



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

Graphic by Lincoln Cushing

EARTH DAY

Visit the WILPF Booth on Earth Day. For the first time since 2019, Earth Day Fresno is returning with an in-person event! It will take place at Fresno City College on Saturday, April 22, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The family-friendly free event will have

educational booths with fun activities for kids, electric vehicle test drives, a bike clinic, local food trucks and much more. Let's celebrate 53 years of Earth Day by joining with others and expanding our understanding of how to be good stewards of the earth.

—Kyla Mitchell

OBSERVANCE OF WORLD WATER DAY

March 22 was World Water Day. The United Nations says this day is about accelerating change to solve the water and sanitation crisis. And because water affects us all, we need everyone to take action. It was ironic that, on this World Water Day 2023, we here in California and beyond were given an atmospheric river of water! As of this writing, it is hoped that the water will be allowed to sink down to replenish the aquifer.

WILPF Earth Democracy invited one and all to come to celebrate water at Lost Lake. Then, Lost Lake was closed because of flooding. With only a week to prepare, we were given permission by the San Joaquin River Conservancy to have a quiet Water Walk on their Lane Road property.

Lance Canales provided Native American flute music to prepare us for a quiet walk on the hillside just above the spectacularly swollen San Joaquin River. Other remarks were made for us to ponder by Native Americans. Then we embarked on a quiet 15-minute walk, seeing and listening to river sounds.

When we came back together on the large covered patio of the Conservancy house, each person wrote a sentence or drew a small picture on a large canvas provided for later reflection. We hope this simple experience will be revisited in our thoughts, reminding us of the beauty and necessity of this liquid treasure. Without it, we wouldn't be here.

—Jean Hays

**PRO-PEACE/
 ANTI-WAR
 DEMONSTRATION**

WILPFers joined other peaceful protesters at a rally against the war in Ukraine on Sunday, February 19, on the corners at Blackstone and Nees avenues. The different local groups gathered to call for both sides to choose negotiations over violent conflict and for the United States to stop funding the war.

One of my favorite signs (held by Nancy Waidtlow), because of its simplicity, read, "We tried war Let's try negotiation." We cannot keep going in the direction of war, hatred and destruction.

I'm reminded of Jane Addams' sentiment when she said, "Nothing can be worse than the fear that one had given up too soon and left one unexpended effort which might have saved the world." What might that one unexpended effort be? Going to rallies, writing and calling your representatives, having conversations with people you don't agree with to find common ground are good ways to make sure we don't find out what that one effort might be.

—Kyla Mitchell



Gerry Bill, Nancy Waidtlow and Kyla Mitchell: United Against War. Photo courtesy of Kyla Mitchell



Anne Merrill and Patricia Wells-Solorzano: WILPF for Peace in Ukraine. Photo courtesy of Kyla Mitchell

**YES! 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 information updates, contact Nancy Hatcher at nhatcher46@gmail.com or Kyla Mitchell at kyla.noelle@gmail.com.

WILPF MEETING

April 13, Thursday, 7 p.m., online and in person at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence. Watch your e-mail for an announcement with a link and a call-in number! For more information, contact

Teresa at taca_03@gmail.com or Leni at lenivreeves@gmail.com.

STIR IT UP—WILPF KFCF 88.1 FM

April 26, 3 p.m. (fourth Wednesday of each month). Jean Hays highlights people and events important to our WILPF community.

UNPACKING RACISM

With Dr. Jean Kennedy. April 30, 6:30 p.m. To join and get a link, RSVP with your e-mail address to drjeankennedy@yahoo.com or text 559-270-1023.

WOMEN IN BLACK

April 5, noon, Courthouse (first Wednesday of each month). Check first with Sue Kern at skern@netptc.net or 559-349-3777.

**VOLUNTEERING
 IN THE NAME
 OF PEACE AND
 FREEDOM**

When I think of the word "international" as in "Women's International League for Peace and Freedom," I think of countries all over the world on every continent. I don't necessarily think of islands or territories or commonwealths even though there are vital communities of people living and working together in those places. I would not have thought of Puerto Rico when I would think "international."

Puerto Rico is an unincorporated territory of the United States (since 1898). There are more than 2 million people living in Puerto Rico who are U.S. citizens but who cannot vote in U.S. elections. Puerto Rico is self-governing, but the U.S. government maintains control over many functions of government including currency, trade and immigration.

In February, I went to Maunabo, Puerto Rico, for the second time, as part of a team of 17 volunteers working with a U.S.-based nonprofit organization providing assistance to families whose homes had been significantly damaged in recent hurricanes.

Families who live on the far side of this island territory do receive emergency services at the time of a hurricane but not the kind of attention that benefits the capital of San Juan and definitely not long term. This is where volunteers like myself and others come in the name of lending a helping hand, peace, goodwill and extending the kind of specific rebuilding that needs teams of people.

On any typical day, our team could be found working on a roof, replacing windows and doors, framing in a much needed room. Concrete is mixed, spackling made, cracks filled, ceilings and walls scraped, preparations made for painting. And all the while, our team of 17 was also building friendships, trust and cooperation as we shared our work, our common experiences and our meals.

For me personally, at the end of every day my muscles might ache but my heart was full of compassion and I am grateful for the opportunity to reach out "internationally" to help others find their own sense of peace and freedom from the worry that has occupied their hearts and minds as they continue to recover from a devastating natural emergency.

—Nancy Hatcher



Volunteers work to repair hurricane damage in Maunabo, Puerto Rico. Photo courtesy of Nancy Hatcher



Nancy Hatcher on the job! Painting louvres after masking with newspaper, as part of hurricane damage repair in Maunabo, Puerto Rico. Photo courtesy of Nancy Hatcher

RAGING GRANNIES SENDING AN SOS

The Raging Grannies invite all (whether you are a grandparent or not) to join them to tell the message of social justice with a little humor, innovation and imagination. Although the grannies are grateful no members were lost due to the pandemic, some of the "rage" has been tempered by restrictions caused by Covid and physical circumstances.

The quality of singing has never been as important as the message of social and environmental justice, but most of our voices crack now and then. Nevertheless, we continue to sing out.

Our passion to tell the people of the world that they can do better is as strong as ever, but physical limitations make it difficult for some of the Grannies to make impromptu appearances on street corners or in front of corporate and government establishments. Due to these conditions, it is more important than ever that the RGs find new members to help carry the torch, rolling pin, cane, whatever, into the future.

Those who like to sing, dance, make up rhymes and work for social justice are urged to join the Raging Grannies practice on the first Friday of the month at 10 a.m. and the third Monday at 2 p.m. For the location and more information, contact Kay Pittsat at 209-532-3554 or Evonne Waldo at evonnewaldo@yahoo.com.

The Raging Grannies will be making appearances at the Fresno City College Earth Day event on Saturday, April 22, and at the Free AME Church with Rev. Floyd Harris (date to be announced).

—Evonne Waldo

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