roadblock to Mr. Hutson's plans.

Mr. DeVore next attempted to take his crusade directly to the people by fielding a ballot initiative. Seeing little interest or action, and polls that demonstrated weak support, he withdrew the initiative before Thanksgiving, another stumbling block for Fresno Nuclear.

In the meantime, the issue of radioactive waste continued to heat up. The DOE held only one hearing on the latest studies for Yucca Mountain in all of California, and that was in distant Lone Pine. At that hearing, a representative of the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility (www.a4nr.org) discovered new maps indicating waste from Louisiana, Texas, and Arizona is proposed to travel throughout our state. The Alliance is working in a bipartisan way with state officials to force the DOE to hold hearings in the California communities that will be impacted by these shipments—from emergency preparedness and health concerns to infrastructure and security requirements.

Despite these drawbacks, the proponents of nuclear power have bent the ear of state officials, and Senator Christine Kehoe (D-San Diego) convened a hearing on the future of nuclear power in early December.

The withdrawal of Assemblyman DeVore's initiative strikes a nearly fatal blow in the attempt to build an atomic reactor anywhere in California in the foresee-

able future. This didn't seem to bother Fresno Nuclear's CEO John Hutson, who appeared to suffer his own "meltdown" during the public comment portion of Senator Kehoe's hearing. Mr. Hutson began his speech by stating, "I am a Vietnam veteran" and then quickly added that he both marched and shared hunger strikes with Cesar Chavez. He also mentioned that he was a "lifelong" Democrat. Fresno, he trumpeted, was suffering from rampant incidents of domestic violence and spousal abuse that were of epidemic proportions. He bristled at the notion that outsiders often refer to Fresno—justifiably so, he claimed—as the "Appalachia of the west." And the root of these problems was the lack of economic development and jobs. Jobs that would be provided only by a project like the nuclear power plant he has proposed building.

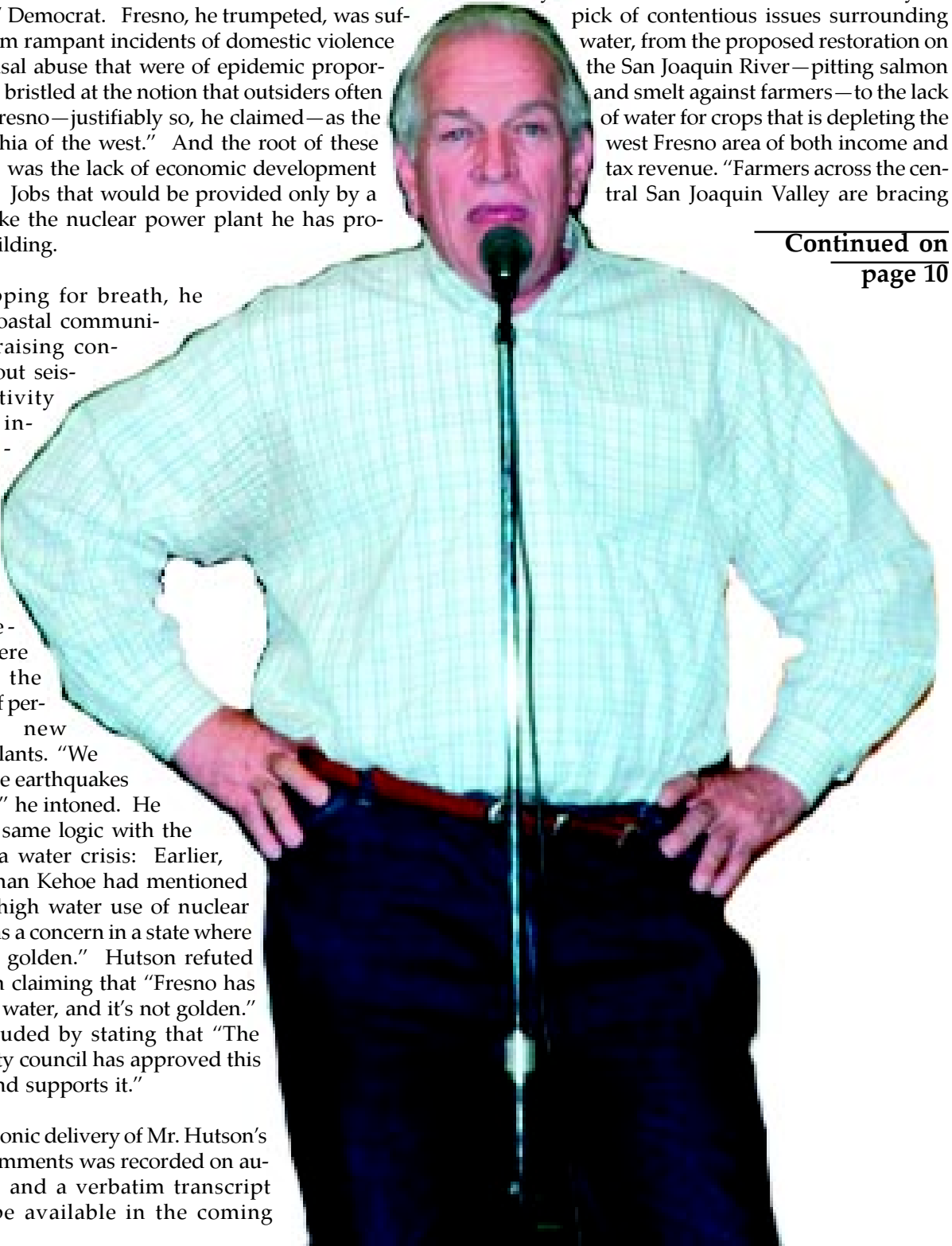
Not stopping for breath, he chided coastal communities for raising concerns about seismic activity that is incompatible with nuclear power, and that "their" requirements were delaying the process of permitting new nuclear plants. "We don't have earthquakes in Fresno" he intoned. He used the same logic with the California water crisis: Earlier, chairwoman Kehoe had mentioned that the high water use of nuclear plants was a concern in a state where "water is golden." Hutson refuted her, again claiming that "Fresno has plenty of water, and it's not golden." He concluded by stating that "The Fresno city council has approved this project and supports it."

The histrionic delivery of Mr. Hutson's public comments was recorded on audio tape, and a verbatim transcript should be available in the coming

month. While his tone may be subject to interpretation, his facts—or lack thereof—are not. Among the claims that should rise some eyebrows are:

**** "Fresno has plenty of water, and it's not golden." This is not the same story being reported over the last year in the Fresno Bee. You can take your pick of contentious issues surrounding water, from the proposed restoration on the San Joaquin River—pitting salmon and smelt against farmers—to the lack of water for crops that is depleting the west Fresno area of both income and tax revenue. "Farmers across the central San Joaquin Valley are bracing

Continued on
page 10



JANUARY 2008

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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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From the Editor

What is remarkable about this issue of the Community Alliance newspaper is that a lot of the information you will find here does not show up in the corporate media. Sometimes it seems like we are living in a parallel universe. There are people in this community who are working hard for peace, social, and economic justice, but if all you read was our big daily paper, you would not know it. I don't think the lack of coverage is an accident. Corporate media has an agenda - they are there to make money and represent the interests of their advertisers and the ruling elite in this community. The Community Alliance, on the other hand, exists to validate the lives of the individuals and groups working for social change and to build a progressive movement. We believe another world is possible.

That is why you will see articles and photos here that are telling "the people's" story, not just what the rich and powerful want you to know about. Our front page article, for example, is about how activists have defeated (for the time being, at least) plans to build a nuclear power plant in Fresno. The people in southwest Fresno needs jobs, affordable housing, and clean air - not a boondoggle that will only benefit a few rich people and chain the land with nuclear waste for centuries to come.

The articles on pages 2 - 4 provide more insight into what is going on in southwest Fresno. This is information you probably won't see anywhere else. A resident in southwest Fresno was forced to hire her own private investigators to find out who killed her mother. According to Betty Harmon, Lilly Mae Harmon's daughter, a federal lawsuit is being filed to demand equal justice under the law and force the police to do their job. On page 3, southwest residents respond to Fresno city officials who are calling gang members terrorists. I believe the implication of declaring young people in southwest Fresno is significant - if they are considered terrorists, does that mean violating their civil and legal rights will be tolerated because of the "War on Terrorism?" That leads to Craig Gilmore's article on page 4 where he concludes that the War on Gangs is really a war on us.

But, sometimes the corporate media follows our lead. For example, one of Dan Waterhouse's *Queer Eye* articles this month is titled *Another Discrimination Lawsuit Against Fresno State Athletics*. It is a great example of investigative journalism. This story, which Dan wrote for the Community Alliance, was posted on Indymedia - which is a web based open publishing news site we use to post breaking stories. After Dan's article appeared there, the local corporate media covered the story. In last month's CA newspaper we had a story about a homeless person who built an underground home. Following our cover-

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age of that exclusive story, local television news picked up on it and the story ended up going national on CNN.

The power of alternative/independent media should not be underestimated. I have often said that "trying to figure out what is going on in this town by relying on the corporate media is like attempting to know what time it is by looking at a clock that only has a second hand. The Community Alliance and KFCF 88.1 FM provide you with the analysis and in-depth reporting you need to get a deeper perspective of what is going on in this community and around the world. I encourage you to join us by becoming a subscriber and supporter of this publication. A subscription form is on page 22. We can't do this without you.

The Tale of Two Cities

By Mike Rhodes

Community activists are demanding justice in the Lilly Mae Harmon homicide case. Betty Harmon, the daughter of Lilly Mae Harmon, said "the City of Fresno and its Police Department have clearly demonstrated that people of color, our seniors, people without police connections, do not share in the same equal protections under the law. Based upon the attitudes concerning investigating crimes against people of color, it has become clear that Fresno is actually two cities. One is black; the other is white. They are totally separate and unequal."

Betty Harmon and Reverend Floyd D Harris, Jr, National President of the National Network in Action, a Civil and Human Rights Organization, announced they were filing a federal lawsuit against the City of Fresno. Harmon and Harris said that it was outrageous that the Fresno Police Department did not investigate Lilly Harmon's death and made the family pay for a private investigator to look into the homicide.

Rev. Harris, standing at the front door of City Hall said "it has come to our attention that the City of Fresno is the *Tale of Two Cities*- the haves and the have nots. If Mrs. Lilly Mae Harmon had been a white woman living in North Fresno, living on the bluffs by the river, we would not be standing here right now. We feel that the police department would have taken more action, faster and quicker. But, because Mrs. Harmon was a lady who lived out in the country who might have driven down dirt roads. . . her case was a low priority. We come here to tell the City of Fresno that enough is enough."

Surrounded by community supporters, Betty Harmon said she lost her mother under tragic and suspicious circumstances. "When I took my concerns to the Fresno Police Department, I found that their motto to 'protect and serve' had limitations. Not only did I have to hire a private investigator to track down and prosecute the case, but I had to pay out of my own pockets for services that taxpayers delegate to the police. The people of color in Fresno demand justice and equal protection under California law and the Constitution of the United States."

Betty Harmon said "If we allow the police and city officials to turn their heads and ignore social harms towards citizens of color, if we allow the trend to continue that people of color must hire their own private investigators to achieve social justice, we allow a standard to be set in this community that people of color must pay for their autopsies in order to qualify for police investigative intervention - if we don't stand up, then we bring back an era where people of color do not matter. No hope; No voice; No vote; No power."

For an in depth report on the incident that led to this lawsuit, see the July 2007 Community Alliance newspaper or go to: <http://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2007/06/16/18427916.php>

Also see: <http://justiceforlillymaeharmon.org/>



Betty Harmon (center) is demanding justice in the case of her mother's death. All photos on this page by Mike Rhodes.

Fresno Westside Residents Respond to Being Called Terrorists

By Mike Rhodes

Residents of West Fresno don't like being called terrorists. The Rev. Floyd D. Harris said, "No one has a right to call anyone a terrorist in this city." Harris was referring to statements made by local elected officials at a press conference held in August. At that event Fresno City Council member Jerry Duncan, stressing the urgency of a campaign against gangs in West Fresno, compared black gang members to terrorists. Duncan, speaking about those gang members, said, "Make no mistake about it, they are terrorists and they are as much of terrorists as those people in Iraq that are blowing up innocent people." Fresno mayor Alan Autry said, "The connection with the war on terror and the war against gangs at home is not a spin, it is a very real connection." For video and more information about Fresno City officials identifying African American gang members as terrorists, see: <http://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2007/08/29/18444759.php>

Harris spoke in front of radio station KFCF 88.1 FM, where he and Duncan were scheduled to discuss the gang/terrorism issue on Valley Black Talk, a program aired on Monday evenings. Shortly before the show, Duncan sent an email to the program's producer saying he would not be able to appear on the show. Harris was disappointed and told me that he had been looking forward to the dialogue with the city council member. The show did go on, but without Duncan. The program included many people calling in to discuss the provocative statements made by local elected officials.

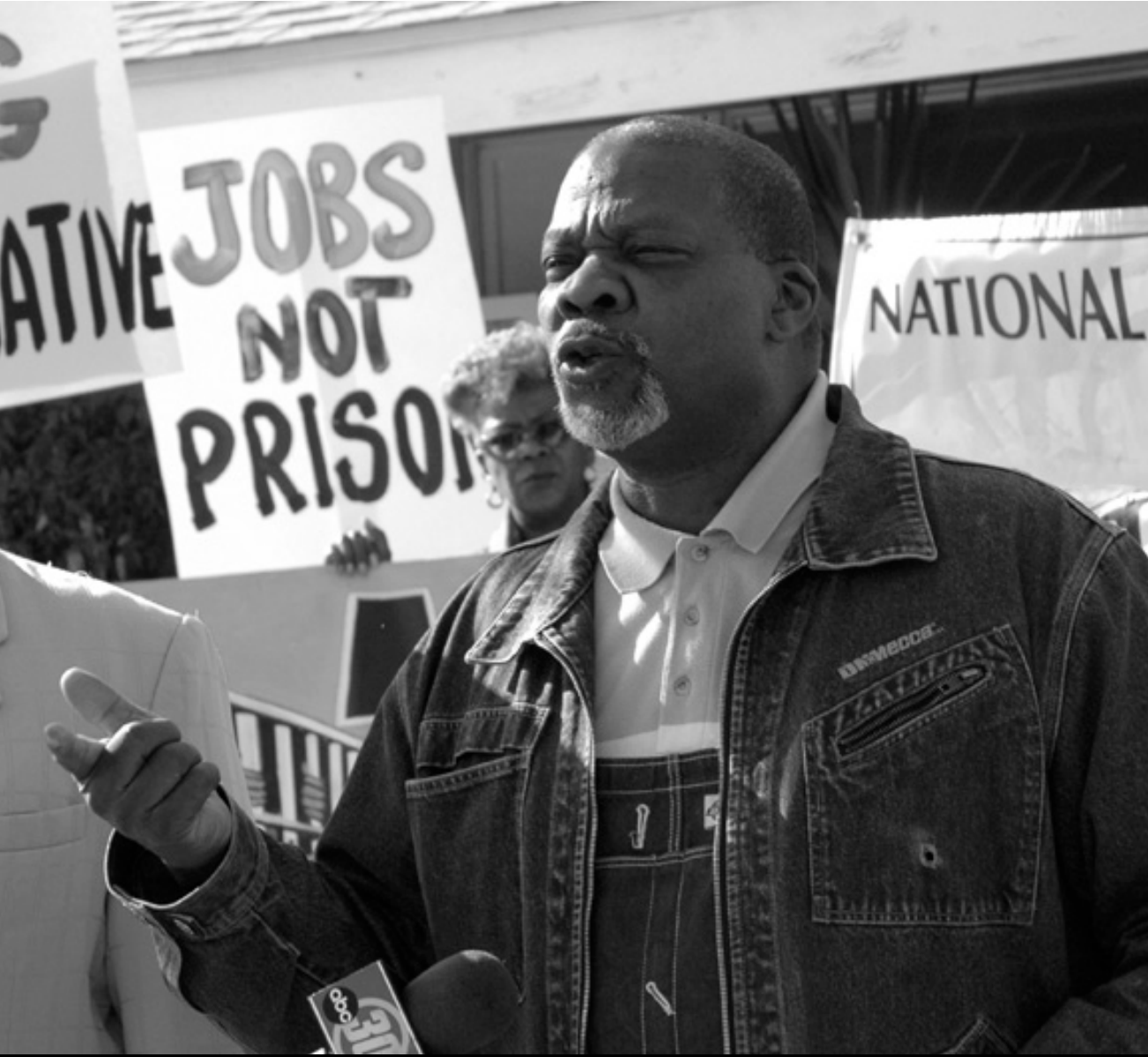
Rev. Harris, who is the president of the National Network In Action, a civil and human rights organization, objected to city officials identifying black gangs as terrorists. Reading a prepared statement at the press conference in front of the KFCF studio, he asked, "Did the Fresno Police worsen the gang problem by using injunctions, anti-gang legislation and police crackdowns? A recent report, the Justice Department's Justice Police Institute Report: Gang Wars: The Failure of Enforcement Tactics and the need for Effective Safety Strategies, called for social programs that promote jobs, education and healthy communities which have proven to be much more effective in curbing drug and gang activities."

City Council member Jerry Duncan is termed out and has announced he is running for mayor. Harris said, "Prior to running for mayor, Duncan has always told people who don't live in his area that he is not responsible for them and doesn't have to talk to them. Yet, he is attempting to promote his 'campaign' on the backs of poor people who do not have the same amount of resources as those who live in the north side. He voted for more monies for incarceration instead of placing greater emphasis on juvenile diversion and prevention programs such as mentoring for those that don't live in his district."

For more information, you can contact Rev. Floyd D. Harris, Jr., at (559) 803-0286 or visit www.nancal.org.



Sister Cammy said, "We are tired of being labeled terrorists, we're tired of being put on the curb.... We're not terrorists, we're human."



Coleman said that Westside residents need jobs and an opportunity to earn a decent living.



The Rev. Floyd D. Harris said, "No one has a right to call anyone a terrorist in this city"

COMMUNITY REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

sunmt.org/nov27chron07.html

Don't put WWII under your Christmas tree

sunmt.org/nov23chron07.html

sunmt.org/dec8chron07.html

Elizabeth Kucinich tells us about Dennis
First of series.

sunmt.org/dec20achron07.html

We sue: cops ignore arsenic murder of my mother

Coming: SunMt 25 year celebration
March 22, 2008 • Noon — dusk
The first Fresno county solar electric building, plus other ways to hug Big Mama while doing media for social, enviro and economic justice

The War on Gangs

By Craig Gilmore

Los Angeles must be a big market for the ribbon industry. Over the past few decades the city and county have named one blue ribbon commission after another to advise them on how to deal with youth gangs. The reports written by those commissions offer the same recommendations: programming to keep kids from joining gangs and law enforcement to destroy or control existing gangs. In these times of tight budgets – or is it these times in which fearing young men of color is increasingly acceptable? – it seems like there is money for more police but rarely more than a token expenditure on prevention efforts, much less adequate funding for public education or living wage jobs.

Although we can trace the latest phase of the war on gangs back to the mid 1980s, but the war goes back much further. In 1943 soldiers and sailors rampaged through downtown and Eastside Los Angeles beating Chicanos, Mexicanos, Filipinos & Black people in what came to be called the Zoot Suit Riots. The local press praised the sailors’ actions after a year of fanning the flames of gang fear after the Sleepy Lagoon murder in which 600 youth were arrested and dozens charged in a murder stemming from an alleged gang fight at a popular LA recreation area.

Less than two decades later, America’s fear of youth gangs was so domesticated that we see mainstream film treatment (Marlon Brando in *The Wild One*, 1953) and in Broadway musicals (*West Side Story*, 1957).

If fear of youth gangs dimmed through the 60s and 70s, it flared out of control in the 1980s.

While US-based street gangs certainly didn’t grow, process or ship cocaine to American cities, they came to control the final distribution to the streets. Along with crack came wealth and competition for territory and the massive increase in street violence, all of which was then repackaged for middle class consumption in rap and film.

Here in LA, 1987-88 marked a turning point in the public hysteria about gangs. In December 1987 a young woman was killed in a drive-by shooting in Westwood, the well-to-do commercial area bordering UCLA. LAPD responded with extra patrols in Westwood and parents in predominantly Black South LA protested that the killings of their kids seemed not to warrant police protection.

The LAPD took that invitation and ran with it, instituting gang sweeps (called Operation Hammer) through South LA, stopping every young Black man on the streets, checking for outstanding warrants and enrolling them on whatever pretense in the newly formed gang database. During Operation Hammer, the LAPD arrested “more Black youth than at any time since the Watts rebellion of 1965,” according to Mike Davis.

In the early 90s, I interviewed teenagers from Pomona and Ontario who had been stopped by police on a Friday night. The police smelled beer and offered the kids a choice: submit to a search of the car and be brought down to the police station where their parents would be called OR sign a statement admitting to gang membership and go free. The gang database became one of the new “tools” used by law enforcement in the one dimensional war on gangs. The gang injunction is another.

In early 2007 the city of Los Angeles obtained an injunction against the Highland Park gang, the 50th street gang in the city to be so tagged. The injunction allows the City to imprison anyone identified as a member of Highland Park for a variety of activities, including congregating with others identified as gang members, loitering or being outside after 10 p.m.

Injunctions are now among the most popular tools in the War on Gangs, allowing law enforcement to arrest and detain alleged gang members for behavior that is illegal only for those identified by law enforcement as gang members.

LA City Attorney James Hahn saw the path to political success (he was later mayor) in the war on gangs. In 1987 he filed for the first gang injunction against an LA street gang, the Play Boy Gangster Crips. The courts ruled his first attempt too broad, but eventually he succeeded in criminalizing membership in or association with an organization.

News of LA drive-bys and mass media exploitation of them (the movie *Colors* and NWA’s *Straight Outa Compton*, both 1988) provided the California legislature the political cover to pass the Street Terrorism Enforcement and Protection Act of 1988, legislation that had been brewing in Sacramento for at least four years. The law required local law enforcement to take up enrolling local youth in what was now a statewide gang database and “enhanced” sentences for anyone convicted of a felony whose name appeared in that database. Sentence “enhancement” means that years are added to a criminal sentence, in this case one to five years was added on.

The sentence enhancement became a major driver in expanding California’s prisons over the next two

It is time we wake up and understand that the war on gangs is a war on us.

decades as alleged gang members and later second and third strikers spent longer in prison, swelling the prison population.

The hysteria about gang violence allowed police involved in gang sweeps latitude for lack of probable cause in stopping, questioning and searching young men of color on the streets. Large increases in police funding to hire more street cops and to update computer systems laid the basis for forms of saturation policing now known as “Quality of Life” policing, in which large gangs of police sweep through a neighborhood, stopping people on any pretext - LAPD this year stopped a person on Skid Row for littering after ash dropped off his cigarette onto the sidewalk.

Extra stops provide more opportunities to run people’s records, looking for outstanding warrants. The effect here in LA has been that targeted neighborhoods like Skid Row and MacArthur Park area being ‘cleansed’ of large numbers of people, many of whom have violated laws like jaywalking and being too poor to pay the ticket – the fine for walking against the light is \$159; a monthly general relief check is \$221.

The city has recently sought a gang injunction against the 5th and Hill gang – purportedly the largest seller of heroin in the Skid Row area. Unlike previous gang injunctions, this one would be aimed at not just gang members but also “sales surrogates and associates” – in short anyone who has been caught in an LAPD drug sting downtown selling a single dose of heroin.

Those drug stings come as a result of LA’s Safer Cities Initiative which has provided \$6 million to put 50 extra police on the streets of Skid Row. The total city budget for homeless shelters and services is only \$5.7 million. A recent UCLA study shows that the Skid Row Safer Cities Initiative, sold to the public as a public safety effort to protect residents of Skid Row from violence and predatory drug sales, is in fact a rehash of a 2002 city memo entitled “Homeless Reduction Strategies.” Those being protected and served by LAPD’s actions are the real estate interests gentrifying Skid Row.

Around MacArthur Park, the targeted population are the Salvadoran gangs 18th Street and MS-13. Many of the youngsters arrested as alleged gang members were born in El Salvador and came to the US with their parents, fleeing the civil war in the 1980s. After they do their prison time, and increasingly after their jail time, they are deported to a country they don’t remember. Many don’t speak Spanish. The mass deportations have created a wave of fear in Salvador about the “American gangsters.”

LAPD Chief Bratton and others have lucrative international consulting firms to help Latin American countries and cities institute US-style saturation policing. Police in Salvador and Honduras routinely stop young men and force them to strip off their

shirts, looking for and photographing tattoos. Lacking the wealth to waste on building California style mega prisons, Salvadoran-Americans are packed into aging prisons where the state seems to be killing them at a spectacular rate.

In order to drum up support for the attack on Salvadoran youth, Newt Gingrich hosted a ‘documentary’ on Fox-TV called *American Gangs - Ties To Terror?* Gingrich presented provocative images but no evidence that MS-13 might contract with Al Queda to move terrorists into the US over routes now used to smuggle drugs or bring members back home.

The intensification of the war on gangs over the past two decades has exploited and in many ways re-fashioned middle class fears of poor young men, and used that media-driven fear to pack prisons, expel thousands to countries they don’t remember, gentrify downtowns, and push more and more public resources to policing, jails and prisons and away from public schools, affordable health care, affordable public higher education, environmental protection and other public goods.

As the war on gangs has created bigger police forces, more sophisticated police/national security databases and more prisons, it has eroded the legal rights of us all. It is time

we woke up and understood that the war on gangs is a war on us.

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Craig Gilmore is a volunteer organizer with the California Prison Moratorium Project. He is co-author of *Prison Town* comic book and is a graduate of Fresno High.

Fresno Native Reynolds Strikes Again

In November we’ll likely be able to vote on Mike Reynold’s latest attempt at law writing. He’s teamed up with George and Sharon Runner (who brought us Jessica’s Law) to author the “Safe Neighborhood Act.”

According to its authors, the law will give law enforcement the tools it needs to deal with an “epidemic” of gang violence in our cities. Who knew the Runners’ Antelope Valley home was gang-infested?

The law lengthens sentences for crimes already on the book and adds sentence ‘enhancements’ for those committed by gang members or for the benefit of a gang. As if the definition of who is in a gang wasn’t fuzzy enough in this state, the law provides that if over a three year period, any two of a list of 32 crimes are committed by two or more people, a “pattern of gang activity” kicks in the SNA.

So let’s suppose that you and your cousin “wrongfully obtain Department of Motor Vehicles documentation” or maybe engage in “unlawful use of personal identifying information to obtain credit, goods, services, or medical information.” Should the two of you be convicted of something as heinous as “felony vandalism” within three years, you and your cousin have established a “pattern of gang activity.”

Reynolds and the Runners expect to begin the process of gathering 435,000 signatures for the SNA in the near future. For the full text of the initiative, see: <http://ag.ca.gov/initiatives/activeindex.php?active=A> and scroll down to “Safe Neighborhoods Act.”

Reynolds’ Three Strikes law has given us 25-years-to-life sentences for guys convicted of stealing a slice of pizza or a few videos. The Runners’ Jessica’s Law has proved to be impossible to enforce, a headache for parole agents and local law enforcement and a fiscal nightmare. The only people benefitting from such legislation are the ambitious politicians (and would-be politicians like Reynolds) who claim to be protecting us while they advance their careers.

Yes, Prisoners, There Really Is A Santa Claus

By Maria Telesco

Santa was unusually busy this season, so he outsourced some work to the United Methodist Church (UMC) of Merced. All year 2007, from Merced, Fresno, Visalia, Los Angeles, San Diego and points between, volunteers gathered donations of toiletries, greeting cards, and snack treats. Carload after carload of “goodies” were hauled, over several months, to the UMC, where they would be prepared for distribution to women prisoners in Chowchilla. Volunteers included members of the Central California Women’s Facility (CCWF) Inmate Family Council (IFC), and several churches. They gathered enough to enable each of the 4,400 women confined in CCWF to receive at least nine items in her bag, a staggering total of more than 44,000 individual items.

Finally, bag-packing day arrived, December 2nd, a frosty, teeth-chattering Sunday. The Visalia and Fresno teams converged upon the UMC for our 3 to 6 PM shift. Many donations had come from the Unitarian-Universalist Church of Fresno (UU). Larry Mullen, a UU, did most of the work in Fresno. He obtained donations and researched potential donor resources. He arrived first at UMC, accompanied by his wife, Rena. They were hard at work when Nancy Hatcher and I, also UUs, got there. Nancy is a magnet for donations; they arrive at her front porch as though it were Santa’s own. IFC members were working so intently, they didn’t notice that I was late, as usual. Nancy Turk of Visalia, IFC chairwoman, was there with Francie Levy and Sheila Shaubach, both ordained Deacons in the Episcopal church, in addition to being IFC members. David Hetland, member of both the IFC and the UMC, had the logistics down pat. Everything was well organized and he kept the work flowing smoothly. He did a fantastic job of sorting items, keeping bins full, and managing groups of volunteers, most of whom had never worked together before.

There were so many donations, so many donors – it’s hard to keep track of them all. Students at San Joaquin Memorial High School gave more than 300 filled and completed goodie bags. Fresno City College students also contributed. Residents at San Joaquin Gardens retirement community gave a large variety of toilet articles. A Fresno businesswoman donated all 4,400

plastic bags both in 2006, and again in 2007. Hundreds of toiletries were donated by a chaplain who works in a Los Angeles jail, and visits at Chowchilla.

Entering the vast room – church social hall/basketball court – my eyes were immediately drawn to what appeared to be a large red wall in the middle of the room. But wait, it wasn’t a wall; it was nearly a couple of hundred red boxes, stacked high enough to make one think twice about sitting in front of them. Each box held 70 envelopes of hot cocoa mix, enough that each woman would get two. On the next table was a heap of bright yellow boxes, and several of different hues, all



Rev. Francine Levy and Rev. Sheila Shaubach, both Episcopal Deacons sort the Goodie Bags. Photo by Maria Telesco.

containing a variety of tea bags. And over there little boxes, each enclosing individual servings of coffee.

Across the room, a chocoholic’s nightmare of Hades: enough chocolate bars to sink a ship, and none had my name on it. Can you visualize 4,400 chocolate bars? Don’t even try – it’s too traumatic. And on another table, giant bags filled with about 9,000 pieces of hard candy of various flavors and colors. At the next table, Larry Mullen sorting last minute donations of soaps and lotions.

The prisoners had been told the gifts would be “equitable” but not “identical.” That meant they might receive different brands, flavors or sizes. They had no problem with that, because they were permitted to trade, and trading was half the fun.

Near the door was a table with 55 small boxes, each

containing 40 one-gallon plastic zippered bags. A woman was busily applying to each bag a sticky label proclaiming Happy Holiday greetings from the IFC. It would be important later on to keep an exact count. Somewhere in the background, a radio was softly playing Christmas music; some were quietly singing along.

Scattered about, gray dishpan-size bins, others humungous, some openmouthed, others overflowing. Their dark ugliness contrasted sharply with the brightness of the “goodies” that would bring a bit of Christmas cheer to a few thousand forgotten women in California. Not the baddest; just the “forgottennest.”

A long table down the middle of the room held large bins, each marked with contents and quantity to disburse – shampoo, conditioner, lotion, candies and more. The assembly line moved quickly and efficiently. Take a bag, proceed down the line, place an item or two into it, hand the filled bag to a seated volunteer to check contents and zip it shut. Dave kept a close eye on the bins. When one approached emptiness, he’d grab a box or sack of refills, so bagger’s work wouldn’t be interrupted.

In a corner lay a pile of new, flat, brown moving boxes. Volunteers assembled those, then handed them to workers at the next table. Each bag went into a box, counted so each box contained 80 completed gift bags. At the prison, staff would know how many were in a box, without having to count them again. When it was time, on Christmas Eve, to distribute them, staff would know the correct number of boxes to dispatch to each housing unit.

A project of this magnitude demands efficiency. The logistics required to put together such an undertaking are very complex, even overwhelming. When our IFC group developed the idea, a few years ago, we were told it would be impossible. How on earth could we arrange and organize such a massive effort? Well, with the hard work of dozens of volunteers and the generosity of hundreds of donors – WE DID IT!

[This newspaper went to press before the delivery of the goodie bags. Stay tuned for the women’s comments next month.]

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

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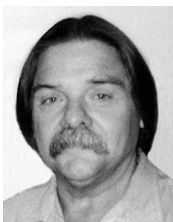
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Parole Board Pillory Courts Expose Corruption

By Boston Woodard

In an August 30, 2007 published court order by Superior Court Judge Linda R. Condrón in Santa Clara County, powerful evidence of abuse by California's Board of Prison Terms (BPT) disclosed flagrant violations of the law.



The order exposed Parole Board officials of breaching laws (passed by a legislative body) governing the release of eligible life prisoners. The order is a pillory where, finally, California's BPT and its commissioners (board members) are being showcased as the thugs they are.

The order was handed down in the case of *In re Arthur S. Criscione* (serving a 15-to-life sentence for 2nd degree murder) who alleged that his due process rights were violated because of "unconstitutionally" applied criteria used to deny his parole in conflict with Penal Code Section 3041(a) that mandates parole "shall normally" be granted to murderers.

Criscione's argument relied on evidence that in "one hundred percent of 2,690 randomly chosen cases," the BPT found the commitment offense to be "especially heinous, atrocious or cruel," factors that show unsuitability under California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 15 §2402(c)(1).

The Parole Board is required by law to apply "detailed standards" when determining if a life prisoner is unsuitable for parole. Those standards are codified in the CCR §2402(c)(1):

"(c)Circumstances Tending to Show Unsuitability. The following circumstances each tend to indicate unsuitability for release. These circumstances are set forth as general guidelines; the importance attached to any circumstances or combination of circumstances in a particular case is left to the judgment of the panel [BPT]. Circumstances tending to indicate unsuitability include:

- (1) Commitment Offense. The prisoner committed the offense, in an especially heinous, atrocious or cruel manner. The factors to be considered include:
 - (A) Multiple victims were attacked, injured or killed in the same or separate incidents.
 - (B) The offense was carried out in a dispassionate and calculated manner, such as an execution—style murder.
 - (C) The victim was abused, defiled or mutilated during or after the offense.
 - (D) The offense was carried out in a manner which demonstrates an exceptionally callous disregard for human suffering.
 - (E) The motive for the crime is inexplicable or very trivial in relation to the offense."

The Parole Board makes no effort to distinguish "the applicability of criteria" between one case and another writes Judge Condrón in her order. The Board is then in a position to frame every case of murder into one or more of the categories delineated in CCR—2402(c).

An example: if the prisoner's actions resulted in an instant death Board members find that it was done

in a "dispassionate and calculated manner, such as execution—style murder." At the same time expressed Judge Condrón, the Board finds that a murder not resulting in a near instant death shows a "callous disregard for human suffering" without any further analysis or fluency of facts which justify that result.

Judge Candron continued that, "If a knife or a blunt object was used, the victim was abused, defiled or mutilated. If a gun was used the murder was performed in a dispassionate and calculated manner, such as an execution—style murder." And, if bare hands were used to take another human life then the crime is "particularly heinous and atrocious."

By applying these methods across the board, every murder has been found to fit with the unsuitability criteria. "What this reduces to is nothing less than a denial of parole for the very reason the prisoners are present before the Board — i.e. they committed murder," said Judge Condrón. Stated clearly by the Sixth District Court of Appeals: "A conviction for murder does not automatically render one unsuitable for parole." (In re Smith, 114 Cal.App.42 at p.366, citing In re Rosentrantz, 29 Cal.4th at p. 683.)

In the case of Criscione, his expert witness was Professor Mohammad Kafi director of the statistics program at San Francisco State University. Professor Kafi teaches statistics and probabilities and it was undisputed that he was qualified to give the testimony he did in Criscione's and the cases of Lewis (#68038), Jameison (#71194), Bragg (#108543) and Ngo (#127611).

Professor Kafi's research demonstrates that 9,750 life prisoners who are eligible for parole had his or her crime labeled "particularly egregious" or "especially heinous, atrocious or cruel" under Title 15 CCR-2402(c)(1). Professor Kafi drew the conclusion that the entire population of 9,750 (lifers) was indeed eligible for parole in each specific case. The criteria out-

murderers be found unsuitable for parole." (Coleman v. Board of Prison Terms, No. Civ. S-96-0783 LKK PAN P.)

A government official's arbitrary and capricious exercise of his authority violates the essence of due process. A "no parole policy" means that no murder offender can get a fair hearing as required by law. "The unrefuted record shows the no-parole-policy-for-murderers policy existed and continued under governor Gray Davis. In the matter of Robert Rosencrantz, the California Supreme Court took note of evidence presented in the state trial court establishing that the Board held 4800 parole suitability hearings between January 1999 through April 2001, granting parole to 48 murderers (one percent). [In re Rosencrantz, 29 Cal. 4th 616, 685 [2003]. Of those 48, the governor reversed 47 of the Board's decisions and only one murderer out of 4800 actually was released on parole." (Coleman v....)

Recently, state and federal courts have uncovered hard evidence of abuse by the BPT that do not "adequately support" their denials of parole.

"[Counsel for] Petitioners [lifers] provided charts, summaries, declarations, and the raw data establishing the cases of Lewis, Jameison, Bragg, and Ngo," as stated in Judge Condrón's order.

In the case of Criscione the evidence was presented in a different manner. To "check" Criscione's methods, the court ordered "The Respondent [defendant] to undertake an examination of two randomly chosen months in the same manner Criscione had been doing." At the conclusion of that order, the Respondent found that "at all the relevant hearings the Board relied on the committed offense as a basis for denying parole." (Rosencrantz's Final Discovery, April 5, 2007.)

In courtrooms across the state of California, case after case, judge after judge, order after order, has found that the Board of Prison terms have completely deemed themselves above the law, ignoring countless court orders to parole eligible life prisoners.

Judge Condrón's August 30, 2007 order strongly emphasizes that "The Board must make efforts to comply with due process in the first instance." The consequences of the Board's actions of giving CCR §2402(c)(1) such a broad all-encompassing and universal application ". is that they have unwittingly invalidated the basis of the California Supreme Court's holding in the Dannenberg case." (Dannenberg (2005) 34 Cal.4th 1061 at 1096, footnote 16.)

Albert M. Leddy, who for twenty-five years was deputy assistant and district attorney for Kern County, and for nine years was a member/commissioner and chairman of the California State Board of Prison Terms, was by no means an advocate for prisoner's rights. Nonetheless, Leddy was absolutely opposed to Governor Pete Wilson's (and later Governor Gray Davis's) expensive campaign to eliminate life prisoner's rights to a fair hearing before the BPT.

In Leddy's blistering (sworn) July 1, 2000 declaration, he exposed the Board of Prison Terms for the immoral, unprincipled criminals they are. Leddy's lengthy written evidence reads like the confessions of an ex-gang leader finally giving up the game on all the thugery and crimes the BPT have been committing for decades.

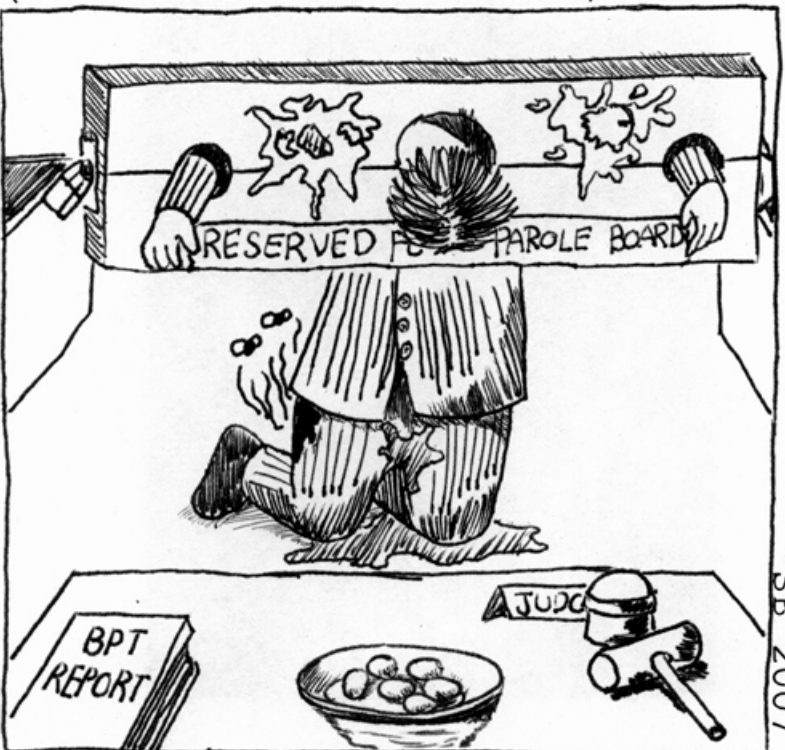
Courts throughout California are finally seeing the BPT for the corrupt lot they are. Massive public humiliation and exposure of their unlawful parole hearings may not be enough to do the job, but it's a good start.

For more information and understanding of just how corrupt California's Board of Prison Terms and commissioners are, see "The Parole Conundrum" at: <http://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2006/12/18/18338477.php>

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Boston Woodard is a prisoner/journalist and is not a life prisoner - Cartoonist Steven Bitz is serving a life sentence.

(Cartoonist: Steven Bitz)



The Parole Board Gets a Taste of its own medicine

lined in CCR—2402(c) did not apply. This practice by the Parole Board is a blatant disregard of state law and the due process rights of Criscione and thousands of other lifers.

Judge Condrón writes in her order that "...every such offense [of the 9,750] has been found [by the Board] to be particularly egregious or especially heinous, atrocious or cruel."

The Second District Court of Appeals found that, "Not every murder can be found to be atrocious, heinous, or callous or the equivalent without doing violence to the requirements of due process." (In re Lawrence 2007 150 Cal.App.4th 1511, 1557.)

In 1991 governor Pete Wilson substantially reduced parole grants; in fact, for all intents and purposes, his policy virtually eliminated paroles. A no parole policy means that no murder offender can get a fair hearing as required by law.

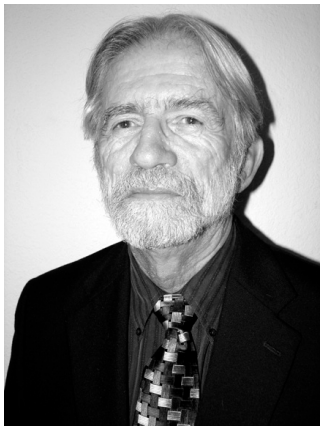
Judge Lawrence K. Karlton, Senior Judge United States District Court (Sacramento), wrote in a May 9, 2005 order, "Petitioner presents evidence that under governors Wilson and Davis the Board disregarded regulations ensuring fair suitability hearings and instead operated under "sub rosa" [secret] policy that all

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CSU-Fresno Diary: Sexism in Academe

by FA Hart

A male CSU Fresno faculty member whom I'll call Adam said to me, years ago, that he liked working with men better than with women because men are, he said, more direct. He went on to say that maybe he felt that way because he'd played football. This was someone who'd taught for several years in a large, very liberal department. He was in some ways a well-intentioned and amiable person who had no idea how offensive his remark was to me.



Another male CSU Fresno faculty member whom I'll call Cain once made a statement in front of a mixed group of men and women faculty members that was so inappropriate that I'm still, years later, awed by it. He referred to the early to mid-20th century woman writer Anais Nin as "Anus Nin" because he believed she had been readily available for heterosexual anal sex. I was so stunned by the comment that I said, "[Darn, Cain], even I think that's sexist." One of the women present said, "Oink." ("Darn" was not the word I used.)

I mention these two incidents for several reasons. As I write, Fresno is in the midst of the expensive and painful-to-watch Stacy Johnson-Klein vs. CSU Fresno trial. Lindy Vivas has won, praise be, a large settlement to compensate for the outrageous treatment she suffered at CSUF. And Diane Milutinovich has also received a large sum to compensate her for similar abuse by the U.

For those who have not followed Fresno State's most recent scandals relating to women faculty, some details.

Lindy Vivas sued the university alleging discrimination based on her gender and perceived sexual orientation. The evidence at her trial was overwhelming to support her charges, as reported in the *Fresno Bee*. The jury found in her favor and awarded her \$5.85 million, cut later by a higher court to \$4.52 million.

Diane Milutinovich was reassigned from her job in athletics to a job in the university's student union. She later charged CSUF with gender discrimination and retaliation against her for advocating gender equity in sports. The U denied these charges (on their website, FresnoStateNews.com, 10/9/07). Later, after Vivas had won her lawsuit and Johnson-Klein's suit was about to come to trial, the university offered Milutinovich a \$3.5 million settlement, which she accepted.

That's \$8,020,000 out of taxpayer pockets. And counting.

As I write this — November 30, 2007 — Johnson-Klein's trial is ongoing. She alleges retaliation against her because she aggressively advocated gender equity in CSUF athletics. This allegation seems very credible. She also alleges sexual harassment of the grossest sort: she says a former administrator in athletics at CSUF fondled her breast, against her wishes, in the ride-through at a car wash. This allegation also, on the basis of the details reported in the *Fresno Bee*, seems credible. There are a lot of reasons why sexism, sexual harassment, homophobia, racism and other ugly -isms are as common as they are at Fresno State.

First — despite how alien some professors seem if you have to listen to their lectures for a whole semester — academics are human. (I need to emphasize that I taught for thirty-seven and a half years at Fresno State, and that some of my students used worse words than "alien" to describe me. In one class, as I learned from another person, some students referred to me as "Andy Fart" be-

cause I have a huge shock of grey hair. My wife Bette, also a retired teacher, tells me that might be partly affectionate. I prefer to suspend judgment.)

Being human, academics are imperfect.

Second, a kind of spiritual tribalism is a universal to the human condition. Every society I've ever visited or read about has its -isms. What I mean by "tribe" in this context is any subgroup within a larger society, that subgroup defined both by a sense of identity within it and by its relations with other subgroups. Whites in America are a large tribe, known by different names depending on context: Caucasian-Americans, honkies, Anglos, gringos, ofays... lots of options. Several White subtribes in which I proudly claim membership are Irish-Americans, academics, senior citizens, and Men with Beards.

A small but toxic and dangerous subtribe of Whites would wear the group name Xenophobes if they had team jerseys: Whites who fear and hate anyone of a different skin color or personal culture.

Males, like any other tribe, have some good qualities, some problems. Those males in the CSUF athletics program who are sexist (I'm confident some others are not) have created an incredible mess.

Third, part of what academe is about is power. That probably seems strange to anyone who thinks of academe as heavily populated with ivory tower airheads. Whether we're airheads or not, we can fight just as aggressively as any late night TV cage fighter. We are usually more fully clothed, and rarely armed with guns or knives. But I sat through thirty-seven and a half years of department meetings in the CSUF English Department. I loved and love the Department. I cherish the memory of the battles we had, including the ones I lost.

The idea of talking about "power" as something college professors have is, I know, foreign to many nonacademics. Several decades ago I wrote a short story called "The Tree of Power," about a firing in academe. My father, an incredibly smart and well-educated man, a very successful TV producer/writer, said he thought of teachers as being psychologically soft (he hastened to add he didn't mean me), and that he didn't see power as an element of college life.

I reminded him that college professors can get fired, and that when we have tenure we can recommend that our juniors get fired. He agreed that firing involves use of power. Of course, since we are infinitely capable of producing euphemisms, we academics don't call it "firing," we call it "not retaining." So much more civilized.

There are a lot of other kinds of power that academics like me wield. And with power goes responsibility. Some Men in Suits at Fresno State seem very unclear on the responsibility part.

Part of the glory of teaching college (and students at all other levels) is that we get to work with young people and help them do the work of shaping their minds, spirits and lives. The joy and glory is that (if we're good at our jobs, as many of us are) we share with students ideas and facts and methods of thinking and investigating that will invigorate them mentally and improve their futures. That opportunity we have gives us an important kind of power. A stockbroker friend of mine asked a small group of academics, which included two English teachers and a linguist, why English and linguistics mattered. The faces of the other English teacher and the linguist went taut and blank. This gentleman had just asked us if our careers mattered.

Teaching matters. So do young minds.

And all education automatically teaches values, including moral and ethical values. Teaching Shakespeare, it is necessary to talk about the religious and moral beliefs of Shakespeare and his audiences. Even the most technical and profession-oriented college majors — chemical engi-

neering, for instance — require hard work, which has spiritual as well as monetary value. Spiritual values are held by all human beings, whether they are religious, agnostic or atheist.

Which brings us back to November 2007.

The taxpayers of California contribute a lot of money to operate CSU Fresno. The students who come here (it's still my home, though I'm retired) also pay a lot, as do their families and the fund sources for scholarships.

We all deserve better than the disgraceful, appalling behavior that our university has ladled out to the three women faculty members named above.

Their suffering is real.

The only way to understand it is to think about it empathetically.

You who read this:

Have you ever been treated like dirt — because of your gender, race, ethnicity or sexual orientation — by someone who had power over you?

Have you ever spent years of study, and years of hard work at a difficult job, and been treated with contempt by your employers? And had that contempt be open and apparent to your peers, students and friends?

You women who read this:

Have you ever been to an "ugly women athletes" party (as some male yahoos held a while ago at Fresno State)? You men who read this:

Have you ever been to an ugly male yahoos party?

The answer to that last question may well be no, because most women I know are too polite to stage one.

And, Fresnans, I ask you to think about whether you want your daughters to attend a university where women faculty and staff are treated this way.

Education should nourish healthy intellectual and spiritual growth.

This goal is greatly undermined by sexism, racism, homophobia, the kind of brutal xenophobia and paranoia and folly that have led us to invade and lacerate Iraq... and by a lot of other types of inappropriate conduct to which academe, like all human tribes, is sometimes prone.

But our students — men and women — deserve better than this. We as taxpayers deserve better than this.

Let's do something as a whole community to oppose and push back this force at CSU Fresno.

Let's not let Lindy Vivas, Diane Milutinovich and Stacy Johnson-Klein be the only ones who went public and stood up to fight.

On Thursday, December 6, Stacy Johnson-Klein won her lawsuit against CSU Fresno and was awarded \$19 million plus dollars by the jury. The athletics program at CSU Fresno, under the inadequate supervision of President John Welty, has cost California taxpayers, so far, \$27,094,673 (that includes awards to Lindy Vivas and Diane Milutinovich), plus attorneys' fees, court costs, a huge sum in taxpayer funded salaries for Dr. Welty and others, and incalculable damage to the reputation of CSU Fresno. State Sen. Dean Florez is now calling for Dr. Welty's resignation.

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Andy Hart taught Shakespeare, comedy and essay writing at CSU Fresno from Fall 1965 through Fall 2002. He lives in the Sierra foothills where he pursues, among other hobbies, bird-watching and politics.

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QUEER EYE

What's Really Gone On At Fresno State?

by Dan Waterhouse

In an interview the day after the “crushing” \$19.1 million verdict against his university in the Stacy Johnson-Klein gender discrimination and sexual harassment lawsuit, Fresno State president Dr. John Welty claimed that the gender equity problems of the past in the school’s athletic department had all been corrected.

But has that really happened?

In advance of the legislative hearings chaired by State Senator Dean Florez this summer, University staff prepared two fact sheets outlining the school’s “advancement of women’s sports” and its “gender equity initiatives.” This data was presented to Senator Florez during the hearings.

Former associate athletic director Diane Milutinovich reviewed the fact sheets and noted some discrepancies. Milutinovich was the senior women’s administrator until she was reassigned to the University Student Union in 2002. She was ultimately fired by the university in July 2006. The university recently settled her retaliation lawsuit for \$3.5 million.

According to the university, a gender equity monitoring committee was formed in 1994. Milutinovich says Dr. Welty disbanded the committee in August 2006. A new gender equity task force was formed this summer, after the Florez hearings, to create a strategic gender equity plan.

The school said it implemented a “sweeping corrective action plan” after the federal review findings were announced in 1994. According to Milutinovich, improvements were made, but they stopped after the Office of Civil Rights closed the file in 2001.

Campus staffers claimed “new gender equity policies and procedures were drafted and implemented in the athletic department and campus wide.” Milutinovich said she never saw them.

While the school added women’s equestrian, soccer and golf, she noted it dropped women’s swimming.

Incidentally, the decision to drop swimming has foreclosed Fresno State’s use of one of the three prongs for showing compliance with Title IX: “where members of one sex have been and are underrepresented among intercollegiate athletes, whether the institution can show a history and continuing practice of program expansion which is demonstrably responsive to the developing interests and abilities of that sex.”

The new task force has determined that Fresno State will use the first prong: “provide participation opportunities for women and men that are substantially proportional to their respective rates of enrollment as full-time undergraduate students.”

The task force admits that the university is out of compliance with Title IX in the area of athletic schol-

arships. Women currently constitute 52.7 percent of athletic participants but receive 43.2 percent of scholarship aid. The task force proposes to achieve compliance by the addition of new women’s sports, which could be housed off campus for the first few years, beginning possibly during the 2008-09 academic year.

In looking at facilities, while Fresno State built a new women’s locker room near North Gym in 1995, Milutinovich said the school did not keep its commitment to build new women’s swimming and softball visiting team locker rooms. It also did not keep its commitment to build a locker room for women’s volleyball at the campus Save Mart Center. While the school claims recent credit for ultimately moving women’s volleyball matches from North Gym to the Save Mart Center (after firing coach Lindy Vivas), that was actually a commitment made in the 1994 corrective action plan.

The equestrian team is currently housed in trailers. The new video wall at Bulldog Stadium, described as a “gender neutral” project in the university’s write-up, is according to Milutinovich used only for football. The university claims it built a ticket office over at the softball stadium, but it’s not visible to the naked eye.

Milutinovich noted the university neglected in its fact sheet to mention the new \$3 to \$4 million football locker room and coaches’ offices over at the Duncan Building near the stadium.

In its write-ups, the university takes credit for activities, such as schedule cards, media trade-offs, radio coverage, and cable television production, that in fact have mostly been done since the compliance plan was put in place in 1994.

Milutinovich also noted that between 2002-03 and 2005-06, spending per male athlete increased by over \$17,000 while spending per female athlete went up only \$8.

Dan Waterhouse was the first journalist to report on the story (below) when he posted it to:

<http://www.indybay.org/centralvalley/>

If you want alternative/independent media (articles, photos, video, audio) that is not controlled by the corporate elite, bookmark <http://www.indybay.org/centralvalley/> and visit it every day. Indymedia is an “Open Publishing” website, which means that in addition to consuming the news, you can publish your stories there as well. Don’t like the news you see in The Bee or on TV? Then make some of your own! You might even be like Dan and scoop the corporate news on an important community story.

Another Discrimination Lawsuit Against Fresno State Athletics

By Dan Waterhouse

A fourth gender discrimination lawsuit has been filed against California State University, Fresno stemming from alleged wrong-doing in the school’s athletic department.

The case was moved from state to federal court by the university at the end of October.

The plaintiff, Virginia Levesque, 57, was an administrative assistant in the men’s basketball office beginning in December 2000 under then-head coach Jerry Tarkanian. Tarkanian retired in 2002 and was replaced by now-disgraced head coach Ray Lopes. Levesque says she “continued as the administrative assistant after CSU replaced Tarkanian with Lopes.”

She says in the complaint that she and Lopes “had a contentious working relationship due to her regular complaints of inappropriate behavior by Coach Lopes, his staff, and his student athletes. This inappropriate behavior took the form of gender and age discrimination as well as potential violations of NCAA rules and CSU, Fresno policies.”

Levesque claims the discriminatory behavior and potential NCAA and CSU, Fresno policy violations included:

Coach Lopes firing her young male student assistant/manager, saying having a young female in that position “would be better for recruiting.”

Levesque says that under Tarkanian, she had been responsible for ensuring compliance by men’s basketball with NCAA rules. According to her, Lopes took those duties away from her.

Lopes was allowed to resign with a six figure settlement in 2005 after he was caught violating NCAA rules. During his tenure as head coach, Fresno police chief Jerry Dyer accused Lopes of interfering in a murder investigation involving his players, current and former.

Levesque says she warned Lopes that “actions by men’s basketball staff, including but not limited to, loaning student athletes their automobiles, was a potential violation of CSU, Fresno policies and NCAA rules and would need to be reviewed by the campus NCAA compliance officer.”

When she complained to Lopes that his student athletes were using her office as a changing room and speaking to her in a “disrespectful manner” she says Lopes did nothing. Levesque added “that she found magazines and a computer screensaver that depicted women in sexually revealing positions publicly displayed in the men’s basketball office.”

She says in the complaint that, through channels, she “prevented a men’s basketball staff member from running an advertisement to hire young women exclusively to help them recruit male players for the basketball team.

“After observing young women having closed door meetings with the men’s basketball staff,” Levesque says in the complaint, “she informed the clerical liaison that such private meetings were inappropriate and that the men’s basketball staff was attempting to use attractive young women for sexualized recruit-

ing of male players. Additionally, she gave a men’s basketball assistant coach volunteer forms to fill out to comply with university volunteer procedures. After this the young women stopped coming to the office, and no forms were filled out.”

Levesque says that in response to her complaints, Lopes regularly retaliated against her. She claims that when Lopes had her office moved, her notepads, files, and phone message books were stolen from a locked cabinet. The note pads included notes she had taken on possible policy and rule violations in the men’s basketball office. She said she discovered that three student managers had thrown them away.

She says Lopes ordered her to stop making complaints to her superiors. When she refused, she said he became hostile towards her.

She was one of five administrative support staff laid off by the athletic department in January 2005. She claims university president Dr. John Welty and human resources director Jeannine Raymond told her she would be rehired to a permanent position. To date that has not occurred. She is also alleging age discrimination.

Levesque is represented by the East Bay law firm of Siegel and Yee. The firm represented former Fresno State women’s volleyball coach Lindy Vivas, former associate athletic director Diane Milutinovich, and was part of the legal team representing former women’s basketball coach Stacy Johnson-Klein in their successful discrimination lawsuits against the university.

The university legal team has denied all wrongdoing.

Public Access TV Update

By Mike Rhodes

Last month, the Fresno City Council voted unanimously to adopt an ordinance in support of Public, Education, and Government (PEG) channels and a Community Media Center (CMC). A similar ordinance was passed in Clovis in November. The result of these actions will be that \$600,000 - \$700,000 a year will be available to run PEG and CMC in the Fresno/Clovis area.

In communities where PEG access channels already exist and a CMC has been established residents have the opportunity to produce TV programing and have it shown on the cable network, at no cost. The CMC provides all the equipment and training needed to produce quality programing. Community groups and individuals can use the Public Access channel to stimulate a dialog about important community issues, promote the arts, spotlight a cultural performance, etc. The CMC will probably be located at California State University - Fresno (CSUF).

Through a collaborative effort, involving many community leaders, the Community Media Access Collaborative (CMAC) has been set up to oversee PEG & CMC. CMAC is a nonprofit 501 c 3. Its board of directors includes representatives from local government, educational institutions, and community groups (For purposes of full disclosure - I'm on the CMAC board of directors). Best practices, in other communities, have found that having a 501 c 3 run the PEG/CMC operation works to everyone's advantage and CMAC was established with this in mind. The issue of recognizing CMAC to run the operation should come up before the City Council in the next month or two.

Both Clovis and the City of Fresno need to request PEG channels from Comcast cable and any other digital media providers in the area (like AT&T). The "E" and "G" channels are totally non-controversial. Some elected officials and staff have had questions about the "P" (public) access channels and how CMAC would control content. The concern is that someone will produce "inappropriate" programing that is offensive to the community. Inappropriate programing is somewhat difficult to define because it means different things to different people. The issue brought up most often, however, is programing that has sexual content or that is offensive for political reasons. City Council members I have talked to have expressed concern about the potential for shows that have nudity or someone producing something like the "Ku Klux Klan Hour."

The issue of problematic programing has been addressed by other PEG stations around the state and country. Producers of programing on the local Public Access channel will not be allowed to produce and broadcast anything that is illegal. If a program has an mature theme, it will go on late at night. These rules successfully work in other communities and they will work in Fresno/Clovis. Nothing will be seen on the "P" channel that is not already available on Comcast cable. The political content of programs will not be censored. If someone produces a show that you disagree with, you are free to produce a show with an opposing viewpoint. Advocates of Public Access believe in free speech and encourage dialog on important community issues.

Funding for PEG will start streaming into the community by the middle of 2008 and CMAC is already working on how to make the most efficient use of the financial resources. That is why they are in discussions with CSUF to utilize existing studio space in the Kremen School of Education. A developing controversy about the funding is that some cable providers say that the funding can only be used for capital expenses (no staff). PEG advocates say that is nonsense and that the money can be used for whatever purpose is needed. The issue will probably be resolved through a court ruling in the not too distant future.

The next step in the years long process of bringing PEG to Fresno/Clovis will be CMAC's presentation to the Fresno City Council. Once CMAC is designated as the organization that will run the PEG operation and Fresno/Clovis asks Comcast for the PEG channels, the CMC will be established and programs will start being produced. That is expected to happen by the end of 2008.

For more information, see: <http://www.fresnoalliance.com/home/peg2006.htm> and www.buskegroup.com



Jennifer Gaxiola (Roosevelt HS) and Ernesto Guevara (UC Santa Cruz) edit a video at the Fresno Youth Empowerment Studio.

Youth Media FresYES Enterprise

On February 2, the Center for Multicultural Cooperation will launch the Fresno Youth Empowerment Studio (FresYES) Enterprise program at their studio in the Veteran's Memorial Building in Fresno. This initiative will empower 25 high school volunteers to develop trainings and consulting services to help organizations to acquire free and low-cost media training, consulting, and services. The FresYES All-Stars will meet each Saturday to get free advanced technology training in movie-making, social networking, web and graphic design, and other media tools. FresYES All-Stars will use laptops and video cameras, attend youth technology leadership retreats outside of Fresno, work on high-impact projects, and be eligible for paid media consultant jobs.

Do you know youth (freshmen/sophomores/juniors) who would be interested in this challenge? Have them check out myspace.com/fresyescmc or contact Nyeland Newel (nnewel@gmail.com, 312-6220). The FresYES Enterprise program orientation meeting will be held on Saturday, February 2, 10am-noon, at 2425 Fresno Street in the Veteran's memorial Building, room 201. The media skills learned in this program will empower youth leaders to express their ideas on current issues.

25 Fresno youth will be trained as social media consultants, making movies and creating websites. These youth leaders will serve their community with digital media, through FresYES trainings of intergenerational digital videos and social media applications, becoming part of a new youth media consulting business in

Fresno. This Summer, FresYES Enterprises will hold a series of free trainings for Central Valley organizations, ranging from website tools to advanced social media campaigns and open-source CMS website development.

The Center for Multicultural Cooperation (www.cmcweb.org) is a non-profit organization that has promoted educational programs for underserved youth since 1982, beginning with wilderness rehabilitation trips for boys from Juvenile Hall in Fresno. In the past five years, CMC has developed an intergenerational digital video program, including Stories of Service, Hmong Voices and Latino Legacy. Hundreds of students in the Fresno area have produced videos of elders and presented them in public showings.

CMC has enhanced the intergenerational digital video program to include all cultures, now called California Voices, and eleven schools now contract with CMC to facilitate after-school classes. A partnership with the Fresno Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Department resulted in a 1,200 square foot studio in the Veterans Memorial Building. CMC has a grant from the Community Technology Foundation of California to develop their youth media leadership program into a job development social enterprise project. Not only will underserved youth learn digital video production, website construction and social networking, some of them will also get the opportunity to get work experience as a media consultant.

Non-profit organizations, youth serving government agencies, and educational institutions may benefit by learning how new technology tools can make their organization more efficient. CMC seeks community input to analyze how to best serve those organizations that serve others in the valley. For more information, contact CMC at (559) 445-0015 or info@cmcweb.org



FresYES team filming documentary Left to right: Dr. Denise Blum (Advisor, CSUFresno) Daniel Parker (Bullard HS), Maricela Hernandez (Sunnyside HS), MaryJane Skjellerup (CMC Program Director), Jennifer Gaxiola (Roosevelt HS), Nora Walker (Bullard HS) and Rosie Arenas (storyteller).

Grassroots Profile

By Richard Stone

You’ve moved into a “not yet gentrified’ area. Your own house is in order, but as you pass through the streets you see homes in disrepair—in need of fences, a coat of paint, a new roof. You think, “If these basic repairs can be made, the whole neighborhood will look better; and if we can do it together as a group of neighbors, we can build a sense of community. We’ll get to know each other, maybe start to trust.”

It was from such a situation and such thinking that some people who had come to the Lowell area of Fresno as apart of an “urban mission” based in the Youth for Christ building at Divisadero and San Pablo, came up with the idea of F.U.N.D. Inc.

Fresno Urban Neighborhood Development Corpora-tion is now about 12 years old, and for the last 10 Bob Dittmar has ben its Executive Director, chief cook and bottle washer. In those 10 years Bob estimates they’ve

undertaken about 150 projects—not only in Lowell, but also in the Jefferson area and in Fresno West. “Mostly we put up fences and paint houses—\$5000 jobs. But we’ve also done a \$40,000 reconstruction of a house that had burned, and we’ve done roofs and other major construction.” One of Bob’s favorite projects was creating a playhouse and kid-friendly yard for the Lowell Resource Center across the street from the school, where there was room for creativity and, well, playfulness.

While there is no end of work that could be done, Bob focuses F.U.N.D.’s attention to where a group of neigh-bors is actively working for neighborhood improve-ment. “We really use the repairs as a tool for commu-nity-building. We call the program All-4-One, and like Habitat for Humanity, we hope recipients of the assis-tance will give back, ideally by working on someone else’s home another time. Of course, that doesn’t al-ways happen, but at least people will provide drinks and sandwiches for the crew if they can’t pitch in and help.”

Bob says that from the first project, he noticed the ca-maraderie and friendliness generated by working to-gether. And since at least some of the workers live in the vicinity of each project, this is a start to building community spirit.

Bob Came to F.U.N.D. quite naturally after time spent as a staff worker with Habitat for Humanity coordi-nating construction projects. But the move to Habitat was truly a leap of faith. He had been an airline pilot, accustomed to a large salary, but also to a life devoted to technical accomplishment with little human satis-faction, and a life tied to schedules and demanding travel. He wanted something else from his work, and a casual agreement to help one day at a Habitat work site altered his course dramatically. Noting a dearth of real construction know-how and organizational skills at the site, he saw a need he could fill. With his wife’s nervous approval, he left the airlines and accepted a position that (like most missionary tasks) he himself had to find the funding for.

And it is funding that is still the biggest challenge to the work he does now. “There’s no way around it, build-ing materials cost. You can’t make the simplest supply run without running up a couple of hundred dollars.”

But he has successfully established a few reliable back-ers, including churches, banks and service clubs (he mentions especially Lowe’s and Union Bank) and re-ceived some grant money from the Whitney Founda-tion. But he would welcome the help of someone who would concentrate on public relations and fundraising so he could dedicate his time more fully to strengthen-ing the neighborhood associations and planning the construction work. “My eventual goal would be to have each neighborhood have its own self-help group, part of a self-sustaining community.”

Meanwhile F.U.N.D. continues to take on project after project (now averaging 2 per month) and to scratch along financially. It has won the devotion of some long-time volunteers (Bob gives special thanks to CeCe Vega—“She’s worked on almost every project we’ve done”, Tina and Randy White, and Clara and Ross Smith “who keep us going in Fresno West.”

So if you have some weekend time and a hammer, you might give Bob a call, though he’s quick to add, “We can use office help and general support even if you can’t drive a nail.” He is best reached at his office at Youth for Christ, 237-4741. Who knows, you, too, might have a life-changing experience.

IDENTITY BOX

Name: Bob Dittmar
Born: Milledgeville, Illinois (“population 1200”)
Ethnic identity: Caucasian
Political identity: good neighbor
Most-frequented areas: inner city Fresno
Inspirations: Jesus
Motto: “Ask not what your neighbor can do for you, but what you can do for your neighbor.”
Other involvements: North Pointe Church
Unexpected pleasure: smooth jazz music



Nuclear Power Continued from page 1

for the possibility of a drought and irrigation restric-tions next year” read a headline from November, 2007. Or as the Bee reported earlier in the year: “The future of water supplies in California can be described in one simple phrase: increasing scarcity. As population grows and demand increases, climate change is almost certain to reduce supplies. That will dramatically alter the land-scape, in more ways than one. That’s one of the conclu-sions that has emerged from the first International Wa-ter Technology Conference, being held through today at California State University, Fresno.” (April4, 2007).

**** While Mr. Hutson’s plan calls for the re-use of waste-water from the city’s treatment facility to cool the pro-posed reactor, it is evident from these stories that the reclaimed water might be needed more desperately for agricultural and human uses than for energy. Particu-larly since energy from both wind and sun—neither re-liant on water—can be found readily in Fresno County.

**** Fresno does not have earthquakes.” Perhaps not the actual city of Fresno, but just forty miles to the south-west, the 1983 earthquake of 6.7 magnitude caused \$31 million in damage in Coalinga, and was felt in Fresno. Seismology is an evolving science. In the months since a major earthquake rocked the coast of Japan (July, 2007) shutting the largest nuclear generator in that country *indefinitely*, evidence has emerged that the fault thought to be the source of the quake was actually larger than originally anticipated. More alarming, the utility knew this was a possibility years earlier, but decided that it wouldn’t affect the power station and did not pursue a further review. It is interesting to note that, as part of the testing Mr. Hutson is going to be conducting at the proposed site, he has included seismic studies, though as he told the legislators that should be a moot point, since “Fresno doesn’t have earthquakes.”

**** “The Fresno City Council has approved this project and supports it.” This is a bit of an overstatement. All the Fresno City Council has approved is allowing Mr. Hutson’s company, Fresno Nuclear LLC, to have an ex-

clusive contract to test the wastewater at the treatment plant for its suitability to cool a potential reactor. And that was a 4-2 vote, not a unanimous endorsement. In addition, on the record, Councilwoman Sterling (in whose district the reactor would be located) said that she had received only statements of opposition from her constituents. Mr. Perea, the other “no” vote, has also publicly stated his preference for solar and renewable energy, and opposes the reactor plans.

**** Finally, to the issues of jobs: Mr. Hutson is willing to assume that offering jobs at a nuclear reactor to those who have been engaged in spousal abuse and domestic violence will somehow curb their tendencies or reform their behavior. This is not to belittle the urgency of solv-ing underemployment and its catastrophic social con-sequences. But is a nuclear power plant the only way to address this? South of Fresno, in Mojave, PG&E is build-ing a solar park capable of delivering 553 megawatts — enough to provide all of Fresno’s power—and plans to have it opera-tional by 2011 (Mr. Hutson’s sched-ule calls for Fresno Nuclear to still be “testing the waters” at that date). And in nearby San Luis Obispo County, Ausra, Inc, a Palo Alto based company is partnering with PG&E on a 177 megawatt solar facility that will create 400 construction jobs with a \$170 million payroll. When opera-tional in 2010, the full time staff will be 75 people with an annual payroll of \$4-5 million (San Luis Obispo Tri-bune, December 9, 2007). Why isn’t Fresno looking to attract similar jobs, or become a manufacturing center for the solar panels or windmill turbines that will be needed in the coming re-newable energy boom?

There is no doubt that Climate Change presents a great threat; The people of Fresno deserve a future where inno-vation and opportunity meets neces-

sity, not the bleak, unflattering portrait painted by Mr. Hutson, a grimness that would make the chamber of commerce cringe. If anything, it is not nuclear power, with its still unanswered questions about high level ra-dioactive waste, security and high costs that should be lighting Fresno’s future, but the lure of high-tech alter-native energy sources that could make the southern San Joaquin Valley the next Silicon Valley. Residents of Fresno are invited to join the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibil-ity as we encourage our representatives, businesses and citizens to usher in the transition from the failed nuclear experiment of the 20th Century to a brighter vision for the future.

###

David Weisman is the outreach coordinator for the Alli-ance for Nuclear Responsibility (www.a4nr.org)



Once Upon a Time

by Cindy Sheehan

Once upon a time in a land called California, there was born a beautiful baby named Casey.

Casey's mom and dad knew from the minute he was born that he was a very special baby. He had dark hazel eyes that seemed to penetrate into the hearts of people who met his intense gaze. He was a cheerful baby that grew into a cheerful, yet shy boy.

Casey loved baseball, video games and playing make believe games with his younger siblings. He was a loving and fun big brother to his sisters and brother. Casey grew close with each sibling in different ways. His bright and mature sister, Carly, was his confidant and closest mischievous maker. With his brother, Andy, Casey would wrestle and play endless video games, huddled closely on the floor in front of the TV set. Casey would carry his youngest sister, Janey (the baby) to bed each night and tell her a bedtime story, kiss her goodnight and make sure there were no monsters in her closet.

Casey also loved his faith and was devoted to the Catholic Church. The young boy Casey became an Altar Server when he was eight and continued that ministry until he graduated from high school. Casey never missed mass, and many around him were sure he would someday be a priest.

Although quiet and thoughtful, Casey had a very good sense of humor—long funny stories were not his forte, but he was adept at one-line zingers that would often surprise and delight his mom.

One day in the land of California, an emissary from the Kingdom's Army knocked on Casey's door and beguiled him (through a spell of broken promises of riches, adventure and learning,) to join the Army of the Kingdom. One very terrible day, a few years later, the evil Ruler of the Kingdom, George III, sent Casey off to a wicked war and Casey was killed trying to save the lives of fellow members of the Army of the Kingdom.

Casey did not live happily every after.

Casey's mom and dad and brother and sisters and many other relatives and friends miss him so much and long for his "happily ever afters."

Once upon the same time in the land of California, there was a Ruler in the Caste of the Democrats named Nancy Pelosi. She told Casey's mom to her face that she was very sorry for Casey dying and that she was doing everything she could to stop other Casey's from meeting

the same fate. Years later, Casey's mom found out that this Pelosi wench knew all along what the evil Ruler George III was up to when he threw innocent people into torture chambers. The Pelosi wench knew that torture would lead to the deaths of many Casey's, but she did not use her power to stop this. Casey's mom finally understood why the Pelosi wench did not use her legal force to stop the evil Ruler George III or his war: she was and is complicit in the crimes of the Kingdom.

This sad tale is told because the Rulers of the Kingdom, in both Castes, misused Casey and thousands of others as pawns in their foul game of global domination.

If the "peasants" in the Kingdom of George and Nancy do not wake up and rise up to stop the oppression and murder by the evil rulers, no one (except the evil Rulers and their consorts) will live happily ever after.

Cindy Sheehan is the mother of Spc. Casey Austin Sheehan who was KIA in Iraq on 04/04/04. She is a co-founder and President of Gold Star Families for Peace and the author of two books: Not One More Mother's Child and Dear President Bush.



The photo above is from Cindy Sheehan's visit to Fresno in October 2006. Here she is with Sue Kern, a member of the KFCF 88.1 FM board of directors. Sheehan is currently running for Congress against Nancy Pelosi. Find out more at <http://www.cindyforcongress.org/> Photo by Howard Watkins.

Fresno County's New Dairy Ordinance Stinks!

By Mary Savala

Despite overwhelming public support for strict regulations controlling air pollution emissions from new mega dairies, the majority of the Board of supervisors voted October 23, 2007 to pass a weak regulating ordinance for siting these new dairies and permitting large expansions of existing dairies in Fresno County.

Public concerns expressed at two public meetings and in large numbers of written comments and letters to staff, and phone calls, e-mails and letters to Board members supported meaningful restrictions on air pollution emissions, protection of ground water resources, meaningful buffers between dairies, and between dairies and sensitive areas such as schools, residences, parks and open space.

Supervisors Judy Case, Phil Larson, and Bob Waterston voted to approve an ordinance with no

air quality regulation, reduced buffers, and minimal protection for ground water from dairy sewage lagoons. The Board approved a negative declaration for environmental review, in essence saying that thousands more cattle in Fresno County had no significant environmental impact and an environmental impact report (EIR) was not necessary. The Board discussed the probability of a law suit against the County on the basis of no EIR for the project, but the majority dismissed that probability as incidental to the matter.

In fact, a law suit was filed on November 15, 2007 in the Fresno County Superior Court by Medical Advocates for Healthy Air represented by attorney Patience Milrod and a rural west Fresno County resident represented by California Rural Legal Assistance. A mandatory settlement conference is required 90 days from filing to see if the parties can come to an agreement out of court. Possibilities might be that the County agrees to the preparation of an EIR without further ado, or the County might agree to amendments to the ordinance mitigating the environmental impacts, making an EIR unnecessary, or the parties might be unable to come to agreement, and the matter will go to a judicial decision.

In the meantime, Supervisors Susan Anderson and Henry Perea have not given up and are working to ascertain if the Board would be willing to revisit the ordinance and consider amendments addressing air pollution emissions, ground water protections, and buffers.

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Mary Savala has been a member and a volunteer with the League of Women Voters for 40 years, and represents the League as executive committee chairperson for the Fresno Healthy Dairy Commission.



Peace of Mind

By Veena Kapoor

Peace of mind has become so precious and rare in our lives today. It seems that the stressors of life have multiplied and our inner ability to cope with them has been depleted. We do desire peace, we talk about it and we may even engage ourselves in promoting peace. However, is the mind calm and free from disturbing thoughts? Do our words and actions reflect the peace we desire? It is said: as we think, so shall we become.

What is true peace and how can we acquire it? We know that the peacelessness in our minds is result of constant thinking about past events or conflicts and worries about the future. We miss out on living in the present moment and nourishing our inner being with peace. When the mind continues to produce negative or wasteful thoughts, we experience loss of energy and feelings of being weak and drained. A peaceful mind generates positive, uplifting and peace-loving thoughts that bring zest to life. Thoughts arise in our mind, and they are like seeds that can take root and create an orchard in no time! Thoughts have energy that we know as positive or negative vibes (vibrations). Our state of mind has a lot to do with our thoughts, therefore the saying: the mind can be your best friend or your worst enemy.

Meditation is the method to learn to focus on the mind in order to clear and clean the mind of waste, to develop concentration and to be in charge of our own lives. The word meditation comes from the Latin word *meditari*, which means to think, reflect or ponder. The Hindi word *yoga* means to link with the desired goal. Our goal is peace of mind. Through practice of meditation we begin to understand and reflect on our true self. We realize the power of our mind and the potentials for peace and love that lie latent within us. We learn to become introspective and to look at our own thoughts and feelings and how they influence us. Meditation enables us to then reframe our thinking to restore calmness of mind and positivity in life. At a deeper level of awareness, we are able to see how our attitudes are formed, the likes and dislikes that cause us distress. Thoughts, feelings and attitudes are closely related and are our own creation, and they influence our behavior. It is up to us to take charge of them and save ourselves from suffering and self-deception.

The question is, what are we doing for the well-being of our mind? What nourishing thoughts can we feed into it every day? The understanding we need to develop is that we are spiritual beings, souls living in a physical body. As souls we are eternal and immortal. Our original home is a place of complete peace and silence. Reflect on this: I, the soul, was embedded in peace until my journey on earth began. My true nature is peace and my original home is a place of peace. While playing my part on this earth I became disconnected from this peace. Now through the practice of meditation I can rediscover my true innate quality of peace, love and happiness. Once I recognize and embrace that peace, no one can take it away from me. Now peace becomes my strength and keeps me stable in various situations. I can radiate this peace through my thoughts, words and actions and contribute toward peace in the world. Om Shanti.

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Homelessness Policy in Fresno - A Kinder and Gentler Plan?

By Mike Rhodes

A new policy, one that will treat homeless people with more dignity and respect, is being considered by elected officials from the City and County of Fresno. These changes, if they are approved, are expected to include converting unused buildings in the downtown area into decent and affordable housing for the homeless. This new policy would be a significant and strategic shift from previous policies that included bulldozing homeless encampments, passing quality of life ordinances, and forcing people into unheated tool sheds. Advocates of this new policy say that providing affordable and decent housing to the homeless is a part of a national trend that is making the social service/shelter model (like the Rescue Mission and Poverello House) obsolete.



Philip Mangano is the executive director of the Bush administration's Interagency Council on Homelessness. He was the principle speaker at the December 7 meeting.

There are powerful economic interests and harsh realities driving this change of policy. By every objective measurement, the policy that the City of Fresno pursued was a failure. The police and other city agencies were simply not able to eliminate the homeless in Fresno by harassing them, making their lives so miserable that they left town, got off the streets, or died. It was not for a lack of trying that these draconian policies against the homeless failed. In the end, the result has been increased homelessness and a more visible homeless population than when these policies began.

The City of Fresno's policy of bulldozing homeless encampments led to a lawsuit that forced the city to stop taking and immediately destroying homeless peoples property. It got so bad, that in November 2006, the city had to be reminded by a federal judge to uphold the constitution of the United States. A trial in that case is expected to begin next summer. The city has also received nationwide attention critical of its ruthless policies against the homeless.

In the end, it does not appear that the negative publicity, homeless advocates, or the lawsuit created enough pressure to change public policy. While those actions played a role, the tipping point seems to have come as a result of the economic re-development in the downtown area led by Forest City Enterprises Inc. Forest City has exclusive rights to redevelop the southern section of downtown Fresno and plans to carry out this development in three phases. Without a solution to the massive number of homeless people in that section of downtown, Forest City simply would not move ahead with re-development.



Fresno County elected officials agreed to bring stakeholders together to discuss a Ten Year Plan to end homelessness.

It is in this context that City of Fresno elected officials asked the Board of Supervisors to discuss the issue of homelessness. City officials believe that a partnership with the county is a critical component in bringing in outside funding to address this issue. A rare meeting between city and county officials finally took place on December 7, 2007. This meeting included the mayor of Fresno, all Fresno City Council members, all but one member of the Board of Supervisors, and the executive director of the Bush administration's Interagency Council on Homelessness, Philip Mangano.

Mangano presented the Housing First model that seeks to provide decent and affordable housing to the homeless. He said that providing housing for the homeless is less expensive than the current "shelter model" used in cities like Fresno and it has better success at reducing homelessness. Mangano cited a study in San Diego where "after they had expended three million dollars on 15 people at the end of 18 months those same 15 people were in the same condition and situation that they were at the beginning of the 18 months. They were on the same streets, the same street corners, same doorways and more importantly ready to randomly ricochet through those very expensive systems once again." Mangano said that the City of San Diego could have provided these homeless people with luxury condos on beachfront property and spent less money.

The reason, according to Mangano, that it is so expensive to maintain the current system is that the city and county has to pay for emergency medical services, police, sanitation, food, shelter, and other services for homeless people. He said that "by providing them with permanent supportive housing you can actually achieve cost savings." The cost/benefit analysis was clearly a major selling point for the Housing First program and Mangano returned to that theme time and again.

"In the cost studies that have been done around the country, the range of chronically homeless people going

"The long moral arc of history, of the American experience bends toward justice."
Dr. Martin Luther King

through those expensive health and law enforcement systems ranges from \$35,000 - \$150,000 per year per person. The cost of providing housing, a room, or an efficiency apartment with support services is between \$13,000 - \$25,000. So, for public policy makers, the choice is an obvious one. We can pay a lot to have people continue to be homeless and randomly ricocheting through expensive systems or we can pay much less to actually solve the problem by providing permanent and supportive housing," Mangano said.

In a warning to local elected officials who might have missed the theme of his talk, Mangano quoted Albert Einstein as saying "the very definition of insanity was doing the same thing over and over and over again expecting a different result." Mangano said that quote by Einstein "characterizes what we did with homelessness for twenty years. Now we are choosing in this country a Ten Year Plan to do things in a completely different way and to frame the effort in a business frame."

Mangano spoke about the success of the national Ten Year Plans to end homelessness. He said "Portland Oregon has had a 70% decrease in chronic homelessness in the three years they have been implementing their 10 year plan." Portland was on the mind of City Council member Larry Westerlund earlier in the week when he talked to me about the city's new direction in its homeless policy. Westerlund spoke highly of Portland's Central City Concern project that has revitalized downtown with housing for the homeless and social services



Al Williams is a homeless man who lives in the Roeding Park area. Al told me he is not sure if he wants to wait ten years to implement a plan to end homelessness. Al says he would like a job that pays a living wage NOW. All photos by Mike Rhodes

to address their many needs. He said he would like to see Fresno do something similar.

As described at the December 7 meeting, Housing First is essentially a plan to get chronically homeless people off the streets and into decent housing. After their housing situation is stabilized they are provided with the opportunity to address the issues that led to their homelessness in the first place. That could mean getting job training, mental health services, or help in addressing drug or alcohol addiction. Housing First is an integrated program that first provides a homeless person with a decent place to live and then helps them improve the quality of their life by offering social services.

Mangano, in closing quoted Dr. Martin Luther King who said "the long moral arc of history, of the American experience bends toward justice." Mangano said "the Ten Year Plan we will be creating here in Fresno is your entire community reaching out together, your arms uniting up to that arc of his-



There were about 150 people that attended the December 7 public hearing.

tory to bend that arc into the lives of your poorest citizens so that every citizen of your city and county will be known by a single name - neighbor - and treated as one and provided with the opportunity as one and the resources as one not to leave any neighbor outside on the street or languishing in a shelter." That, he said, is the goal of the Ten Year Plan.

At the conclusion of the public hearing both the City Council and Board of Supervisors passed a resolution in support of the development of a Ten Year Plan. Both bodies agreed to direct staff to bring together the stakeholders on the homelessness issue and begin this work in early January 2008.

If successful, the new city/county plan will accomplish multiple goals. Forest City will proceed with the mixed use re-development of downtown, older unused buildings will be converted into housing for the homeless, and people who are homeless will be housed and treated with the dignity and respect they deserve.

For a list of articles and documents about the struggle for civil liberties for homeless people in Fresno, see: <http://www.fresnoalliance.com/home/homelessness.htm>

Housing First - A Closer Look

By Jeremy Alderson

The Indian anti-guru, Krishnamurti, used to tell a story about the day the devil and a friend were out walking and saw a man pick up a piece of truth. “That’s bad for you,” said the friend. “No, it’s not,” answered the devil. I’m going to help him organize it.” So it is with Housing First. On the face of it, there’s nothing wrong with Housing First. But then again, there was nothing wrong with telling kids to just say no to drugs. It was just wrong to use that campaign as a cover for militarily terrorizing Latin America, moving massive amounts of cocaine into America’s inner cities and cutting back on drug treatment. There’s nothing wrong, for that matter, with informing kids that abstinence is the safest sex for physical (though not necessarily mental) health, but it was wrong to use that campaign as the fetishistic happy face of a broad-based assault on reproductive rights. And there’s nothing wrong with a president fulfilling his oath of office to defend the United States, but it’s wrong to claim you’re defending the country when you’re really launching a war of aggression based on lies. So it should come as no surprise that, in the hands of our current crop of would-be tyrants, the Housing First model has become no more virtuous in practice than any of these other fine ideas.

Yes, of course, homeless advocates, myself included, are for housing first, because when you get people into houses they’re not homeless anymore, and isn’t that the point? But before we go signing loyalty oaths to the praise police, let’s just ask one little question. If we are to believe that the Housing First model, as it’s now put forward, represents the heartfelt cry of huddled masses yearning to breathe free and not the guttural chant of corporate voodoo priests, on what date, exactly, will all the homeless people be in houses and why are we supposed to believe it?

Okay, it’s a two-part question, but the answers are never and we’re not. I welcome anyone who can prove me wrong. Seriously. Just show me the evidence and I’ll print a complete retraction. But from everything I’ve seen till now, The Housing First model is today being waved at us by people who — no matter what incidental good they might do — have no plan whatsoever for solving the housing crisis. Their centerpiece initiative, the celebrated “Ten Year Plans” to end

homelessness, are ten year shams, because nobody knows how many homeless people there’ll really be in ten years. Didn’t we just see more than a million people become homeless overnight with Katrina? Aren’t economists saying the sub-prime mortgage melt-down is likely to drive us into a deep recession? Are we supposed to be deaf, dumb and blind?

What these plans obscure is the need for universal health care, a massive commitment to public housing on the part of the federal government, and a universal living wage, just to name three little things. Where “Housing First” fits today is in a system that Paul Boden, head of the Western Regional Advocacy Project, describes as “women and children last.” Yes, the Bush initiatives are helping some homeless people get off the streets. Some lives are definitely being saved. But it’s just part of a snow job. The homeless people being helped are the ones who are literally bad for business, because their unsightly carcasses (again, sometimes literally) can cost the



Jeremy Alderson is the director of the Homelessness Marathon, which was broadcast from Fresno last February. With Jeremy are two of the plaintiffs in the lawsuit against the City of Fresno (to stop them from taking and immediately destroying homeless peoples property), Joanna Garcia and the late Pamela Kincaid. Pam died last summer under extremely suspicious circumstances.

tourist and retail sectors. Meanwhile, programs that treat crack addicted pregnant women — programs that probably save money, because of how effectively they can eliminate platinum-plated neonatal intensive care — are seeing cutbacks. This is no coincidence. Did anyone ever hear of low birth-weight babies driving shoppers away?

So let’s talk about Fresno, but anyone reading these words can plug in the name of any other town in the United States. On what day will proposed Housing First programs end homelessness in Fresno and why are we supposed to believe it? Are they claiming that they’ll build enough housing units for everybody who needs one, and if so, on what basis do they make that claim?

I believe that no one on the scene today can satisfactorily answers these questions, because the people in power aren’t implementing real solutions, and the people who would implement real solutions aren’t in power. So I say let’s save our cheering for the day when all of our brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers, and sons and daughters are housed.



Elizabeth Kucinich (left), the wife of presidential candidate Dennis Kucinich, was in Fresno last month. While here she visited the homeless at Roeding Park, attended the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom Holiday Crafts Faire, and held a fund raising event at the home of Jean Hays. Sherri Williams (center) died shortly after this photo was taken. A couple of months ago Sherri was taken to Community Hospital where they refused to provide her with needed medical care. She was given a voucher for a taxi ride back to a dirt field where she lived. Some people call that patient dumping. Without treatment, Sherri again became sick, was re-admitted to Community Hospital, and died on December 20. She will be missed. Photo by Alvin Valeriano.

Santa Clara Street

Words: Paul Jackson

Based on words and music by U. Utah Phillips (Larimer Street)

Your bulldozer rolling through our shanty town,
The dump truck came here and swallowed it down.
You threw out our tents and our family lore
That did not meet up with your sense of décor.

Chorus

And where will we live? And where is our station?
You threw out our stuff for Revitalization.
Revitalize us? City council says no, friends;
They’re running the bums out of Fresno.

You blame us for people not coming downtown
Instead of the parking they pay with a frown.
You push a new law that we should not pan-handle
Instead of pursuing the real thief or vandal.

Away from the service on which we depend,
And you built a big stadium no one attends.
Our park is a precious and free open space,
But for rich folks you’ll build a new zoo in its place.

Now we’re finding out just what cities are for:
Keeping money in rich hands away from the poor.
We don’t want to fight, but they sure picked a bone.
We wish that they had simply left us alone.

Larimer Street

Words and music: U. Utah Phillips

Your bulldozers rolling through my part of town,
The iron ball swings and knocks it all down.
You knocked down my flophouse, you knocked down my bars,
And you blacktopped it over to park all your cars.

Chorus

And where will I go? And where can I stay?
You knocked down the skid row and hauled it away.
I’ll flag a fast rattler and ride it on down, friends,
They’re running the bums out of town.

Old Maxie the tailor is closing his doors.
There ain’t nothing left in the second-hand stores;
You knocked down my pawn shop and the big harbour light,
And the old Chinese café that was open all night.

You ran out the hookers who worked on the street,
And you built a big hall where the playboys can meet;
My bookie joint closed when your cops pulled a raid,
But you built a new hall for the stock-market trade.

Now I’m finding out there’s just one kind of war;
It’s one going on ‘tween the rich and the poor.
I don’t know a lot about what you’d call class,
But the upper and middle can all kiss my ass.

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Contact:

Larry Mullen 559 227-0293

www.fresnogreens.org

The kNOw Youth

By Mai Der Vang

Get ready Fresno citizens, a group of young people are on the rise! Since October 2006, over 15 youth, mostly from southwest Fresno, have been meeting, dialoguing, and participating in after school writing workshops. They are learning how to use the power of writing and media to get their voices heard. They are sharing innovative ideas and ways to address some of the city’s most pressing issues. And they are eager to participate in civic discussions while inspiring fellow peers to action.

They are The kNOw.

In May 2007, the first issue of The kNOw magazine was released to the Fresno community. The first issue highlighted stories of personal struggles that young people were facing, but also included perspectives on youth music and fashion. Topics ranged from gang violence, to punk fashion, to a discussion on body image.

This past December, the youth proudly released a second issue, focused on community-wide concerns, stereotypes, education, hip hop, and more! Included here are two articles from the second issue.

The kNOw is coordinated by Silicon Valley De-Bug, both of which are projects of Pacific News Service/New America Media. For more information on how to obtain copies of The kNOw, contact mvang@newamericamedia.org.

Dear Mr. Trump, Do the Right Thing

By Jesse Andrews

New America Media Editorial Note: Donald Trump’s recent offer to buy the bankrupt Running Horse Golf Course in Southwest Fresno, Calif., has been trumpeted by the city’s mayor as “a great day.” It will surely inject much-needed cash into a neighborhood with the highest concentration of poverty among the largest U.S. cities, according to the Brookings Institution. In 2005 its poverty ranked higher than New Orleans after the Katrina hurricane. But some local residents are concerned that big development may push them out of their homes. Jesse Andrews, 16, is a student at Edison High School and writes for “The Know,” a Fresno-based youth magazine.

FRESNO, Calif. – Celebrity billionaire Donald Trump has proposed backing the construction of Running Horse Golf Course in Southwest Fresno, promising the project would bring economic development to this area known for unemployment, crime, and poverty. Many people in the neighborhood fear the jobs and economic benefits of this establishment will not go to them, and they might even lose their homes. I have decided to address the issue and make it known to Mr. Trump how I feel.

Dear Mr. Donald Trump,

Imagine this: Seven-hundred-and-eighty luxurious homes, each fully equipped with beautiful back yard scenery. The astonishing sight of your first tee off on the gorgeous green designed by Jack Nicklaus, next to a luminous lake, as you prepare for the superb PGA Tour coming to Southwest Fresno next year. Oh, it is a dream-come-true, life-couldn’t-get-any-better-than-this kind of thing.

As a 16-year-old 11th grader at Edison High and resident of Southwest Fresno, I like fairy tales, but only the kind that has a happy ending.

Your fairy tale has a lot of “probably” in its ending. As I rode my bike by the proposed site of Running Horse, for example, I did not see that there would be space for 780 homes, unless you are planning to take over more land in order to accomplish your plans.

Then it occurred to me you would have to destroy something to get these homes built. Our homes. Maybe even my home.

The homes where Big Mama made her delicious Jambalaya. The homes where Momma Ray raised the neighborhood children. The homes that were passed down from generation to generation to generation of families so we could go to Papa Smith’s house and be comforted when life was tearing us apart. Our homes.

You mean to tell me that you want to buy our homes? Where will we stay? And if we refuse to go, you will just force us to leave? I don’t think so.

Families have put in too much hard work and sweat to get their homes. You want 780 new high-priced homes. I don’t even want to know how high the price is. Many of the neighborhood’s families are living on low incomes, from paycheck to paycheck. The key word here, if you missed it, is “low.”

The people of this community do not need high-priced homes, but low-priced homes. The Fresno West Coalition for Economic Development’s CEO, Keith Kelly, made this clear when he told the Fresno Bee that the community “wants to make sure that they don’t lose anything either, or lose as little as they possibly can.”

I believe your project should increase economic development in our lower income neighborhood, but not by taking anything away from the citizens of this community.

I live in the community; no one needs to tell me what we need in this community but us.

We need more jobs here in Southwest Fresno, where the unemployment rate is extremely high, which means many people are poor. Fresno County’s current unemployment rate is about 8%, which is much higher than California’s average of 5.2%. Wow! Fresno needs to sit down somewhere with those numbers. Will your project create job opportunities to only have them filled with people from another city, town or state? Southwest Fresno citizens should receive priority for these jobs.

According to the LA Times, you have your “eye on improving a down-and-out area of Southwest Fresno for a mile on all sides of Running Horse.” That’s all good, but we don’t need your eye, we need your heart to understand what we are going through, to feel what we feel.

Fresno Mayor Alan Autry told the LA Times: “The impact of this thing will be just enormous” – enormous enough to have you prosper off the profits and revenue that will be generated, or enormous enough to see one of the best communities in Fresno wither and die away?

Many people are saying that you are going to do the right thing; these are a few of the “right things” I suggest:

Establish a program that ensures that residents of this community have the opportunity to be employed first.

Have a one-on-one dialogue with the community, so we can understand each other.

Make sure that you mean what you say. If you want to help Southwest Fresno, make sure some of the profit goes to the community.

Find a better solution to accommodate the people of the community rather than removing them from it.

Please take this into consideration. I am simply saying we are willing to stand with you all the way, as long as we stand in unity and communicate about concerns. Will this fairy tale come true? Or will Southwest Fresno citizens be left without the opportunities? It’s up to you.

Originally published on New America Media on August 4, 2007, and later in the Fresno Bee Valley Voices, August 11, 2007

When the Punishment is Worse Than the Crime

By Kavis McGee, 17

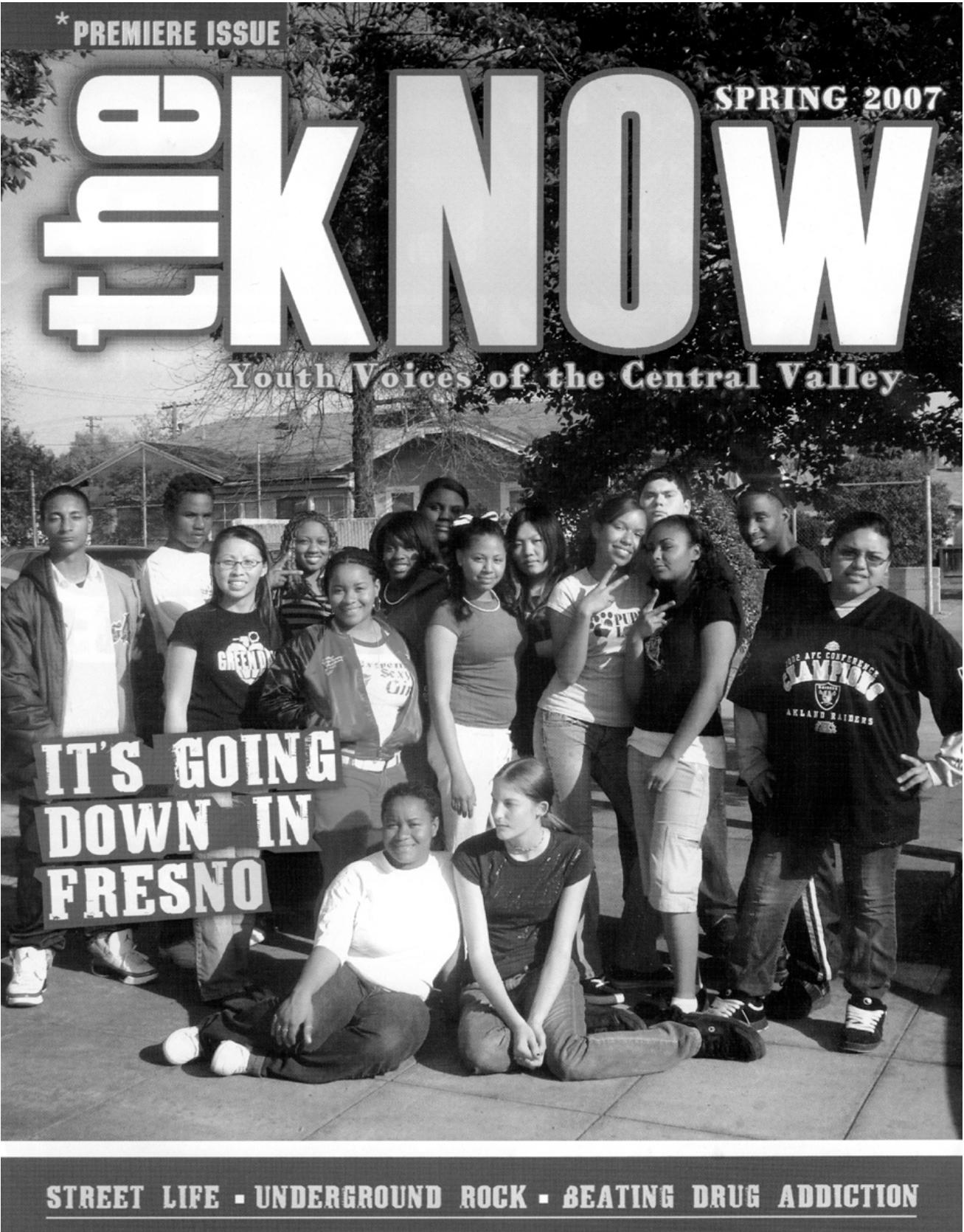
While I was attending Fresno High School, I witnessed a gruesome fight, first hand. Two Asian males were getting jumped by about 5 or 6 Black males. They were getting stomped to the ground while people cheered. I ran up to the fight to see for myself.

Finally, the Campus Assistance (CA) came and pushed the Black students back, giving the Asians time to run. It wasn’t long before the others slipped away from the CA’s grip and chased the Asians around the school. I don’t know even why the fight started.

Gang violence, drama, and fighting have increased in schools during the past three years, and most schools have become stricter, operating almost like prisons.

If you are a graduate of the school, and want to visit your old teachers, before, you could do so at any time of the day, morning, passing period, or at lunch. But now, you can only visit them after school. And now, CAs act almost like guards. They follow and watch you from a distance to make sure you go to class.

One time, my friend and I had to go to the office because we were wearing red shirts. My friend got accused of being “high” and was searched by school administrators, just because his eyes were red, even though he was just tired. I almost got searched too, but I had already left the office.



KNOW

WINTER 07-08

Youth Voice of the Central Valley

issue 02

BEHIND THE FACES OF FRESNO IDENTITY, CULTURE, AND COMMUNITY

INSIDE: The Truth About Emo West Coast Call Out Generational Curses & More

The Community Alliance newspaper thanks The KNOW magazine for allowing us to re-print two of the articles from their Winter 07-08 issue. We wish them success and encourage our readers to pick up a copy of The KNOW and read all of the articles from this great group of young Fresno writers.

Strict rules often deal now with student's attire. Fresno High has banned the usage of more than 25% of red or blue attire, or even just having a red or blue t-shirt under your regular shirt. These colors are often seen as "gang-affiliated".

One of the incidents that sparked the creation of such strict rules was a riot that happened two years ago, supposedly between the Crips and Bulldogs. Everyone was fighting, close to 25-30 people it seemed to me! It started because one group confronted the other, and then suddenly, everyone was throwing fists. It felt like a movie, like the end of The Outsiders, for example, when a brawl takes place between the Greasers and the Socs (two rival gangs).

It's even starting to get strict at Cesar Chavez Adult School (night school). They told me I couldn't wear my dog tag because it was too thick, saying it could be used as a weapon. If that is the case, they might as well ban all jewelry, because they can all be used as weapons. I felt like I was judged, as if they thought I was going to use it as a weapon. I also felt put down, but I listened to the principal anyway since I didn't want to get kicked out.

David E. Roy, Ph.D.

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Also, three years ago there was a very big riot at Edison involving the Asians and Blacks also. But Edison isn't as strict as other schools. Maybe it is because a lot of smart and talented kids go there, because it is, in fact, one of the best schools in the Valley.

Despite the various stereotypes, Edison doesn't have much drama. And if there is drama, it's mostly females. Most of them fight over gossip, and what people say about them. There are some gangs at Edison, but they don't fight each other because they don't have beef with each other. In other words, these gangs are cool with each other.

I know if riots were to happen at any of the Clovis schools, student's freedom would be stripped.

I know some people who attend Clovis schools, and they tell me the dress code is very strict, for example, anything can be considered a distraction, nose piercings, mohawks, or long hair on guys.

When I witness a fight, I feel excited but cautious. I don't want to get hit, but I am not afraid of going to see what is going on.

Surprisingly, I think fights do not affect school spirit because even though it might bring down the school's reputation, students still rep their schools at events. I don't think schools ever really lose their spirit no matter how many fights occur, the schools will still have their mascots, rallies, dances, and sports.

Fights happen, and it's hard to avoid them. But I believe fights can be prevented if students better knew that the consequences for their actions can be dire. For example, suspension, expulsion, maybe even jail time—and nobody wants that.



Do it for the Birds

By Brandon Hill

Fresno Audubon Society is a local, volunteer based conservation organization. Founded in 1966, Fresno Audubon's mission is to promote the enjoyment, understanding and preservation of birds and other wildlife in Fresno and Madera Counties through birding, education, science, advocacy and fellowship.

Currently, Fresno Audubon would like to more strongly pursue its mission and become a force in the local environmental movement, but it needs more volunteers to do so. Among our most dire needs is a Program Chair: the program chair is responsible for planning the chapter program schedule for the year and organizing the programs at each scheduled membership meeting. The program chair may want to conduct program planning at an open board meeting, drawing on the ideas of as many people as possible. S/he must be able to organize well in advance of each meeting, making sure speakers and all other logistics are taken care of.

The duties of the Program Chair include:

- Organizing the feature program for each membership meeting (9 meetings yearly).
- Developing a schedule of future programs, preferably for the entire year.
- Working with the publicity chair to promote programs in the community and in the press.

In addition to the Program Chair position, many other opportunities for involvement exist within Fresno Audubon. Those interested in environmental education, advocacy, outreach, and other areas are also welcome to contact us. If interested in volunteering for the above position or others please send an email to fresnoaudubon@gmail.com or call 559.978.2369. Also, please feel free to visit our website at www.fresnoaudubon.org for information about our activities.

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Crisis in Pakistan

By Dan Yaseen

On November 3, 2007 President General Musharraf declared emergency, in essence martial law, by suspending the Constitution. Musharraf took power in October 1999 after a coup against the democratically elected Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. The declaration of emergency was a coup against the Supreme Court; Musharraf dismissed all the judges, put them under house arrest, and shut down the private TV channels. This led to protests organized by lawyers and journalists. The police arrested over 7,000 protesters. Musharraf formed a new Supreme Court by hand picking the judges. The first action of the new Supreme Court was to rule the declaration of emergency legal. In response to pressure from the US, the UK and within Pakistan, Musharraf has doffed his uniform, handing over the post of commander-in-chief of the army to another general. He lifted the emergency on December 15 after issuing six amendments to the Constitution and announced January 8, 2008 as the date for the election.

Pakistan is in crisis; Pakistan has been in crisis since its independence on August 14, 1947. Pakistan has been under military rule for 34 years, two of the army generals ruled for eleven years each. While no elected prime minister has ever completed his/her term. Musharraf has been in power for 8 years and he wants to stay for five more years. Pakistan has never been able to establish a stable, democratic government.

Pakistan was created as a nation for Muslims, but not as an Islamic state. Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the founding father of Pakistan was a secularist, who was educated in Great Britain, and practiced law in India and Great Britain. He was a great statesman, a brilliant barrister and an astute negotiator. Unfortunately for Pakistan he became ill just few months after the independence and died in September 1948.

Pakistan has never recovered from that tragedy. Over the next 10 years Pakistan had 7 prime ministers. Then in October 1958 after a coup Army took control and civilian rule did not return until 1973.

Pakistan has been labeled a failed state and the most dangerous nation. While military and civilian rulers are responsible for the state of affairs in Pakistan, the CIA and the US State Department have played a key role in managing the affairs of Pakistan over the last 50 years. Looking at the world map, one can see Pakistan is surrounded by India, Afghanistan, China, Middle East and Russia. The location of Pakistan is the reason the US has used Pakistan to implement its foreign policy in the region.

While US media is characterizing the current crisis as one of Pakistan's making, it has US fingerprints all over it. Musharraf, a US ally since 911, is trying to stay in power. He has been receiving \$150 million a month from the US to deploy Pakistani armed forces for Bush's so called "War on Terror." Benazir Bhutto another US puppet, who has been prime minister twice and was dismissed both times for incompetence and corruption, is trying to become prime minister again. The three major parties Pakistan Muslim League (Q Group) that supports Musharraf, Pakistan Muslim League (N Group) led by Nawaz Sharif and Pakistan Peoples Party led by Benazir Bhutto will be trying to win a majority in the next National Assembly. Pakistani people are already talking about an un-free and an un-fair election. Musharraf would like to control enough seats to be able to choose the next prime minister of Pakistan.

Dan Yaseen is a Fresno Center for Nonviolence Board Member. He is a native of Pakistan whose family still lives there. Dan has lived in the US for 33 years and in Fresno for 18 years. He is an insurance agent specializing in seniors' insurance.
danyaseen@comcast.net

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stir it up

Dan Yaseen will be discussing conditions in Pakistan

Wednesday, January 9th 3 p.m. - KFCF 88.1 FM.

An Irishman Returns!

Vincent Lavery is Back!!

Dates: Feb. 5 to 19, 2008

Events so far: (Times TBA)

Sat. Feb. 9 - North Fork "The Studio" - Vincent speaks about Ireland - 3p.m. - 7 p.m.

Sun: Feb 10 - Community Mennonite Church: reception and Irish readings

TBA: Unitarian Universalist Church - Vincent speaks about Ireland

The FCNV is a Host Organization

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

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

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Postluc @ 6:30

Discussion to follow evening showing

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Graphic by Lincoln Cushing



Three photos from the WILPF holiday crafts faire. This is Angela Price, Nora DeWitt and Dr. Sudarshan Kapoor at the Center For Non-Violence table.

2007 has been an exciting and productive year for the Fresno Branch of WILPF. It has not been without controversy. Our National Executive Director resigned in late September, and the National office staff was laid off. We do, however, move forward locally, due to our amazing members and their teamwork.

A look back at what the branch has accomplished since it began the WILPF year in September speaks volumes about "walking our talk" as we work for peace and an end to all forms of violence in the world. Here are some highlights:

September

Throughout September WILPF as a part of a coalition with Peace Fresno and MoveOn was present each Tuesday during the noon hour in front of Rep. Costa's office to remind passers by that he had voted in favor of more funding of the Iraq occupation, and to urge him to change his vote when the issue came up again. The Raging Grannies provided spirited songs both outside the building and in the office of Rep. Costa. WILPF continued its presence each Tuesday, with Peace Fresno standing each Wednesday and MoveOn lending its presence each Thursday. On the second day of our presence, Costa issued a statement from the nation's capital indicating that he might think twice about continued funding of the Iraq occupation!

Also in September WILPF presented the 2007 Jane Addams Peace Award books to the Gillis Branch of the Fresno County Public Library.

October

At CSUF's Take Back the Night event in October our Clothesline Project was displayed with much success. New t-shirt art was added to the collection, thanks to the women of the Holy Cross Center for Women. This project was ably facilitated by Alvora Trujillo and intern Sylvia Garcia.

WILPF was invited to table at the Harvest Festival at the Inter-Mountain Nursery in Prather. It was specifically requested that we provide counter-recruitment information, and a display of the Clothesline Project.

At our October monthly meeting, the branch hosted Iranian, Mina Abdollahian, who spoke about her life in Tehran before coming to the U.S.

November

At our November branch meeting we voted on three issues on which to focus this year: Social Justice, Environment, and Ending the occupation of Iraq with no invasion of other Countries.

On the day after Thanksgiving our branch handed out flyers outside Toys R Us and Wal Mart. The theme, a revival of an action of some years ago, was "Don't Put WW III Under Your Christmas Tree" Flyers suggested ideas for buying peaceful toys. The action was a great

was the presentation of gifts of peace cookies to military recruiters at their offices on West Shaw Avenue. A huge origami peace crane headed the procession to the Recruitment Office from the parking lot, and the Raging Grannies returned to the office triumphantly, after a two year absence, to serenade recruiters and shoppers.

We look forward to 2008, hoping that our branch of wonderful WILPFers will continue to inspire, inform, and work toward accomplishment of peace, both locally, nationally and internationally. Where there's a WILPF, there's a way!

WILPF Legislative Committee Branch Report:

The WILPF Legislative Committee is off the ground! The main objective or this group is to increase the visibility of WILPF. Appointments to visit the Fresno offices of our legislators are the first order of business. Our elected officials need to know WILPF exists. Secondly, the members of the group volunteered to compose letters which WILPF members could send to their legislators. The letters will be about issues important to WILPF. These letters will be sent via the list serve. Members are to copy and address the letter to their legislator. Periodically WILPF members will visit legislators to inquire about issues over which they have jurisdiction. An updated list of our legislators is on the back pages of the new WILPF Directory. Remember that our officials will only accept communication from their constituents. If you don't remember your district or assembly number, note it somewhere or circle the contact numbers in the directory.

Submitted by the WILPF Legislative Committee: Lydia Flores, Polly Victor, Joyce Huggins, Ellie Bluestein, and Andie Grajales.



Margaret Hudson (second from the left) and friends at her studio table.

success despite the fact that we were asked to leave the parking lot of Toys R Us after a full morning of flyering, and Wal Mart after about 2 hours of flyering in their parking lot. Information was given to over 1000 people.

The Legislative Committee presented, in person, a letter to Sen. Feinstein's local office, advising her to vote "no" on the approval of Judge Makasey to be Attorney General.

December

The annual Peace Holiday Craft Faire was a huge success, as usual. Countless WILPFers worked tirelessly from October until the big day on Dec. 1 and the result was an event filled with the spirit of peace (one could feel it in the air), good food, good music, good local merchandise (made with TLC), good opportunities to write to congressmen and sign meaningful petitions, and good times spent with old and new friends. We tried to compile a list of workers to thank but it was too long. A big hug to all of you. Key WILPFers in this endeavor were Ingrid Carmean, Joan Poss, and Ellie Bluestein, our resident Wise Women!

On Dec. 19 another collaborative effort with Peace Fresno, Peace Edison, and other peace organizations



Matt Fields, Juanita Temple, and Betsy Temple sold wonderful items handcrafted in Guatemala.

Our branch bids a fond farewell to Sylvia Garcia, who served as our CSUF Intern for the Fall semester. Sylvia was our representative at many important events locally and we will miss her. Good luck, Sylvia as you finish your MSW course work and go on to new and exciting ventures.

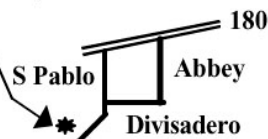
The new WILPF Directories are now available. Contact Laura Fultz or Nora DeWitt if you need to get one. A big Thank You to Laura for putting the directory together!

Next WILPF meeting - Monday, Jan. 28, 7:00 pm at the Fresno Center for Non-Violence.

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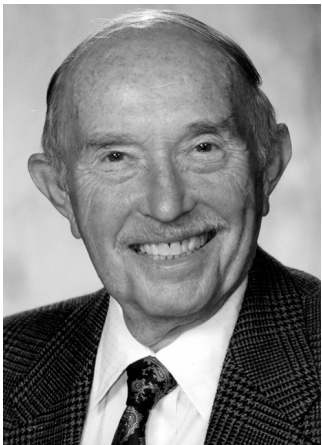
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OPINION & ANALYSIS FROM THE GRASSROOTS

From The Greenhouse

by Franz Weinschenk



You gotta screw up pretty badly before the Bee gives you their Saturday edition “Thumbs Down” award. But that’s exactly what Fresno County Supervisors Phil Larson, Judy Case, and Bob Waterston got — and deserved! — for passing extremely permissive regulations for Fresno County dairies, regulations which seriously endanger the health of those county residents who live

anywhere near a dairy. We’re not talking about a couple of mom-and-pop family farms here, but 125 large dairies that as of today are actually milking 109,000 cows right here in Fresno County while housing an equal number of support stock, such as dry cows, heifers, and calves — all in all, 213,000 dairy-related critters.

Most of us are intrigued by those fairy-tale, gentle, happy cows with the big brown eyes blissfully roaming the green pastures of our TV screens. Sorry, but the reality is quite different. As you drive by, you often see them standing there on a mountain of their own manure, staring into space and just waiting to be machine-sucked dry one more time.

Besides the milk, one dairy cow produces between 100 and 120 pounds of manure daily. Multiplied by the hundreds of thousands of animals that live here, Fresno County all by itself produces a staggering amount of manure annually — waste which, if not handled properly, can become quite a health hazard. First of all, manure naturally releases methane gas, which, alongside carbon dioxide, is one of the major contributors to global warming. On top of that, as the stuff dries its dust particles are carried just about everywhere, contributing mightily to our bad air. And finally, whenever it rains, the run-off from all that stuff often pollutes nearby surface and groundwater with coliform (fecal) bacteria and nitrogen. The California Air Resources Board predicts that by the year 2020 dairies will become the largest source of smog-forming emissions in the county even as emissions from passenger cars are actually expected to decline.

Realizing how inadequate the regulations passed by the majority of their colleagues were, Supervisors Susan Anderson and Henry J. Perea opposed passage. They voted to look out for people’s health and for clean air and water but were, once again, outvoted by the Farm Bureau. The situation is so serious that a group called Medical Advocates for Healthy Air, supported by other activists, has filed a lawsuit to stop implementation of the regulations until a proper environmental assessment has been done.

*

You know, if they were really interested, there is a way dairies could turn around all the negative effects of the waste they produce, and even make some money in the process. How? By extracting methane from those mountains of manure — methane that in turn can generate electricity and consequently NOT contribute to global warming.

The process is called “anaerobic digestion.” You start out with a contained area, such as a covered tank or lagoon, where water and manure are mixed. Depending on the temperature (95 degrees Fahrenheit is thought to be most favorable), the anaerobic bacteria in the manure “digests” the mixture and in about 10 to 15 days you can start piping off methane. What remains is good fertilizer. If you want a steady supply of gas, simply add more manure and water daily. Methane gas is not practical to use in moving vehicles, but it is suitable for fueling stationary engines and for heating water in boilers to make the steam used in electricity-generating turbines. That’s exactly what Albert Straus does on his Marin County dairy ranch. With the methane he extracts from the manure of only 270 dairy cows, Straus is able to power all the operations of his dairy farm and creamery and even charge the batteries of his electric car. Currently there are only 18 manure-to-electricity operations in California, very few of them in the Valley.

PG&E agrees that the process is practical and profitable. That’s why they just contracted to buy a considerable amount of methane gas from a company called Microgy, which is in the process of constructing four new methane production plants on large dairy farms in California.

So, to safeguard the public’s health, to generate a steady stream of electricity, and to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, Fresno County Supervisors should encourage PG&E to commit to producing even more electricity from the abundant cow power available right here in our county, and they should hold the dairies to strict health and safety standards while encouraging them to convert those massive mountains of manure into renewable energy. After all, the dairies stand to make big bucks in the process.

Not Enough Polish

By Ruth Gadebusch



These days, there is much talk about Bush thinking of his legacy and attempting to polish it. Well, it seems to me that it is too little, too late. There is not enough polish on the planet to take the tarnish off his actions of the last seven years.

Once again, he has vetoed a bill that would bring health care to millions more children. For seven years he went with no vetoes; but now, with the congressional majority having shifted, he has to deal with matters that just might make living better for ordinary folks. Calling himself a “uniter,” he has been anything but. He appears to have little appreciation for any but his rich friends.

Thus far any significant tax relief has been for the least needy. Bills, ostensibly designed to help the needy, such as the prescription medicine legislation, are so contrived as to be more like welfare for the pharmaceutical companies and other big business. His very first act upon taking office was to stop all government grants for contraceptive purposes to any organization that also had the word “abortion” in its vocabulary. This latter was probably the bell wether of what was to come.

His appointment of toadies has been apparent time after time when he made selections more for the purpose of dismantling an agency, rather than facilitating its work. If these appointments did not require senate approval, all the better; though it seems he has little to worry about with the Republican majority in Congress for his first six years and, most recently, with two leading Democrats joining in support of his nominee to head the Justice Department. Their supposed reasoning was the judge was the best whom Bush was likely to nominate and the department needed leadership. Even children know how to play that game to get their way. Why not leave it open?

All of this pales in the rape of the constitution which he has been able to perpetrate. His appointment of judges, whose ages assure power for years to come, casts a long shadow. They almost certainly will curtail the rights of women and minorities. In fact, the Ledbetter ruling regarding the timing of claims of unequal pay notice — most likely affecting women more than others — is already with us.

Then there are all those matters stemming from his reaction to the dastardly deeds of September 11, 2001. Though the perpetrators of that destruction were largely from the nation run by Bush family friends of oil connection, he was able to begin a seemingly unending war in another nation. He then parlayed the needs of conducting a war as giving the president unlimited power — never mind that great document known as the U.S. Constitution. With claims of the secrecy needs of the executive branch in conducting a war, none of us knows when our phone conversations may have been monitored, or our travel recorded, or our reading matter reported to some agency, or torture done in our name, or attorneys fired for their political party instead of their work performance, or CIA agents outed, and on and on — all things which we thought our nation did not do.

We won’t even speak of the refusal to accept scientific evidence of such things as global warming and air pollution. Although we can hardly ignore the damage to the nation’s reputation around the world. We are no longer the shining light of what’s right with the planet that we once were.

Yes, this legacy is so bad that even his own party’s presidential candidates shy away from it. We should hardly be surprised that things have deteriorated to this point. After all, the administration, due to a botched election in Florida upheld by questionable Supreme Court action, began with over a half million votes in the hole. The Democrats believing that honor required him to be the promised “uniter” simply rolled over. The trouble was that only one party believed in unity. It has been down hill since then.

This legacy will be with us far longer than we care to think about. There is no polishing that can be done. The challenge for the next administration is to overcome it.

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

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A Small Incident with Large Implications

By Sue Beevers

Sometimes it takes a small thing to bring an enormous thing to your attention. My small experience was a ticket I decided to contest. I lost. Because of the manner in which I lost my case, and because I think it represents patterns, I am quite concerned. First, many people I know are being ticketed for either things they didn't do, things they couldn't avoid, or things that are nit-picky—like being cited for not stopping when they did stop, or for making a sloppy stop while a dog was vomiting in the back seat; or for being the *third* green-light person entering the on-ramp; or for speeding while passing or on the way to a hospital. Some of these drivers may have made errors, but they were a danger to no one.

But here is the other pattern. I see reckless and erratic driving. I see cars tailgating, going 80 miles per hour, changing multiple lanes without signaling, cutting in front of cars with only centimeters to spare, and weaving. I see cars pass on the left when you are turning left. I see people cutting *in front of* four lanes of traffic to make a left turn. I see four cars in a line running a red light, even with pedestrians present. I see people being threatened over parking places. Where are the police?

I wonder if they are sitting on rural roads making money for their counties. During my trial, the court was full of police defending several traffic cases each. Someone told me they get time and a half for doing so.

We citizens pay for police time, and we citizens are paying \$300 fines for these tickets. I overheard people begging for payment plans and postponements. They didn't have \$300. I wondered how many of these drivers were reckless, and how many just unlucky.

Thousands of dollars were being collected in fines that day. California counties are in shortfall, I realize. But this was caused by a rogue corporation backed by the power of the federal government. They should be paying the fines.

Something else happened during my trial I hope is *not* part of a pattern. When I went before the judge, the policeman described an incident that never happened, a vehicle that never existed. I literally couldn't believe my ears.

I thought to myself, "If the officer would perjure himself about such a petty thing, then he would lie about anything." (It's possible he just made a mistake, but that is only marginally comforting. Why didn't the judge wonder why these two stories were so different, especially since I had a corroborating witness?)

I respect police. When I was a special education teacher, I knew dedicated, compassionate officers who helped many young people. I have heard of police brutality, but I have seen mob violence too, and I have tended to give police the benefit of the doubt.

But now, because it was such a *small* reason to lie, I have lost my trust. Distrust begins a vicious circle. For example, you mistrust a policeman, you avoid him. He calls on you to stop, you run. He pursues you, you become afraid. You behave erratically, he becomes afraid. Then the one who is most afraid attacks the other. Distrust begets fear begets violence.

The more fear, the more abuse. When I was protesting nuclear plants, a guard was "overzealous" in searching my breasts. She claimed it was due to fear; that women concealed blades in their privates.

To have cooperation between police and citizens, we must have trust. Trust requires truth. But the standard of Truth is set at the *top* of the Justice System, and there is no standard there at all.

We now have a Justice System that condones torture. Why then am I surprised when I am shot in the back by air guns at the airport just because I have a metal hip? Why am I surprised I am not treated fairly in traffic court?

We need to take our government back, locally and nationally. I don't know how, but for me, it might be time to let the small thing, the ticket, go, and face the enor-

mity of our country's moral bankruptcy.

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Sue Beevers is a teacher of special education, dance and Tarot. She can be reached at zenabeever@sbcglobal.net

Cleaning the Air in Paradise

By Alvin Valeriano

Puerto Princessa, Palawan, Philippines, December 17, 2007: One hour by jet travel from the Philippine capital of Manila, 1400 islands surround Palawan province like a necklace of pearls, one of Southeast Asia's best destinations for eco-tourism (a mode of travel that puts a high premium on preserving the natural characteristics of the places visited for vacation). Puerto Princessa (Spanish for Princess of the Port) is the capital city of this island group and is unlike most cities in the Philippines, a country that ranks at the bottom levels of economic development in Southeast Asia. While Manila and other Philippine cities suffer from traffic congestion, air pollution, chronic poverty, very high rates of violent crime, and political gridlock, Puerto Princessa is clean, safe, and its citizens have a very good sense of environmental stewardship and civic participation.

One Sunday morning, while having breakfast at a pension house (a bed and breakfast), I struck up a conversation with the proprietor of the place, which is called Lola Itang's (Grandma Itang's). This gentleman turned out to be the city government's legal counsel, and upon learning that I work as an air quality consultant in the San Joaquin valley, he told me what their city has been doing to combat the growing problem of air pollution. That same day, he took me on a tour of the city and its tourist attractions, culminating with dinner at a seaside restaurant, straddling the shore among mangrove plants and coconut trees, with soft breezes from the China Sea and soothing piano music. Attorney Austria, his cousin Terry, and I had beers, baked calamari, and deep-fried prawns, traded stories about our work experiences, shared concerns about the environment, and commiserated about the political corruption in the country.

The following morning, I was introduced to the city's legal staff, planning staff, and the municipal waste management supervisor. Our conversations centered around alternative energy production, air and waste management, carbon emissions trading, and regulatory ordinances. In the afternoon, I attended a program presentation on how the city is tackling the main source of air pollution, motorcycles with sidecars used as the main mode of passenger transportation. These motorcycles have two-cycle en-

gines, very similar to what we use for powering landscaping equipment, such as leaf blowers, grass edgers, and lawnmowers. In California, these machines have some of the dirtiest emissions responsible for ozone and particulate matter pollution.

The City of Puerto Princessa formed a partnership with the Envirofit Foundation, a project of Colorado State University. They are undertaking the retrofitting of engines, changing the carburetion systems to direct injection. These retrofit devices cuts pollution substantially, while also decreasing gas fuel consumption. Retrofit devices cost \$480 and the city started the program by paying for half of the retrofit cost for approximately 150 units. Motorcycle operators shoulder the other half, and the cost is recovered since the retrofits result in more fuel efficient operation by as much as 40%. To assure that the rest of the fleet numbering around 3,000 will be retrofitted, the city is considering an ordinance to ban the operation of units older than 15 years old. It's a classic carrot and stick approach.

The City of Puerto Princessa has been using other regulatory mechanisms, which would be considered quite extreme by the San Joaquin Valley's business community. Operators are only allowed to haul passengers every other day, cutting motorcycle congestion by half. They have stopped granting operating licenses, freezing the number of these machines at their current number. They issued an amnesty program for illegal operators, threatening violators with outright confiscation of their machines. They are actively looking for more incentive funding assistance from local and foreign donors. At the program presentation, the city's mayor, Edward S. Hagedorn spoke before a crowd of operators that have already retrofitted their engines. Mayor Hagedorn thanked them for their participation and explained his passion for protecting the city's environment, mentioning the need to clean the air, avoid further deforestation, prevent shore water despoliation and vowing to oppose destructive mining operations. This man of politics is an environmentalist through-and-through. Philippine politicians consider the environmentalist label as political suicide. Mayor Hagedorn dares to be different and bold about his actions. The people of Puerto Princessa idolize him and corporations hate the guy to max.

I shook his hands with gusto, as he gave me his calling card. In paradise, I met a man who is truly concerned about preserving Mother Earth for future generations. Don't you wish we have such mayors and cities in our San Joaquin Valley, which is plagued with some of the worst air pollution in the United States?

Note: Alvin Valeriano is currently on work/vacation jaunt in the Philippines, his country of birth.

Alvin Valeriano came up for air (in paradise) long enough to write this article for the Community Alliance.



PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Friday, January 4

4:30 - 6:30 PM

Peace Corner on the first Friday of every month. Come join Peace Fresno as they tell motorists to call Congress to stop war funding and not to authorize an attack on Iran. Corner of Blackstone and Shaw in Fresno. www.peacefresno.org

Friday, January 4

6:30 - 8:30 PM

The Reedley Peace Center presents speaker: Veena Kapoor. Topic: Meditation for Peace of Mind: Managing Stress and Becoming Peaceful.

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

Wednesday, January 9

12 Noon and 7:00 PM (pot-luck at 6:30 PM)

Video Presentation – "The Canary Effect" takes an in-depth look at the effect US policies have had on the indigenous people of America. Using beautifully crafted imagery, it presents a chilling case to what many believe is an ongoing genocide of the American Indian. Featuring interviews with some of the leading scholars and exponents of indigenous struggles, alongside revealing insight from those who live on reservations today. "The Canary Effect" creates a link between the past and present in a unique way never before explored on film. A discussion will follow evening showing. For information call 237-3223 Monday – Friday, 11 AM to 3 PM. This event will be held at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N, Van Ness. FREE

Thursday, January 10

8 AM - 5 PM

San Joaquin Valley Housing Symposium. This one day event will bring together housing professionals from across the valley and state to discuss, network and exchange ideas about land use topics that are vital to the future of California's new frontier.

To Register please visit www.sjvhousing.com, or call, Stephen Sotomayor, Housing and Community Development Project Manager, at 559-621-8511. Registration includes breakfast, a catered lunch, and a networking reception hosted by the Urban Land Institute. Register for the San Joaquin Valley Housing Symposium Today www.sjvhousing.com

Friday, January 11

11:15 - 1:00 PM

Peace Fresno will sponsor a demonstration in front of the new Federal Building at 2500 Tulare Street in downtown Fresno. This demonstration will protest the loss of civil liberties tied to Guantanamo Bay, use of torture, illegal wire-tapping, Patriot Act and the Homegrown Terrorism Prevention Act. Come join us as we tell Fresno that civil liberty is more important than security. For more information contact Scott at president@peacefresno.org or (559) 487-2515 and www.peacefresno.org

Friday, January 11

5 and 8 PM

Fresno Filmworks presents "Outsourced" at the Tower Theatre. Outsourced, in which a Seattle call center manager named Todd (Josh Hamilton) is fired and then dispatched to India as a consultant to train his own replacement, is a wonderful surprise.

The film shows that individuals in every nation are nearly powerless before the global economy, a force that shatters tradition and compels people to think of themselves as self-interested free agents. This pragmatic point of view is articulated by one character, Asha, who rhetorically asks Todd why it's necessary for Indian call-center workers to pose as Americans while selling cheap junk made in China.

In its modest way, "Outsourced" may be unique: a charming culture-clash romance that could be taught in business schools. Tickets can be purchased at the Tower Theatre Box Office, 815 E. Olive Ave., WineStyles in Fig Garden Village, and at the door, for \$10; \$8, for students and seniors. Tickets can also be purchased online through PayPal at www.fresnofilmworks.org. For more information call the FFW info line, 221-0755, or go to www.fresnofilmworks.org

Friday, January 11

6:30 - 8:30 PM

The Reedley Peace Center presents speaker: Victoria Benavides will report on her Study trip to Cuba. Victoria is currently a student at U.C. Berkeley. She has been a Peace Center member since her junior year at Reedley High where she was also president of Student for Peace.

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

Saturday, January 12

3:30-5:00 PM

The Central Valley Progressive PAC will meet at the Fresno Center for Non-Violence (1584 N. Van Ness Ave., Fresno). Speaker: Michelle Jorgensen, local attorney and progressive candidate for City Council District #6. Come meet and hear how progressives can gain a seat on the Fresno City Council. CVPPAC monthly meetings are free and open to the public.

Sunday, January 13

1 - 4 PM

The Peace & Freedom Party will be holding a forum for their presidential candidates. Candidates who have stated they will be appearing as of today are Gloria La Riva, Brian Moore, Stewart Alexander and John Crockford of Clovis. Other presidential candidates who are running on the Peace & Freedom Party ticket and have not confirmed are Cynthia McKinney, Ralph Nader and Stanley Hetz. This event will be held at Fresno City College, Forum Hall 101. The event is being sponsored by the Sociology Department at Fresno City College and the Peace & Freedom Party of the San Joaquin Valley. Peace and Freedom Party information is available at www.peaceandfreedom.org

Thursday, January 17

4 PM

Circle for Justice and Peace. Members of various peace & Justice organizations will meet to become acquainted with each other and with the goals and projects of their groups. Organizations are invited to send representatives. Meeting at the office of Dr. Ali Rezapour MD, 6769 N. Fresno St., #204, SW corner Fresno & Herndon. For Info: 353-3952.

Thursday, January 17

6 PM (Vegetarian Potluck and Social Hour)

7 PM (Keynote)

Interfaith Alliance of Central Calif. Annual Meeting and Potluck. Keynote: Rev. Barry Lynn, Americans United for Separation of

Church and State - Protecting Religious Liberty: Putting the First Freedom First. This event will be held at Hope Lutheran Church, 364 E. Barstow Avenue (NW corner of Fresno and Barstow) in Fresno.

Thursday, January 17

Open 6:30 Video 7:00 Discussion 8:30 PM

Progressive Thursday Presents "Oil, Smoke, and Mirrors" at Round Table Pizza 5763 N. First Street, Fresno, CA [SW corner of First and Bullard]. This event is hosted by the Fresno County Green Party and is free, wheelchair accessible and open to anyone interested in progressive topics. Contact: Larry Mullen 559 227-0293 www.fresnogreens.org

Thursday, January 17

7:30 PM

John McCutcheon, back by popular demand. Multi-instrumentalist - banjo, piano, guitar, fiddle, autoharp - singer of traditional and original material. No one is able to blend traditional music and original material with the ease, grace and power of John McCutcheon. This event will be held at the Unitarian Church at Alluvial & Chestnut. \$20 advance; \$25 day of Performance. Advance tickets available at UU church, Patrick's Music, National Hardware or online: www.fresnofolkconcerts.com. This event is sponsored by the Fresno Folklore Society. For more information call Pat Wolk at 559 431-3653.



John McCutcheon will be in Fresno on January 17

Friday, January 18

12 Noon - 1 PM

Opening Garlanding Ceremony at the Fresno County Courthouse Park (at MLK Bust) - 1100 Van Ness. Opening Ceremony for the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King events. Please bring flowers. Keynote speaker: Dr. Larry Powell, Superintendent at Fresno County Office of Education.

Contact: Dr. Sudarshan Kapoor (559) 435-2212 or Gail Gaston (559) 681-3140. (Bring canned food donation). This event is a part of the 23rd Annual Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration - 2008 Living the Dream: Let Freedom Ring for a New Day and a New Way

Friday, January 18

6 - 7:30 PM

Award Reception 6:00-7:30PM (program begins at 6:30PM) Location: African American



The 23rd Annual Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration will take place throughout the month of January. This photo is from the 2007 MLK march in downtown Fresno.

Museum - 1857 Fulton Ave. Informal meet & greet, along with entertainment. Contact: Julia Dudley (559) 352-1444. (Bring canned food donation). This event is a part of the 23rd Annual Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration.

**Saturday, January 19
8:30 AM**

Community Breakfast at 8:30AM / Program at 9:30AM Location: Clovis Veteran's Memorial Building. Come enjoy food, speakers, & musical performances Independence Room - 453 Hughes Ave, Clovis. Tickets cost \$5.00 each - along with your canned food donation.

Contact: Caroline Carlson (559) 324-2416 at Clovis Police Department, Ed Bailey (559) 304-5772, or Gail Gaston (559) 681-3140. (Bring canned food donation). This event is a part of the 23rd Annual Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration.

**Saturday, January 19
4 - 6 PM**

All Faith Service 4:00-6:00PM Location: Cornerstone Conference Center - 1525 Fulton Ave. Various beloved community speakers, spiritual leaders, & musical talent Contact: Dr. Sudarshan Kapoor (559) 435-2212 or Rev. Leonard Adams (559) 375 6749. (Bring canned food donation). This event is a part of the 23rd Annual Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration.

**Sunday, January 20
5 - 6 PM**

Candlelight Vigil. Location: First Congregational Church - 2131 N. Van Ness. Variety of community speakers & musical performances. Contact: Dr. David Howard (559) 277-9552 or Janet Capella (559) 974-1824. (Bring canned food donation). This event is a part of the 23rd Annual Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration.

**Monday, January 21
9:30 AM**

March and Food Drive will start at St. John Cathedral Church - 2814 Mariposa Ave. Marchers assemble at 9:30AM. March begins at 10:00AM, ending at the Saroyan Theatre. "Mountain of Food" will be collected at church. Contact: Enrique Reade (559) 940-2159 or James Lett III (559) 284-6420. (Bring canned food donation). This event is a part of the 23rd Annual Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration.

**Monday, January 21
11 AM - 12:30 PM**

Commemoration Program. Location: Saroyan Theatre - 700 "M" St. Join Fresno MLK Unity Committee for inspirational program. Contact: Julia Dudley (559) 352-1444. This event is a part of the 23rd Annual Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration.

**Thursday, January 24
7 PM**

The Angry Crow Reading by Creative Writing M.F.A. students and professors from Fresno State will be held at the C.A.F.E. infoshop 935 F st in Fresno's Historic Chinatown. Suggested donation \$5 at the door.

Wednesday, January 30

Fresno Healthy Dairy Celebration - A dinner and celebration with Supervisors Susan Anderson and Henry Perea to thank them for their continuing support of strong protections from mega-dairy pollution. Exact time and location will be announced shortly. For more information see: www.fresnohealthydairy.org

**Thursday, January 31
6 PM**

Dinner fundraiser at the C.A.F.E. infoshop to help support their programs Food Not Bombs, Community Grocery, The Womyn's Collective, and Radical Mental Health. C.A.F.E. has provided the community with lectures by former political prisoner, Rob Los Rios; former ALF

activist and currant animal rights lecture, Gary Yourosky; world-renowned author and chronicler of the Zapatista movement, John Ross; and founder of the American Indian Movement, Dennis Banks and we look forward to hosting more with your help. The all vegan dinner will be \$20 at the door and there will be live painting and live music by local artist for entertainment. Thank you for your support we hope to see you there! Jan. 31st 6pm at 935 F st in Fresno's Historic Chinatown.

**Friday, February 8
4 PM**

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

Saturday, February 9

Vince Lavery will speak about Ireland at "The Studio," in North Fork

Sunday, February 10

Vince Lavery Reception and Irish Readings at Community Mennonite Church

February 10th and 11th

The women's studies student group at CSU-Fresno, POWER, is putting on the Vagina Monologues.

Monday, February 18

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

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Central Valley Progressive Political Action Committee

cvppac.org

PO Box 5845, Fresno, CA 93755

559-435-7360

Next meeting: Saturday, January 12, 2007 3:30-5:00 pm

Location: 1584 N. Van Ness (at McKinley), Fresno

**Speaker: Michelle Jorgensen, local attorney and progressive candidate for City Council District #6.
Come meet and hear how progressives can gain a seat on the Fresno City Council.**



Counter recruiting protestors marched through the shopping center, handing out cookies and spreading the message of peace to holiday shoppers.

Rich Man's War, Poor Man's Blood

By Mike Rhodes

December 20, 2007 - Peace activists held a demonstration against military recruitment at a shopping center on west Shaw avenue in Fresno yesterday. The event began with the Raging Grannies singing songs of peace and a delegation going into the military recruiting center to hand out peace cranes and cookies.

Santa joined the protesters as they demonstrated in front of the recruitment station and later marched peacefully through the shopping center. Surprised shoppers were greeted with smiles, holiday cheer, and given cookies by the protestors.

As the group of about 30 protestors stood in front of Costco, Fresno police officers started to arrive. At about the same time the protestors were leaving, two police cars pulled up to the entrance of the store. Peace Fresno President, Scott Key talked to the officers who reminded him that the group should not

block the entrance to the store or hit anyone with a sign. Key said that was not a problem and the officers left.

For more information about the Central Valley Counter-Recruitment Coalition contact Dan Yaseen at danyaseen@comcast.net or 251-3361. For more information about Peace Fresno, contact Scott Key at president@peacefresno.org or see www.peacefresno.org .

Defend our Civil Liberties Friday, January 11 11:15 - 1:00 PM

Peace Fresno will sponsor a demonstration in front of the new Federal Building at 2500 Tulare Street in downtown Fresno. This demonstration will protest the loss of civil liberties tied to Guantanamo Bay, use of torture, illegal wiretapping, Patriot Act and the Homegrown Terrorism Prevention Act. Come join us as we tell Fresno that civil liberty is more important than security. For more information contact Scott at president@peacefresno.org or (559) 487-2515 and www.peacefresno.org

Peace and Justice are Inseparable

By Scott Key

The days are shorter, but the work continues. While most Americans oppose the occupation of Iraq, war funding continues without strings. Iran could be next. Civil liberties are lost. We must re-double our efforts to force our elected representatives to protect our constitution and say "NO TO WAR!"

November was a busy month as Peace Fresno distributed hundreds of flyers at Fashion Fair Mall. We co-sponsored the "Don't Attack Iran" demonstration at Fresno State on November 9 and supported Peace Edison's march on Representative Costa's office on November 14. And we worked with WILPF to flyer outside Toys R Us and Wal-Mart on the busiest shopping day of the year.

December brought continued action. December 19 saw us outside the main Military Recruitment Station in Fresno with the Central Valley Counter Recruitment Coalition, the Raging Grannies and other concerned community members. We shared our message of peace with cookies and song. This message was shared with passing motorists on December 25 at our Annual Santas for Peace demonstration.

January brings new opportunities to share our message of peace and justice. Besides our peace vigil at the corner of Blackstone and Shaw on the first Friday of each month, we invite you to join us to protest the erosion of civil liberties. On January 11 at 11:15 am, we will gather in front of the new federal building to call for the closure of the Guantanamo Bay prison and end to torture. And, on February 18, we invite you to celebrate Presidents' Day by joining us in the "President for Peace" march to send a loud message to all presidential candidates.

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

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

RESPONSE TO WAR

Peace Fresno is organizing a community response to the possible announcement that our country (or Israel) has attacked Iran.

PEACE FRESNO RESPONSE TO U.S. OR ISRAELI ATTACK ON IRAN

If the United States or Israel attacks Iran, Peace Fresno is asking everyone to:

1. Immediately gather at the corner of Shaw and Blackstone to protest the attack. If the attack occurs between 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., gather at the corner at 6:00 a.m. or as soon as you get the news after 6:00 a.m.
2. On the next business day following the Shaw and Blackstone protest, a second protest will be held at the new Federal Courthouse Building in downtown Fresno, 2500 Tulare St. at the corner of Tulare and 'O'. The protest will begin at 8:00 a.m. and continue until 3:00 p.m. We urge a large presence for the NOON HOUR especially.
3. On the first Saturday following the attack, a march will take place. We will meet at 12:00 noon at River Park Shopping Center, Blackstone and El Paso (in front of Macaroni Grill). There is plenty of curbside street parking on El Paso, west of Blackstone. The march will arrive at Blackstone and Shaw at approximately 1:30 p.m. for a demonstration. Blackstone buses make return to parking easy.

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

TEN YEARS AGO, THE ACTIONS OF A SITTING PRESIDENT LED TO A DEBATE MOST AMERICANS NEVER EXPECTED TO SEE.

IF THE PRESIDENTIAL YOU-KNOW-WHAT DID NOT COME INTO ACTUAL CONTACT WITH THE INTERN'S YOU-KNOW-WHERE--

--CAN IT REALLY BE CONSIDERED "SEX"?

OH, FOR THOSE HAPPY, CAREFREE DAYS...

TODAY, THE ACTIONS OF A VERY DIFFERENT PRESIDENT HAVE LED TO A VERY DIFFERENT DEBATE... ONE I DAMN SURE NEVER EXPECTED TO SEE...

IF THE TECHNIQUE OF SIMULATED DROWNING DOES NOT RESULT IN ACTUAL ORGAN FAILURE OR DEATH--

--CAN IT REALLY BE CONSIDERED "TORTURE"?

SERIOUSLY: WHO EVER IMAGINED THAT IN THE FIRST DECADE OF THIS NEW CENTURY, AMERICANS WOULD BE NONCHALANTLY DISCUSSING HOW MUCH TORTURE IS ACCEPTABLE?

IS THE MEDIEVAL THUMBSCREW REALLY ANY WORSE THAN BANGING YOUR THUMB WITH A HAMMER?

AND AS FOR THE RACK-- WELL, LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT MY CHIROPRACTOR! HA, HA!

HA, HA!

AS A JUSTIFICATION, PROPONENTS OFTEN INVOKE THE "TICKING BOMB" SCENARIO--THE IMPLAUSIBILITY OF WHICH SHOULD BE APPARENT TO ANY BRIGHT FIFTH GRADER...

THERE'S A NUCLEAR BOMB SET TO GO OFF IN TEN MINUTES! THE ONLY WAY WE CAN SAVE LOS ANGELES IS TO TORTURE THIS GUY!

HOW EXCITING! IT'S JUST LIKE AN EPISODE OF "24"!

AND THEN THERE IS THE QUESTION OF WHETHER TORTURE EVEN WORKS...THOUGH TORTURE DEVOTEE ALAN DERSHOWITZ ASSURES US IT DOES--

"--AS EVIDENCED BY THE MANY DECENT MEMBERS OF THE FRENCH RESISTANCE WHO, UNDER NAZI TORTURE, DISCLOSED THE LOCATIONS OF THEIR CLOSEST FRIENDS AND RELATIVES!"

AND IF IT WORKED FOR THE NAZIS...!

*ACTUAL QUOTE!

OF COURSE, DEMOCRATS HAD A CHANCE TO TAKE A CLEAR MORAL STAND WITH THE MUKASEY CONFIRMATION... AND, PREDICTABLY, DECLINED...

--BUT WE DO INTEND TO CAST VERY DISAPPROVING LOOKS IN HIS DIRECTION WHENEVER WE SEE HIM!

I WILL EVEN GO SO FAR AS TO MURMUR "TSK, TSK" UNDER MY BREATH!

BECAUSE AMERICA NEEDS LEADERSHIP!

NEXT--THE IRON MAIDEN: CRUEL AND UNUSUAL--OR SOMEWHAT UNCOMFORTABLE?

TOM TOMORROW © 2007... www.thismodernworld.com