



WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM
 WILPF Fresno, P.O. Box 5114, Fresno, CA 93755

Graphic by Lincoln Cushing

WE GATHERED FOR WORLD WATER DAY

World Water Day was March 22. This year's UN theme was Water for Peace. WILPF Fresno joyfully celebrated this day at the river, as it has done in past years. We chose to celebrate World Water Day on Saturday, March 23, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. so that more people could attend. We met along the San Joaquin River at the River Parkway's Sumner Peck Ranch on Friant Road. It was peaceful and beautiful!

First, participants were invited to go on a silent walk by the river for 15 minutes. Upon their return, they were asked to write a word or draw a picture on our mural board that would best describe their total river experience. We then gathered around the picnic tables and heard from people representing various environmental organizations speak of water's importance. These speakers were as follows:

- Sarah Parks, representing the San Joaquin River Parkway & Conservation Trust
- Ron Martin, representing the Tehipite Chapter of the Sierra Club and Fresnans Against Fracking
- Evalee Swint, age 6, speaking for WILPF's Earth Democracy Issues Group
- Anita Lodge, speaking for Friends of the San Joaquin River Gorge
- Katie Kalkhof, Outreach Chair of the Fresno Audubon Society
- Richard Iyall, Cowlitz Tribal Elder, speaking of water from an Indigenous perspective
- Sandra Iyall, Cowlitz Tribal Elder and WILPF Fresno's keeper of our Facebook page. Sandra read from a winner of WILPF's Jane Addams Children's Book Awards, which happens every year. The title of the book: *Water Protectors!*

Kyla Mitchell, co-chair of WILPF Fresno's Earth Democracy group, kept things running smoothly, serving as MC. She was assisted by Jean Hays, ED's co-chair.

We hope to heighten awareness of the importance of and care for water! Did you know that

- Nearly 97% of the world's water is salty or otherwise undrinkable? Another 2% is locked in ice caps and glaciers. That leaves just 1% for all of humanity's needs—agricultural, residential, manufacturing, community and personal.
- A person can live about a month without food but only about a week without water?
- Water is part of a deeply interconnected system? What we pour on the ground ends up in our water, and what we spew into the sky ends up in our water. Think about that the next time you take a sip of this most-precious liquid! Let's honor and protect it so that it is safe to drink! See you next year on World Water Day, March 22.

—Earth Democracy Committee Co-Chairs Jean Hays & Kyla Mitchell

HELP US CELEBRATE AT EARTH DAY FRESNO'S NEW DATE

May 4, 10 a.m.–4 p.m. at Fresno City College. Visit our booth to clean the ocean of pollutants and plastics.

WILPF MEETING

May 9 (second Thursday), 7 p.m., online. Check with Teresa as to whether the meeting will be in-person at FCNV. Watch your e-mail for an announcement with a link and a call-in number! For info, contact Teresa at taca_03@gmail.com or Leni at lenivreeves@gmail.com.

STIR IT UP—WILPF KFCF 88.1 FM

May 22 (fourth Wednesday), 3 p.m. Jean Hays highlights

people and events important to our WILPF community.

UNPACKING RACISM

With Dr. Jean Kennedy. Moving toward community event participation. To join, RSVP with your e-mail address to drjeankennedy@yahoo.com or text 559-270-1023.

WOMEN IN BLACK

May 1 (first Wednesday), noon, Courthouse. May Day! Check first with Sue Kern at

skern@netptc.net or 559-349-3777.

Help us find you! Are you getting our announcements of meetings and events? Our contact list is sometimes badly out of date. Let us know your current info. Send an e-mail message to Teresa Castillo at taca_03@gmail.com or text 559-360-8054.

WHEN I JOINED...

How many millions have said those infamous three words followed with, "I had no idea what I was getting myself into?" And specifically about the military? Aaron Bushnell certainly didn't know, and the same is true for Larry Hebert. Aaron was on active duty at the time of his self-immolation on Feb. 26, 2024, in front of the Israeli Embassy in Washington, D.C. Larry, on leave from active duty when he began his hunger strike on April 1, 2024, in front of the White House, was inspired by the actions of his comrade Aaron.

The pressing question for me is how many millions of Americans know about either man or both? Or about the Portland, Ore., veteran protesters who lit their military uniforms on fire on Feb. 28, 2024, in solidarity with Aaron? If I were to survey my neighbors on both sides of the street from one end to the other, my guess is that I could count on one hand the number of folks who know about Aaron, Larry or the Oregon protesters.

Today, April 12, 2024, marks 188 days since the Oct. 7 attack we all know about, but shouldn't we also know about the people serving in the U.S. military who put their lives on the line so ours remain free? Not knowing about Aaron, Larry and the Oregon protesters keeps the dark and heavy veil of ignorance over our eyes.

Larry said it best when interviewed by Jim Wuhgelmuth and Harvey Bennett, "I was completely in the dark about the extent and willingness to harm civilians. I thought



Senior Airman Larry Hebert is going on a hunger strike while on leave from his duty station to protest the violence in Gaza. Photo provided by Larry Hebert

we were primarily just targeting military infrastructure."

That is what I don't want for anyone, to be in the dark about the extent and willingness of our government harming civilians, and so the stories of these soldiers like Aaron, Larry and the Oregon veteran protesters need to be made known and remembered because, as Larry so poignantly said in his interview with Amy Goodman and Juan Gonzalez, "It's just completely wrong and immoral for civilians to be starved and bombed and targeted in any manner."

—Carol Goiburn, Disarm Committee Chair

MALCOLM X, CUBA AND PALESTINE

Join us! We will gather again at Free AME Church, 806 Collins Ave., to honor and discuss Malcolm X el-Hajj Malik el-Shabazz and his unique connections to Cuba and Palestine. Watch e-mails and social media for details about this year's Malcolm X birthday celebration in mid-May. For info, contact Leni at lenivreeves@gmail.com.

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP NOW! HERE'S HOW

Send dues to WILPF Fresno, P.O. Box 5114, Fresno, CA 93755. WILPF-US membership is \$35/year. WILPF-Fresno sponsors a low-income rate of \$20.

For questions and/or information updates, contact Nancy Hatcher at nhatcher46@gmail.com or Kyla Mitchell at kyla.noelle@gmail.com.