

connections

PRICELESS

Volume XXVIII, Number 3

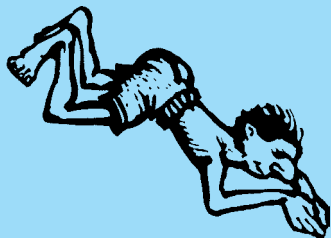
Published by the Peace & Justice Network since 1986

April 2010

SAVE THE DATES

SUN, APRIL 18
EARTH DAY FESTIVAL IN
VICTORY PARK, STOCKTON

SUN, MAY 2
EARTH DAY IN UTICA PARK,
ANGELS CAMP



Sunday, Apr 18, Victory Park

Celebrate Earth Day!!

“Be a Breath of Fresh Air in Your Community” is the theme of this year’s annual Earth Day Festival on Sunday, April 18th, from 11 am to 4 pm at Victory Park, behind Haggin Museum in Stockton.

This is the premiere environmental event in all of San Joaquin County, and as always, the focus of the day long festival is to educate you about taking care of our natural resources —the earth, air and water. The Festival has grown over the years but remains true to its mission of education. We expect a crowd hungry and eager to learn how to take care of their environment. It is a fun day for families, and best of all, admission is free.

The Festival will have dozens of informative, interactive booths, displays and exhibits, plus there will be plenty of great food and exotic crafts. Local area schools will be teaching you how to better take care of our earth with a variety of hands-on activities, and environmental organizations will educate you about the important issues that impact you and how you can make a difference.

Community agencies will help you live a healthier, more positive life, and green businesses will assist you in making changes to your home and workplace. Over 100 vendors will border the oak trees and cross the grass field at Victory Park, making this Earth Day Festival the biggest ever. Close to 10,000 people attend this event annually.

A full schedule of entertainment starts at 11 am, featuring colorful ethnic dance groups and local area bands. Warm-up for the day at 10 am with yoga on the park green. Join the hundreds of cyclists who will bike around the neighborhood as part of the Family Fun Bike Ride and Parade. Biking registration is at 10:30 am. Kids can strut as their favorite animal in the Endangered Species Parade that will circle the park. Or participate as a drummer in the Drum Circle that traditionally closes the Festival on a percussive high note at 4 pm.

Companies and organizations are encouraged to participate as a sponsor. Sponsor donations will be put to good use supporting this non-profit event.

Sponsors will be part of promotional efforts and will be recognized for their “Go Green” environmental concern. This year’s event is a partnership of the City of Stockton Solid Waste & Recycling Division and Water Conservation Program, San Joaquin County

Come enjoy the 22nd Annual
Stockton Earth Day Festival
Sunday, April 18th, 2010
11am - 4pm - Victory Park
Free Admission

Fun Exhibitors & Demos • Delicious Food
Live Entertainment • Fun Learning Activities
Family Fun Bike Ride Registration at 10:30 am

Be a **Breath** of Fresh **AIR** in
YOUR Community.
www.LiveGreenSanJoaquin.org

Public Works-Stormwater Management, Peace & Justice Network, University of the Pacific, San Joaquin County Office of Education and Mayaco Marketing & Internet.

All schools, organizations and individuals doing environmental activities or projects are encouraged to share with the community at this year’s Festival as an exhibitor. Whether you have educational information to share, crafts or food to sell as a vendor or school projects to demonstrate, please join the thousands

who will gather on this special day.

It takes a village of volunteers to make the Festival happen each year. Volunteers are still needed to assist before and on the day of the Festival so call (209) 946-2083 if you would like to be actively involved in San Joaquin County’s Earth Day activities.

For more information on how to be a sponsor, exhibitor or vendor, call (209) 937-8389, email stocktonearthday@gmail.com or visit www.livegreensanjoaquin.org.

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Practical lessons for citizenship

Bruce Giudici

In times of change, we need to question what has become conventional wisdom. Conventional wisdom says that certain government functions need to not lose money: hospitals, public transport, the postal service. For other government services, money is squandered with no discernable oversight: the military, police, fire and prisons come to mind. And for others, we are expected to raise our own monies to make ends meet: bake sales for school activities, rummage sales for food banks, walk-a-thons for medical research. Why is that?

It's time for all of us to understand—to know what things cost and what we are willing to pay for. Good questions include: how much do our local police, fire and school services cost us? Where does the tax money come from—who pays? Property taxes, sales taxes, and the rest. How does the state allocate funds—how much do the prisons cost?

Feedback

Together, we sink or swim

Editor,

It's hard to believe what's happening in America. The unity that was emblematic of the country during WWII has all but left the building. Can anyone really envision Americans of today sacrificing, both on the battlefield and at home, like the millions who did in the 1940's? Post 9/11 harmony (briefly) approached that type of feeling until Neo-Conservative forces called into dispute the Patriotism of anyone questioning the intricacies and realities of our response to that challenge.

The decaying bumper stickers from those angry first days still cling to aging bumpers but the hollowness of their intended message is overwhelmingly evident today. "Freedom isn't free," many of them said, the words emblazoned over and under the Stars and Stripes that identify us. Yet today, a growing and disenchanting electorate is increasingly incensed at the idea that they should have to pay for

K-12? the universities? And for the feds—who pays the taxes now and historically? Is there a Social Security trust fund—and how does it work? How much money is spent on war, on interest, and on social services? What does the national debt mean—to whom do we owe it and when must we pay it back?

To our detriment, we have delegated our understanding of these issues to politicians who are generally reluctant to offend those who finance their campaigns and, not so coincidentally, pay most of the taxes. The current gridlock in government is a direct result of decisions made by a majority of these self-interested politicians guaranteed re-election through legalized corruption. The system, though flawed, works for them... and, barring a crisis, there is little reason for them to change it soon.

So, fixing it will take some work. Getting angry is a start—witness the tea-baggers, who get publicity because of a right-wing media

anything except the pursuit of their own well being. Why should I have to use "my money" to pay for "your" kid to go to school? The United States educational system used to be copied and admired by large parts of the world. Not anymore. Not unless you're lucky enough to have parents with lots of money. Think of the waste! As China, India, Japan, Germany and others spend billions trying to make their kids the best that they can be, we complain about a public school system that we, the voters of this country, allowed to fall into a system of vast and systemic inequalities.

And on today's front lines, as millions of our fellow citizens, many of them hard working, dedicated, Patriotic Americans, fall sick and dying, with the need for health care reform greater than ever, many of us complain of outrageous Socialist plots and the perceived re-distribution of wealth to some implicitly identified dead beats who are stealthily trying to access another entitlement. We sit snug in our homes, wrapped in a cocoon of sham Nationalism, exalting soldiers deeds and getting

sympathetic with most of their issues. Progressives are just as angry—without the megaphone. Armed with an understanding of the forces arrayed against basic human progress—witness the past 18 months at any leadership level—we can begin to make logical electoral choices, cutting through the advertising tsunami that will result from the recent Supreme Court decision on corporate political "donations." But we first need an understanding.

Starting March 28, from 7 to 8:30 at the Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Road—and every last Thursday to follow—I will begin what we will call Practical Lessons for Citizenship and Survival. Since my background is as a non-profit financial manager, we can begin there. The discussion topic will be Public Finances—who pays and for what. In future discussions, I encourage readers to contact me with public interest topics you know well and would like to discuss. For example, I can cover

soft around the middle whilst whining and whimpering that we might be asked to actually honor the things for which those exalted soldiers presumably died for.

The privileged class in this country is basking in wealth unlike any era except the gilded age of over 100 years ago. Unlike then, they now control an immensely vast, 24/7 networking of mixed media that have convinced large segments of the population to declare war on their fellow citizens. The Insurance industry makes billions, literally sucking the life's blood from our people and our economy yet, with clever, deceptive propaganda and the help of Conservatives in Congress, they redirect the ire of citizens towards those least responsible for the situation.

An old English proverb says, "We are usually the best men when in the worst health." Given the state of the nation's health, the impossible sustainability of the health care system, the inequality of coverage, the desperation of millions, can anybody say that about the obstructionist Conservatives in our Congress

Bruce Giudici, editor



practical skills such as accounting, spreadsheets, non-profit and personal taxes, things that may help make life a little simpler. You probably have additional experience and knowledge to share (such as using the internet for progressive action?)—and in a time of recession and high unemployment, we should make use of our slack time while we have it.

What I'm encouraging you to do is not new—listen, understand and act. We must use the tools at our disposal. While we may not be able to out-shout big money, we still have invaluable local connections that may see us through. And don't forget to attend the 22nd annual Earth Day Festival—now more than ever.

today? Adolph Hitler, early in his fiendish career, spoke of the "heartless overflowing power of nature, creating a superabundance of life and at the same time a superabundance of death, which lets the rotten and sickly die" in order to preserve a type in a few specimens. He also said, "Be simple, be primitive, be brutal...let them not rely on reason, but rather trust in their emotion. Reason can treacherously deceive a man, emotion is sure and never leaves him."

Divide and conquer strategy. Emotional issues such as abortion, immigration, gun rights, gay marriage, even flag burning. All carefully designed propaganda tools devised by cunning Conservative minds in a fashion that clearly would have left Der Fuehrer impressed. The next time you hear the whining chorus of victimized corporate America, in the guise of Rush Limbaugh, Glenn Beck, Ann Coulter or even Sarah Palin, ask yourself that in a time of great personal peril, would you really like to be in a fox hole with them?

Dave Waldon

Connections

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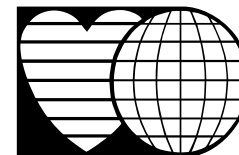
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Community Calendar: vacant

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"The Peace and Justice Network is a nonprofit educational organization committed to the vision of a world in which the equality of all persons is achieved, basic needs are met, conflict is resolved nonviolently, and the earth's resources are shared responsibly for the well-being of all her inhabitants and all future generations."

Facing up to climate change: Part III

Eat seasonably, eat sustainably

Some basic steps to sustainable eating:

- Support environmentally friendly farming by buying organic produce
- Eat food grown locally and in season
- Cut down your meat intake: livestock are a significant cause of climate change
- Choose fish from sustainable sources
- Avoid bottled water; carry a stainless steel water bottle and fill it from the tap
- Waste less of the food you buy
- Compost your food waste
- Avoid products with unnecessary packaging and recycle it where possible

Why Eat Local/Natural?

Great Taste: There is a reason top chef's use locally grown foods; they taste far superior!

Reduce Health Risks: 60% of all herbicides, 90% of all fungicides and 30% of all insecticides approved by the EPA are now considered carcinogenic. Extensive research has linked these chemicals to cancer and other diseases.

Protect the Water Quality: Two-thirds of your body is made up of water and essential to our survival. The EPA has estimated that pesticides pollute the ground water in 38 states!

Save Energy: Modern farming uses more petroleum than any other single industry, consuming 12% of the country's total energy supply. Natural farming is still mainly based on labor intensive practices so produce travels a shorter distance from the farm to your plate.

Support the Local Economy: Buy from local farmers and food producers to keep the money in the community; not to corporations.

—from *Fresh Edibles Community Farm website*

Farmers Markets

Stockton Farmers Markets:
<http://www.stocktonfarmersmarket.org/>

Downtown Stockton Market

El Dorado & San Joaquin Streets
Every Saturday at 6:30 am under the crosstown freeway
Open year round

Trinity Parkway Market

Park West Shopping Center
Eight Mile Road
Every Thursday and Sunday from 9:00 am until 2:00 pm
May through October
Currently closed for the season

CSAs

Today your typical grocery store food travels an average of 1500 miles from the farm to the table. Your food is shipped, inventoried, possibly fresh processed and bagged or packaged in some way, consolidated, shipped again, inventoried again, distributed, inventoried again, restacked, displayed, and finally sold to you. It is no wonder that ship-ability is more important than taste to the food industry.

After all of this effort, the price is driven up to the point that the farmer may only make 25% on every food dollar and is compelled to produce large mono-crops to increase volume to make ends meet, all the while increasing financial risk.

The Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) movement provides a direct link between consumers and farmers. The goal is to provide solutions to problems of small farm survival, food quality, nutrition, community building, sustainability, and quality of life.

CSA is a partnership of mutual commitment between a farm and a community of supporters, which provides a direct link between the production and consumption of food. Supporters cover a farm's yearly operating budget by purchasing a share of the season's harvest. This direct marketing method benefits both farmer and consumer.

CSA members make a commitment to support the farm throughout the season, and assume the costs, risks, and bounty of growing food along with the farmer. This mutually supportive relationship helps create an economically stable

farm operation in which members are assured the highest quality produce, often at below retail prices. In return, farmers and growers are guaranteed a reliable market for a diverse selection of crops.

Sources: *Rancho Piccolo and Fresh Edibles Community Farm websites*

Stockton CSAs:

Rancho Piccolo
<http://www.ranchopiccolo.com>

Fresh Edibles Community Farm <http://freshedibles.org/>

Personal Gardens

Creating a garden at your home is a great way to control what you eat and add to your food security. There are ways to grow gardens in small spaces, even at apartments.

Community Gardens

Community gardens are wonderful. They not only increase food security and safety, but also help build community. Generally, people rent a plot in the garden and often share tools and expertise. Some gardens put on community gatherings and share their bounty with local food banks.

Stockton currently has a dearth of community gardens but many other cities are actively working with their citizens to convert empty lots into thriving gardens.

Slow Food Movement

Slow Food, founded in Italy 1986, is an international organization whose aim is to protect the pleasures of the table from the homogenization of modern fast food and life. It promotes gastronomic culture, develops taste education, conserves agricultural biodiversity and protects traditional foods at risk of extinction.

Each Slow Food chapter (called a convivium) chooses its own projects and activities to further the organization's mission. There is currently no Stockton chapter.

Slowfood Sacramento
<http://slowfoodsacramento.com/>

Slow Food Delta Diablo
<http://slowfooddeltadiablo.blogspot.com/>

10:10 Diary—March

Laurie Litman

The Struggle

This lifestyle changing endeavor can be crazy-making. Like trying to figure out my own rules and staying honest in the attempt to make meaningful reductions in my carbon footprint.

Can I trade the flying I'm not planning to do anyway for another vacation by car? Do I get more guilt-free miles if I drive a Prius? Can I crank up the heat when company comes over? Does it count if I'm using my computer for work? For *Connections*? Will purchasing carbon credits absolve me from my carbon sins?

We've made a number of easy lifestyle changes around our house. We're a one-car family and do many errands by foot or bike. We live in a small house, pay extra for all-renewable energy, changed to fluorescent bulbs, and turned our heater down. It's a start; probably enough to achieve our 10% reduction this year.

But there are other areas I find more difficult. I don't want to give up my longish hot showers in the morning. I like to do some of my errands quickly by car. I like my techie toys. I'm not sure how many actual sacrifices I'm willing to make.

What makes it harder still is that there is no societal/political support to make drastic lifestyle changes. It's easier to ignore the issue with the excuse that my little effort won't make a difference. Unfortunately for that excuse, I'm well aware that our collective denial won't make one bit of difference to the laws of science that are governing what is happening to the earth. And I can look at my personal climate change mascot, little Lennon, and know that my comfort is less important than his survival.

Some Success

One area that has been fun, and successful, is a change in our shopping and eating habits. I love to eat, and don't deny myself much. What's changed is what I want and how I get it.

I seldom (maybe once or twice a year) shop at a typical grocery store. I belong to a CSA where I get my weekly box of veggies, shop at my local Farmer's Market for more veggies/fruit/honey/flowers, and go to the Sac Food Coop for (somewhat) local/sustainable/healthy food. (I do confess to shopping at Trader Joes—healthier perhaps, but not local.) And we never ever eat at fast food joints, and very seldom at corporate chains.

Our newest foodie venture is a plot in a community garden where we're learning a whole new world of growing veggies. More on that another time.

Join me: Don't forget the No Impact Experiment coming up the week of April 18. Register at <http://noimpactproject.org/experiment/>.



Eating right to save the planet.

Slow Food in Schools projects

Slow Food in Schools is a network of community-based youth food education projects. Ranging from schoolyard gardens, to cooking classes, to farm to school initiatives, Slow Food in Schools projects are diverse—yet all offer children hands-on opportunities to explore where their food comes from.

Local Projects

Slow Food in Schools supports local projects as they create meaningful relationships between young people and food. By placing an emphasis on hands-on experiences, community interaction, and the pleasures of the table, Slow Food in Schools projects help to strengthen the food communities of tomorrow by engaging youth today.

Each project works closely with a local chapter to teach students where their food comes from, who

grows it, how to prepare it, and the importance of sharing it with friends and family. Slow Food in Schools projects are designed to address the specific needs of the communities they serve. Using good, clean, and fair food as the guide, project leaders develop creative, fun, hands-on lessons.

Project Examples:

- A mobile healthy food cooking cart.
- After-school farmer's markets.
- Farmer visits to the classroom.
- Parent and child cooking classes.
- Tracing foods from seed to plate by growing, harvesting, preparing and eating.
- Reintroducing Native Foods to Reservation school children.
- Visit the Slow Food in Schools Projects page for additional, detailed, project descriptions.

Time for Lunch Campaign

Concerned about school food? Check out Slow Food USA's Time for Lunch campaign. The site is packed with ideas and resources to help you make a difference in the upcoming reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act. http://www.slowfoodusa.org/index.php/campaign/time_for_lunch/

How to Start a Slow Food in Schools Project

Slow Food USA has developed general guidelines for establishing Slow Food in Schools projects with a step-by-step guide to starting a project in your community as well as many other resources.

To learn more about Slow Food in Schools, explore the website or contact your local Slow Food USA chapter. http://www.slowfoodusa.org/index.php/programs/details/in_schools/

Letter from Bill McKibben at 350.org

Global Work Party set for October 10

Dear friends,

Well, no one said it was going to be easy.

Last year, thanks to many of you, we built up enormous momentum for climate solutions. The global day of rallies you pulled off on October turned out to "the most widespread day of political action in the planet's history," according to CNN, with 5200 actions in 181 countries.

And in Copenhagen that translated into 117 countries—most of the world's nations—supporting a tough 350 target.

But it didn't translate into political victory. The biggest polluters wouldn't go along. So we still have work to do.

In fact, our slogan for 2010 is "Get To Work." Get to work to start changing our communities, and get to work to make our leaders realize that they actually need to lead. We've sifted through thousands of your emails from all over the world, and come up with an action plan for this year that we think may break the logjam and get us moving. But only, of course, if we act together to make it happen.

The first date to mark on your calendar: October 10. Working with our friends at the 10:10 campaign, we're going to make the tenth day of the tenth month of the millennium's tenth year a real starting point for concrete action. We're calling it the 10/10 Global Work Party, and in every corner of the world we hope communities will put up solar panels, insulate homes, erect windmills, plant trees, paint bikepaths, launch or harvest local gardens. We'll make sure the world sees this huge day of effort—and we'll use it to send a simple message to our leaders: "We're working—what about you? If we can cover the roof of the school with solar panels, surely you can pass the legislation or sign the treaty that will spread our work everywhere, and confront the climate crisis in time." 10/10/10 will take a snapshot of a clean energy future—the world of 350 ppm—and show people why it's worth fighting for. It's not too early to sign up here: www.350.org/oct10

Every nation is not created equal in this climate crisis, of course. If we can't get the biggest polluters and the biggest economies to change, then we'll never win. So we're going to focus some particular attention on China, America, and India with a Great Power Race—campuses will compete to see who can come up with the most, and the most creative, climate solutions projects. We hope friendly competition will help governments see that they have a lot to gain by diving into clean energy—and a lot to lose by missing this opportunity.

And we'll keep figuring out ways to put political pressure on where it counts—in the U.S. Senate, say, where we're joining a group of our best allies in backing the proposed Cap-and-Dividend approach that would stop letting big polluters pour carbon into the sky for free. In other parts of the world, we'll hold more of the climate leadership workshops that produced so many great leaders last year.

And as the next UN conference approaches in Mexico in December, we'll stage the largest piece of public art in the planet's history—a reminder that we have to bring passion to bear along with science and economics if we're going to move this process.

We know, from the calls and emails we've been getting, that people all over the world are ready to go to work. We think this plan can increase the odds of real action. We know that we have no choice. When, years down the road, the next generation asks what we did to save the planet, we want to be able to say: "We rolled up our sleeves and got to work." There's no guarantee we can beat the rich and powerful interests that we're up against—but thanks to you we've got enough momentum to have a real chance. Let's use it now.

Onwards,

Bill McKibben and the 350.org Team

Become a PEACE PAL!

Please consider giving to PJN month by month. It will give us stable, predictable funding to continue providing our services. It's easy for you and cost-effective for us. Our website online donation is recommended for ease and convenience. Your monthly donation can be automatically withdrawn from your bank account.

Monthly Giving Enrollment Form

Name: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Yes, I accept your invitation to become a charter member of Peace Pals.

Here is my monthly pledge contribution of:

\$10 \$15 \$20 \$25 \$(Other) _____

I prefer to donate by one of the following methods:

- U.S. mail; please send me envelopes
- Online donation through PJN website: www.pjnsjc.org (click on donation button)
- Automatic Bank Transfer
- I've enclosed a check for my first contribution. Arrangements will be made by me with my bank for future pledges.

Mail checks to: Peace and Justice Network, P.O. Box 4123, Stockton CA 95204

The Peace and Justice Network is a 501(c)3 non-profit educational corporation. Contributions are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

Health care update

Carol Bailey

Health care reform has been swirling around at the Federal level for several months. The President has called upon Congress to vote on the issue. Reform looks more like insurance reform than health care reform. Everyone will be required to buy health insurance. Limits and regulations are placed on the health insurance industry. Much can change between today and the day a vote is actually taken.

At the State level, single payer, enhanced Medicare for All is alive and well. Mark Leno has taken up the cause. The California Health Care Act SB 810 (Leno), having passed the Senate, is now working its way through the state legislature. It is expected that in April, SB 810 will be heard in the Assembly Health Committee. Legislation must be acted upon in the full Assembly by the end of August. Once out of both houses (Senate and Assembly) SB 810 will go to the Governor's desk for signing (or vetoing).

While SB 810 provides the "road map" for real health care reform, the financial component will need to go to the voters for approval. SB 810 is essentially unchanged from SB 840 (Kuehl), which passed the Legislature twice, only to be vetoed by Governor Schwarzenegger. The health reform is still comprehensive, including medical, dental, vision, pharmaceutical, counseling, hospitalization and more. SB 810 remains affordable and a true way to help close the budget gap through the savings realized by not subsidizing the insurance industry at 30 cents for every dollar spent on health care.

Open access to medical providers remains a key part of SB 810. There is no insurance company limiting provider access. Patients may keep the medical provider they have or change if they wish. There is no insurance company limiting needed treatments and surgeries. Physicians can work directly with patients on recommended or needed medical treatments. There is no insurance

company limiting a patient's choice of prescriptions based on their formulary. Physicians can prescribe the medication that her/his medical judgment considers most medically appropriate. There is no insurance company limiting access to health care by raising rates beyond what is affordable to patients as individuals or to employers—large or small.

And so back to the Federal level. As it stands now, the insurance companies will not be able to deny coverage because of a pre-existing condition; raise rates beyond a reasonable amount; drop coverage when a medical crisis occurs. We can do better. We must continue pushing at the State level to obtain a waiver from the Federal program in order to implement an enhanced and improved Medicare for All—SB 810. Five states are in the position of doing this—each near passing their own single payer bill. By example, we can help move our Federal Government to enable medical services now available in all other industrialized countries of the world.

THIS MODERN WORLD

A SINGLE PAYER SYSTEM WOULD HAVE BEEN THE SIMPLEST SOLUTION.

IF WE COULD JUST REMOVE THE PARASITICAL INSURANCE INDUSTRY FROM THE EQUATION--

--THEN SOCIALISTS LIKE YOU WOULD SEIZE POWER AND DESTROY AMERICA--JUST LIKE GLENN BECK WARNED US!!

ER-- I-- WHAT?

CLEARLY THERE WAS NO HOPE OF THAT.

THE NEXT BEST THING WOULD HAVE BEEN A PUBLIC OPTION, WHICH OBAMA SOMETIMES PRETENDED TO SUPPORT DURING THE CAMPAIGN. BUT IF YOU GO BACK AND STUDY THE TRANSCRIPTS, YOU'LL SEE THAT I NEVER SPECIFICALLY USED THE WORDS "PUBLIC OPTION"!

SO WHEN I SAY NOW THAT I DID NOT CAMPAIGN ON THE PUBLIC OPTION--TECHNICALLY, I'M ALMOST NOT LYING!

IN FEBRUARY, ROBERT GIBBS EXPLAINED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD NOT PURSUE A PUBLIC OPTION, DUE TO "VOTE COUNT" CONCERNS. WE DON'T SEE ANY POSSIBLE WAY WE CAN GET 50 VOTES OUT OF THE, UM, 59 DEMOCRATS IN THE SENATE.

THAT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE.

AND YOU'RE A CARTOON PENGUIN. NO ONE CARES WHAT YOU THINK.

THE WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON

A MORE PLAUSIBLE EXPLANATION WAS SPELLED OUT PRETTY CLEARLY IN THE NEW YORK TIMES LAST AUGUST.

Several hospital lobbyists involved in the White House deals said it was understood as a condition of their support that the final legislation would not include a government-run health plan ... "We have an agreement with the White House that I'm very confident will be seen all the way through conference," one of the industry lobbyists told a Capitol Hill newsletter...

(full article: nyti.ms/a2PAXy)

HIS SUPPORTERS LIKE TO CLAIM THAT THE PRESIDENT IS A MASTER TACTICIAN PLAYING A GAME OF MULTI-DIMENSIONAL CHESS... HE'S SO FAR AHEAD OF EVERYONE ELSE, THE BRILLIANCE OF HIS STRATEGY WILL ONLY BE APPARENT IN RETROSPECT!

AND PERHAPS NOT EVEN THEN!

BUT WHAT IF THE GAME IS POKER-- AND HE'S JUST A LOUSY PLAYER? BEFORE WE START, UH, BIDDING, I THOUGHT IT ONLY FAIR TO SHOW YOU GENTLEMEN MY CARDS!

A VERY STRONG HAND IN-DEED, MR. PRESIDENT!

HEH! HEH!

IF WE HAD ANY SENSE, WE'D FOLD RIGHT NOW!

HEH HEH!

TM, TM&R© 2010... www.thismodernworld.com

Photographs for viewing at the Henry Paine Gallery, 147 E. Alpine Ave., Mon-Fri., 1-6pm. Stockton

Henry Paine Camera Repair

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Stiffening the backbones of Democrats

Jim Hightower

You know what we need to juice up the performance of our weak economy? Viagra.

Yes, America needs a new Viagra, specifically targeted to stiffen backbones—in particular, the limp backbones of Barack Obama's team, as well as the flaccid spines of Democratic congressional leaders. Where's the drug industry when we really need it?

The Obama-ites seem incapable of firm stands. They excite us by boldly addressing our economic woes, then they seduce us by proposing stout actions. But when it comes time to follow through—it's droopsville.

Take America's job crisis. Obama and the Democrats eloquently empathize with the plight of struggling families who are falling out of the middle class. They point out that after Wall Street bankers crashed our economy and created the Great Recession, which began in December 2007, the number

of jobs available to Americans has plummeted by more than 8.4 million. Since then, another 2.7 million jobseekers have come into the workforce. That leaves us in a hole that is 11.1 million jobs deep.

The White House and Congress correctly note that our economy must not merely stop losing jobs, it must create more than 400,000 new positions a month for the next three years just to get us out of this hole. Nothing is more important, they tell us, blowing kisses of compassion and promising satisfaction.

"Our three most important priorities in this Congress," says Rep. Bob Etheridge, a North Carolina Democrat, are "jobs, jobs, jobs." Obama himself has titillated the hopes of working families by proposing a \$266 billion national emergency program to put America to work.

Strong stuff—let's get it on!

Sure enough, after a lengthy romancing of their Republican

colleagues (who are devout believers in an abstinence-only job-creation policy), the Democrats finally made their move last week. With the support of five GOP senators, the "jobs, jobs, jobs" bill passed in both houses of Congress.

But ... what a letdown. To win those five Republican senators, Democratic leaders shriveled their job investment program from a robust \$266 billion to a frustratingly puny \$15 billion. Even such phony Casanovas as Sen. Chuck Schumer had to confess that the "package is not a panacea; it's not going to solve everything."

Everything? Chuck, admit your impotence. At most, this bill might stimulate the creation of 250,000 new jobs—a bit short of the 11 million that America needs just to get back to where we were in 2007, much less the need to create an economic path to lead us into a bold future of new, sustainable, middle-class job creation.

In fact, the Democrats' response is even weaker than it appears. Rather than directly creating jobs that pay workers, the \$15 billion is going into tax breaks for businesses. The convoluted hope is that the money will "encourage" the recipients to hire a few people who're suffering from long-term joblessness. This trickle-down approach is even more pathetic than trying to fight a house fire with a squirt gun, for it doesn't even put the squirt gun in the hands of the people caught in the fire.

What the Democrats have done is to pass a do-nothing Republican bill, a reality that was blurted out by Sen. Orrin Hatch, one of the five GOPsters to vote for it: "This is a conservative approach to help put our economy back on track through tax relief, not government spending."

What a fraud. And an insult. Remember when Wall Street bankers shouted "Fire!" two years ago? Both parties rushed to the rescue, not with "conservative" tax

relief, but with trillions of public dollars that they put directly in the hands of the same Wall Street arsonists who started the fire.

We expect pious Republicans to consider millions of struggling American workers to be less worthy than a few greedheaded bankers, but not the Party of Roosevelt. Yet one Democratic leader said of this feeble bill, "Better something than nothing."

Maybe they're fooling themselves—but not us, and certainly not the jobless. This bill is nothing. And if Democrats don't stiffen their spines, they'll be nothing, too.

National radio commentator, writer, public speaker, and author of the book, Swim Against The Current: Even A Dead Fish Can Go With The Flow, Jim Hightower battles the Powers That Be on behalf of the Powers That Ought To Be—consumers, working families, environmentalists, small businesses, and just-plain-folks.

Source: *truthout* | Op-Ed 3/10/10
www.truthout.org

Democrats and the youth vote

Paul Rogat Loeb

If the Democrats don't get the youth vote, they're toast. That happened in Virginia, New Jersey and Massachusetts, where young Obama voters stayed home in droves. It's an ugly, conceivable future portended by a new Harvard poll that shows 41 percent of young Republicans planning on voting in November, compared to 35 percent of young Democrats and 13 percent of independents. A recent Pew poll showed a similarly disturbing pattern: Young voters still prefer the Democrats, but their margin is slipping and their enthusiasm level is worse.

Reasons and solutions

The Democrats need to tackle youth joblessness. They've passed important changes in student financial aid, like income-contingent loan repayment. Most students and recent students don't know about them, and they need to. But with youth unemployment at near-record levels, it's understandable that young men and women would feel angry and frustrated.

If the Democrats want to keep this generation, they need to pass major jobs bills, probably through reconciliation, since the Republicans seem to be only too eager to leave young voters demoralized and unemployed. It would be nice if the Obama administration were leading on this more strongly, but since they aren't leading strongly enough, the push to make jobs the top priority has to come from the grassroots. This happened in the 1930s under Roosevelt. Seventy-five years later, I can visit a Works Progress Administration-created library or go for a run on a Works Progress Administration-created boardwalk, and reap the benefits of programs that also gave millions of people desperately needed jobs.

We need to make equivalent investments now, targeted at those who need jobs the most. It also wouldn't hurt to address the drastic lack of health insurance among all but the most affluent youth, and to avoid a further Afghan quagmire.

But we need more than specific programs and policies. We need to give people a renewed sense of

why involvement matters. Absent a sense of how social change has occurred in the past and can again, it's tempting to give up when you've barely begun, all the more in an instant-attention and instant-gratification culture. Given that few of us know the stories of how previous citizen activists persisted and prevailed, it's understandable that many who were acting so passionately just over a year ago feel adrift and unable to make an impact. That's true of more experienced activists, but it's particularly true of those for whom the Obama campaign was the first step into trying to create a more humane common future. Those of us who've been involved longer (including veteran youth activists) need to offer this perspective, to help those more recently involved avoid cynical resignation and withdrawal.

We need these lapsed activists and particularly lapsed youth activists, because they're the ones who will reach out to their peers. During the 2008 election, you could go anywhere in battleground states and find efforts to engage

young voters. In the Virginia, New Jersey and Massachusetts elections, the campaigns largely ignored them, and the parallel independent efforts that might have filled the gap didn't exist. Without being reached by these more personal approaches, young voters were left more isolated, more readily manipulated by 30-second ads, and more likely to simply stay home. As I explore in my "Soul of a Citizen" book, change works best when people approach those they already know, within familiar contexts. And when campaigns, movements and their supporters reach out in ways that offer a chance for genuine dialog. Some of this can be through social media—we need the texting, Facebooking, and other networking that helped the Obama campaign bloom. But these approaches

work best when complemented by more visible public actions and more direct personal dialog. If we're going to enlist those who once acted and speak to their legitimate discontents, we're going to need to recreate this one-on-one

reach, and begin to recreate it now, not just in the last two weeks of the campaigns.

As the recent surveys imply, the stakes in this are huge—not just for now or November, but for the ongoing allegiance and participation levels of a generation. Whether citizen activists can help the Obama administration and the Democrats re-engage those who carried them to victory in '08 will shape American politics not just in the coming year, but for decades to come. The Obama administration can play a critical role in demanding action on issues that affect young voters' lives. The Congress can use all available options, including reconciliation, to pass them. But it's up to the rest of us to offer the examples of connection, context and continued commitment.

Paul Rogat Loeb is the author of "Soul of a Citizen: Living With Conviction in Challenging Times."
<http://www.soulofacitizen.org>

Source: *truthout* | Op-Ed 3/11/10
www.truthout.org

House Afghanistan debate: what Kucinich accomplished

Robert Naiman

Yesterday, at long last, there was a vigorous debate about the war in Afghanistan on the floor of the United States House of Representatives. The legislative vehicle was a resolution introduced by Ohio Rep. Dennis Kucinich calling for US troops to be withdrawn from Afghanistan by the end of the year. But House critics of the war have long been agitating for a real debate.

This is the debate that should have been held—at least—last fall when the administration was considering sending more US troops to Afghanistan, or—at least—when the administration announced its plans to send more troops. If the House had held this debate while the administration was mulling its decision, the Congressional airing of arguments against military escalation and in favor of political and diplomatic solutions would have attracted a lot more attention, and could have affected the decision. No doubt, the possibility that a Congressional debate then might have affected the policy was a key motivation for some in the House leadership not to allow this debate to occur then.

But it is much better for the House to debate now than not to debate at all, or to fail to debate the policy until the question of money is on the floor, a point emphasized by Rep. Howard Berman, chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, who vigorously opposed the resolution but vigorously supported the debate. Pro-war views are hardly lacking venues for making their case, meeting in church basements, passing out flyers on the sidewalk. Pro-war views dominate the mainstream media. It's dissent against the war that has to fight to be heard. Yesterday, dissent was heard.

Of course, the House debate on Afghanistan didn't get the media play yesterday that the Eric Massa soap opera did, as Rep. Patrick Kennedy (D-Rhode Island) passionately noted (ironically, arguably garnering more press attention for the Afghanistan

debate with his jeremiad than any other intervention on the House floor.)

But compare the press coverage of the Afghanistan debate to almost any other day of press coverage on Afghanistan, and the thing that stands out is that there was any coverage of dissent at all. Kennedy was absolutely right to call attention to the media's choices in the exercise of their agenda-setting power, but it's always important to keep in mind that the causality also always runs the other way: the media take cues about "what is an issue" from politicians, and the increase in the reporting yesterday of dissent on the war was a reflection of that. There was some press coverage of Congressional dissent, in part because there was a newsworthy Congressional dissent event to report on.

Julian Barnes of The Los Angeles Times got the story exactly right: The measure ended up losing, 356 to 65, a margin that had been expected. Nonetheless, antiwar lawmakers welcomed the debate as a chance to express pent-up frustration with the continued troop buildup in Afghanistan, and to express their view that the original mission of US forces, defeating al-Qaeda, had been lost.

Barnes specifically noted the dissents of Rep. Donna Edwards (D-Maryland), Rep. Alan Grayson (D-Florida) and Rep. Ron Paul (R-Texas). Edwards said she supported the resolution because the US was no longer fighting al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. "This Congress has an obligation to send a strong message to the White House that the war must come to an end," she said. "Who are we fighting? Over the course of this time this war and its mission and its goals have morphed and morphed and morphed."

Grayson, wearing a tie festooned with peace symbols, called the Afghanistan war a "foreign occupation" that was unconstitutional and would leave thousands more young people with brain damage. "We won and now we could go home. In fact,

we could have gone home a long time ago," Grayson said. "We simply can't afford these wars any more in price of money or the price of blood."

"The country is totally bankrupt and we are spending trillions of dollars on these useless wars," said Rep. Ron Paul, a libertarian and also a former presidential candidate. "History shows all empires end because they expand too far and bankrupt the country, just as the Soviet system came down."

The *New York Times* noted the dissent of Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-Maine): "Is the cost of this war worth it?" asked Pingree. "Can we afford to turn our backs on the challenges we face at home and continue to pursue failed policies abroad?"

And National Public Radio noted the dissent of the gentleman from Ohio. Kucinich said he wrote this bill because he wants Congress to take responsibility for the war in Afghanistan. He said it should "claim responsibility for the troop casualties, which are now close to 1,000; to claim responsibility for the cost, which is approaching \$250 billion and, together with the Iraq war, close to \$1 trillion." Kucinich said Congress must also take responsibility for the great cost at home: the money spent on the war that hasn't gone to job creation, housing and public works projects.

Robert Naiman is senior policy analyst at Just Foreign Policy <<http://www.justforeignpolicy.org>>.

Source: truthout | Op-Ed 3/11/10 <http://www.truthout.org>

Test your knowledge on Afghanistan

- Which is the correct list of countries bordering Afghanistan?
 - China, Iran, Pakistan, India
 - China, Iran, Pakistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan
 - China, Iraq, Iran, Uzbekistan, Russia
 - Russia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Iran
 - Which number is closest to the number of U.S. and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) military bases in Afghanistan?
 - 50
 - 150
 - 300
 - 400
 - General McCrystal said which solution would be the inevitable outcome to the conflict in Afghanistan?
 - Military
 - Political
 - Economic
 - Social
 - President Obama talked about a 'surge' of American civilian expertise going to Afghanistan from the State Department and USAID. How many civilians does the U.S. government hope to have in country in the near future?
 - 1,000
 - 2,000
 - 5,000
 - 10,000
 - By the summer of 2010, how many U.S. troops will be in Afghanistan?
 - ~20,000
 - ~33,000
 - ~74,000
 - ~98,000
 - How much money is the Obama Administration expected to request for the Afghanistan war supplemental (to be applied to FY2010)?
 - \$80 million
 - \$12 billion
 - \$22 billion
 - \$33 billion
 - What ethnic group do the largest number of people in Afghanistan belong to?
 - Pashtun
 - Tajik
 - Hazara
 - Uzbek
 - Aimak
 - How many countries contribute ISAF troops to the war in Afghanistan?
 - 14
 - 30
 - 42
 - 50
- Source: Friends Committee on National Legislation 3/9/10 FCNL, 245 Second St NE, Washington, DC 20002 800-630-1330 <http://www.fcnl.org>*
- (Answers on page 11)*



Why is too much not enough?

Bill Moyers
and Michael Winship

Living in these United States, there comes a point at which you throw your hands up in exasperation and despair and ask a fundamental question or two: how much excess profit does corporate America really need? How much bigger do executive salaries and bonuses have to be? How many houses or jets or artworks can be crammed into a life?

After all, as billionaire movie director Steven Spielberg is reported to have said, when all is said and done, "How much better can lunch get?" But since greed is not self-governing, hardly anyone raking in the dough ever stops to say, "That's it. Enough's enough! How do we prevent it from sweeping up everything in its path, including us?"

Look at the health care industry saying to hell with consumers and then hiking premiums—by as much as 39 percent in the case of Anthem Blue Cross in California. According to Congressional investigators, over a two-year period, Anthem's parent company WellPoint spent more than \$27 million dollars for executive retreats at luxury resorts. And in 2008, WellPoint paid 39 of its executives more than a million dollars each. Profit before patients.

This week, America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP), the health insurance industry's lobby, announced they'd be spending more than a million dollars on new television ads justifying their costs.

Speaking at their annual policy meeting in Washington—and without a trace of irony—AHIP's President and CEO Karen Ignagni declared, "The current debate about rising premiums has demonstrated that, in fact, we have a health care cost crisis in this country. Unfortunately, the path that has been followed is one of vilification rather than problem solving."

Beg pardon? You're lamenting a health care cost crisis and raising your premiums? Isn't that like the guy complaining there's an

obesity epidemic in America while ordering a double Big Mac with extra fries?

Of course, a million is a mere bagatelle in the shadow of the \$544 million that was spent on lobbying by the health sector last year, plus more than \$200 million in advocacy ads. And a million's just the curtain raiser to what will be spent in these final weeks of health care reform debate.

Two weeks ago, the *Washington Post* reported, "Washington interest groups have burst back into action in hopes of bolstering or defeating a new Democratic push on health-care reform legislation, sparking another wave of rallies, lobbying efforts and costly advertising campaigns."

This in spite of the projection that over ten years the Obama plan would pop an additional \$336 billion into the insurance companies' pockets—in the form of subsidies given to those who can't afford to buy health insurance on their own.

O.K., this is getting weird: We're going to help the poor by enriching their exploiters?

But apparently even that won't satisfy big business' voracious appetite for more. On Tuesday, Employers for a Healthy Economy, a coalition of 248 business groups, led by the U.S Chamber of Commerce, and including construction and manufacturing interests, as well as health insurance companies, said that over ten days they will spend up to \$10 million on ads aimed at putting the screws on members of Congress to vote against health care reform.

Goodness knows, it isn't just because their profit margins may dwindle. No, according to Neil Trautwein, vice president of the National Retail Federation, one of the trade associations involved, "These bills are job killers. Retail simply cannot afford any higher benefit costs or burdensome mandates." (Never mind that extrapolating from baseline forecasts made by the US Department of Labor's Employment Projections Program, the Center for American Progress,

a liberal think tank, projects that health care reform possibly could create an average of as many as 400,000 new jobs a year.)

But beyond the health care fight, and perhaps far more significant in the long run, this effort is just one more example of life, Pandora-style. The Company has arrived, only it's called the US Chamber of Commerce, and it's got its sights on anything that moves, damn the natives, full speed ahead. During 2008, 86 percent of contributions from the chamber's political action committee went to GOP candidates. The conservatives have found their Avatar, AKA Frankenstein.

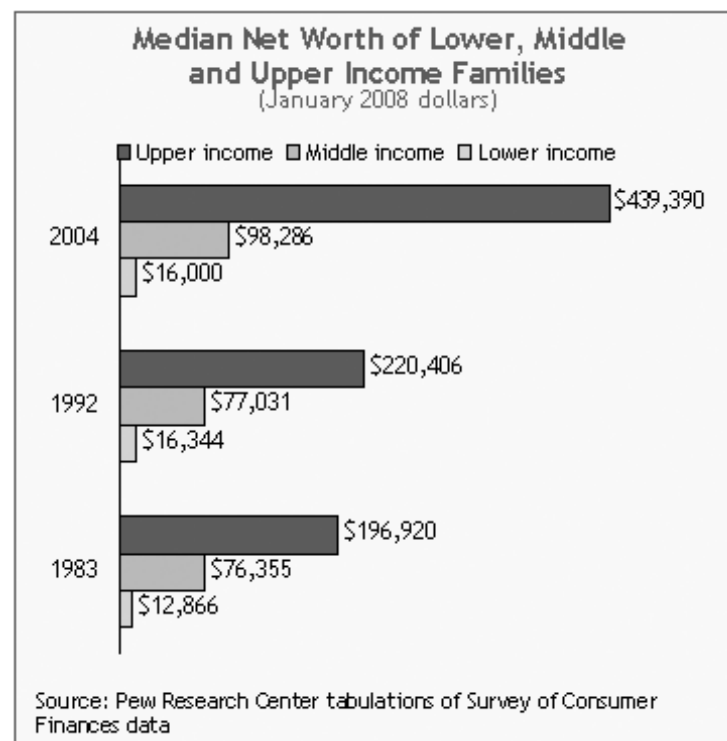
Of course, there is not actually a Chamber of Commerce, at least the way we might imagine it. This is no confederation of congenial, small town business groups that pass out maps of Main Street and souvenir key rings. The chamber in question is a front group. Yes, yes, it reports a membership of three million businesses, but tax records indicate that in 2008 a third of its contributions came from 19 companies paying between \$1 million and \$15.3 million. Don't hold your breath: the chamber is not required to reveal who those 19 are.

The March 8 edition of the *Los Angeles Times* reported, "internal documents suggest the organization's treasury is filled in substantial part by contributions from a couple dozen major corporations most affected by Washington policymakers."

Got it? Predators who prey together stick together.

With all that cash, the *Times* noted, "The chamber spent more than \$144 million on lobbying and grass-roots organizing last year, a 60 percent increase over 2008, and well beyond the spending of individual labor unions or the Democratic or Republican national committees. The chamber is expected to substantially exceed that spending level in 2010."

This elite organization of oligarchs has been emboldened by the Supreme Court decision in the Citizens United case, which now allows corporations to spend



freely on political campaigns right up until Election Day, and by the chamber's recent success contributing a million dollars for ads supporting Republican Sen. Scott Brown in Massachusetts.

What's more, wrote the *Los Angeles Times*, "Using trade associations such as the chamber as the vehicle for spending corporate money on politics has an extra appeal: These groups can take large contributions from companies and wealthy individuals in ways that will probably avoid public disclosure requirements."

So, with the spring comes anonymous greed run rampant. "In the past a lot of companies and wealthy individuals stood on the sidelines" of politics, a corporate lawyer at Washington's influential

law firm Covington & Burling told the *Times*.

"That cloud has been lifted," he said.

As the sun sets on democracy.

No wonder demonstrators outside that health insurance meeting in Washington this week surrounded the hotel with yellow crime scene tape. The entire country is being mugged.

Bill Moyers is managing editor and Michael Winship is senior writer of the weekly public affairs program, "Bill Moyers Journal," which airs Friday nights on PBS. Check local airtimes or comment at The Moyers Blog at www.pbs.org/moyers <<http://www.pbs.org/moyers>>

Source: *truthout* | Op-Ed 3/12/10
<http://www.truthout.org/>

How much excess profit does corporate America really need? How much bigger do executive salaries and bonuses have to be? How many houses or jets or artworks can be crammed into a life?

State crimes against democracy—and 9/11

Peter Phillips and Mickey Huff

The term “conspiracy theory” is often used to denigrate and discredit inquiry into the veracity of suspected state crimes against democracy (SCADs). Labeling SCAD research as “conspiracy theory” is an effective method of preventing ongoing investigations from being reported in the corporate media and keep them outside of broader public scrutiny. Psychologist Laurie Manwell, University of Guelph, addresses the psychological advantage that SCAD actors hold in the public sphere. Manwell, writing in *American Behavioral Scientist* (Sage 2010) states, “research shows that people are far less willing to examine information that disputes, rather than confirms, their beliefs . . . pre-existing beliefs can interfere with SCADs inquiry, especially in regards to September 11, 2001.”

Professor Steven Hoffman, visiting scholar at the University of Buffalo, recently acknowledged this phenomenon in a study “There Must Be a Reason: Osama, Saddam and Inferred Justification.” Hoffman concluded, “Our data shows substantial support for a cognitive theory known as ‘motivated reasoning,’ which suggests that rather than search rationally for information that either confirms or disconfirms a particular belief, people actually seek out information that confirms what they already believe. In fact, for the most part people completely ignore contrary information.”

Sometimes even new academic research goes largely unreported when the work contradicts prevailing understandings of recent historical events. A specific case of unreported academic research is the peer reviewed journal article from *Open Chemical Physics Journal* (Volume 2, 2009), entitled “Active Thermite Material Discovered in Dust from the 9/11 World Trade Center Catastrophe.” In the abstract the authors write, “We have discovered distinctive red/gray chips in all the samples. These red/gray chips show marked similarities in all four



samples. The properties of these chips were analyzed using optical microscopy, scanning electron microscopy (SEM), X-ray energy dispersive spectroscopy (XEDS), and differential scanning calorimetry (DSC). The red portion of these chips is found to be an unreacted thermite material and highly energetic.” Thermite is a pyrotechnic composition of a metal powder and a metal oxide which produces an aluminothermic reaction known as a thermite reaction and is used in controlled demolitions of buildings.

National Medal of Science recipient (1999) Professor Lynn Margulis from the Department of Geosciences at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst is one of many academics who supports further open investigative research in the collapse of the World Trade Center towers. Margulis recently wrote in *Rock Creek Free Press*, “all three buildings were destroyed by carefully planned, orchestrated and executed controlled demolition.” Richard Gage, AIA, architect and founder of the non-profit Architects & Engineers for 9/11 Truth, Inc. (AE911Truth), announced a decisive milestone February 19, 2010 at a press conference in San Francisco, CA. More than 1,000 architects and engineers

worldwide now support the call for a new investigation into the destruction of the Twin Towers and Building 7 at the World Trade Center complex on September 11, 2001.

Credible scientific evidence brings into question the possibility that some aspects of the events of 9/11 involved State Crimes Against Democracy. Psychologically this is a very hard concept for Americans to even consider. However, ignoring the issue in the context of multiple proven SCADs since World War II seems far more dangerous for democracy than the consequences of future scientific inquiry and transparent, fact-based investigative reporting. Anything short of complete, open discourse based on all the evidence about these critical issues in our society relating to the possible continuation of SCADs is simply a matter of censorship.

Peter Phillips is professor of sociology at Sonoma State University, President of Media Freedom Foundation/Project Censored, former director of Project Censored, and coeditor of Censored 2010. Mickey Huff is associate professor of history at Diablo Valley College, Director of Project Censored/Media Freedom Foundation, and co-editor of Censored 2010.

How misinformation is spread

Sam Wang and Sandra Aamodt

The brain does not simply gather and stockpile information as a computer’s hard drive does. Facts are stored first in the hippocampus, a structure deep in the brain about the size and shape of a fat man’s curled pinkie finger. But the information does not rest there. Every time we recall it, our brain writes it down again, and during this re-storage, it is also reprocessed. In time, the fact is gradually transferred to the cerebral cortex and is separated from the context in which it was originally learned. For example, you know that the capital of California is Sacramento, but you probably don’t remember how you learned it.

This phenomenon, known as source amnesia, can also lead people to forget whether a statement is true. Even when a lie is presented with a disclaimer, people often later remember it as true.

With time, this misremembering only gets worse. A false statement from a noncredible source that is at first not believed can gain credibility during the months it takes to reprocess memories from short-term hippocampal storage to longer-term cortical storage. As the source is forgotten, the message and its implications gain strength. This could explain why, during the 2004 presidential campaign, it took some weeks for the Swift Boat Veterans for Truth campaign against Senator John Kerry to have an effect on his standing in the polls.

Even if they do not understand the neuroscience behind source amnesia, campaign strategists can exploit it to spread misinformation. They know that if their message is initially memorable, its impression will persist long after it is debunked. In repeating a falsehood, someone may back it up with an opening line like “I think I read somewhere” or even with a reference to a specific source.

In one study, a group of Stanford students was exposed repeatedly to an unsubstantiated claim taken from a Web site that Coca-Cola is

an effective paint thinner. Students who read the statement five times were nearly one-third more likely than those who read it only twice to attribute it to *Consumer Reports* (rather than *The National Enquirer*, their other choice), giving it a gloss of credibility.

Adding to this innate tendency to mold information we recall is the way our brains fit facts into established mental frameworks. We tend to remember news that accords with our worldview, and discount statements that contradict it.

In another Stanford study, 48 students, half of whom said they favored capital punishment and half of whom said they opposed it, were presented with two pieces of evidence, one supporting and one contradicting the claim that capital punishment deters crime. Both groups were more convinced by the evidence that supported their initial position.

Psychologists have suggested that legends propagate by striking an emotional chord. In the same way, ideas can spread by emotional selection rather than by their factual merits, encouraging the persistence of falsehoods about Coke or about a presidential candidate.

Journalists and campaign workers may think they are acting to counter misinformation by pointing out that it is not true. But by repeating a false rumor, they may inadvertently make it stronger. In its concerted effort to “stop the smears,” the Obama campaign may want to keep this in mind. Rather than emphasize that Mr. Obama is not a Muslim, for instance, it may be more effective to stress that he embraced Christianity as a young man.

Sam Wang, an associate professor of molecular biology and neuroscience at Princeton, and Sandra Aamodt, a former editor in chief of Nature Neuroscience, are the authors of “Welcome to Your Brain: Why You Lose Your Car Keys but Never Forget How to Drive and Other Puzzles of Everyday Life.”

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of San Joaquin County

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Stockton's march for schools



On Thursday, March 4, Stockton commemorated “Black Thursday,” a day where protesters wore Black in solidarity with students, parents and public education employees against further cuts to education. Over a thousand people participated in the walk down Miracle Mile to the UOP campus.

Statement from the event

We, concerned citizens and activists in San Joaquin County, formed the Coalition to Save Public Education because we believe a healthy, thriving public education system is the backbone of every community. It should provide all those living within the county with equal educational opportunities and the promise of a better future! We can no longer sit idly by and watch the systematic dismantling of an essential educational resource and right of every citizen!

The Coalition emphasizes:

- The need to restore and guarantee quality public education.
- A government and economy that works for all people.
- Fair taxes to fund California’s Education, our future.

ACTION: Tell Sacramento to Stop Dismantling Public Education

On the SUSD budget

*Beverly Fitch McCarthy,
SUSD Board President*

Recently every public school district has been concentrating on the immediate problem of how to adjust their expenditures in order to have a balanced budget for 2010-2011. I find it illuminating to consider what could have been, if there had not been such massive cuts to public education.

There are many different indicators that one can use to measure reductions in funding. You can look at the categorical fund budget. Categoricals are state and federal monies that can only be spent for specific purposes as designated by law. Or you can look at the general fund budget excluding categorical funding. Finally you can look at a combination of the two. Since there have been multiple reductions in categorical support that varied considerably by district across

the county, Stockton Unified limited its analysis to base revenue limit funding—the state per pupil funding, adjusted by enrollment gains or losses.

Our analysis focused on the funding Stockton Unified School District would have enjoyed if the funding formulas that were in place in 2007-2008 would have remained in place through 2010-2011.

Looking only at base revenue limit funding, and excluding categorical funding which has also undergone in excess of 15% reductions based upon the Governor's January proposals for fiscal 2010-2011, we have \$111,938,000 less than what we would have had if the funding formulas had not changed from those in place 2007-2008. That figure breaks down year-by-year to \$16.6 million in 2008-2009, an additional \$65.4 million in 2009-

2010, and another \$46.5 million in 2010-2011. This is an incredible loss in services to students, jobs lost, and losses of income to our employees who have not had cost of living adjustments over those three budget cycles. If the losses in categorical funds were included, the figures would be even larger.

Some of these lost funds could have been used to address our lowest performing schools under the new unfunded mandate of Race to the Top. As it is, we will need to adjust our current allocation of resources to meet the challenge.

We know that the State cannot give what it does not have, due to the recession.. However, if someone tells you that Stockton Unified has not done its part in budget reductions to address the need, you can answer not only are we continuing to meet new mandates, we are doing it with over \$111 million fewer dollars.

Answers to Afghanistan quiz (page 7)

1. Which is the correct list of countries bordering Afghanistan?

Answer: b—China, Iran, Pakistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan

(CIA World Factbook website. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/af.html>)

2. Which number is closest to the number of U.S. and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) military bases in Afghanistan?

Answer: d—400

(Nick Turse on the CommonDreams.org website. <http://www.commondreams.org/view/2010/02/10-0>)

3. General McCrystal said which solution would be the inevitable outcome to the conflict in Afghanistan?

Answer: b—Political

(Financial Times. <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/1036aae6-074a-11df-a9b7-00144feabdc0.html?nclink-check=1>)

4. President Obama talked about a 'surge' of American civilian expertise going to Afghanistan from the State Department and USAID. How many civilians does the U.S. government hope to have in country in the near future?

Answer: a—1,000

(FCNL's September/October 2009 /Washington Newsletter/, "Civilian Surge or More Militarized Aid in Afghanistan?" http://www.fcnl.org/now/now_item.php?item_id=635&issue_id=36.)

5. By the summer of 2010, how many U.S. troops will be in Afghanistan?

Answer: d— ~98,000 (Right now about 68,000 which is about 30,000 more than when Obama took office. Obama is sending another 30,000 by this summer.)

Sign FCNL's petition <http://action.fcnl.org/petitions/afghanistan0210>. See FCNL's Afghanistan page <<http://www.fcnl.org/afghanistan/>> for our analysis on the war and how to take steps towards peace.

(Peter Spiegel, Jonathan Weisman, and Yochi J. Dreazen in *The Wall Street Journal*. <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125967363641871171.html>)

6. How much money is the Obama Administration expected to request for the Afghanistan war supplemental (to be applied to FY2010)?

Answer: d—\$33 billion

(News release from the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD). <http://www.defense.gov/Releases/Release.aspx?ReleaseID=13281>)

7. What ethnic group do the largest number of people in Afghanistan belong to?

Answer: a—Pashtun (42%)

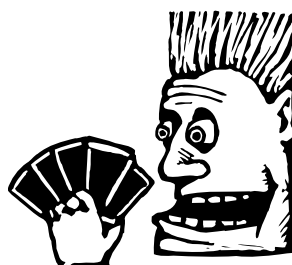
(CIA World Factbook website. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/af.html>)

8. How many countries contribute ISAF troops to the war in Afghanistan?

Answer: c—42 (28 in NATO and 14 others)

(NATO ISAF Contributing Nations website. <http://www.nato.int/isaf/structure/nations/index.html>. If you would like to see an end to the war in Afghanistan, consider signing FCNL's petition <http://action.fcnl.org/petitions/afghanistan0210> calling for a troop decrease and an exit strategy.)

Source: Friends Committee on National Legislation 3/9/10 FCNL, 245 Second St NE, Washington, DC 20002 800-630-1330 <http://www.fcnl.org>



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Fight against hunger gets a little help

Jeremy Terhune

On February 2, 2010, the local organization PUNTES welcomed a highly qualified team—Patricia Miller-Battiste, Eleazar Caballero, Marcy Hachman, Rey Ledesma, Mark Stebbins, Maria Mendez, and Dale Sanders—to participate in the Citizens Advisory Committee for the PUNTES Community Supported Garden project.

Stockton is aggressively revitalizing its downtown; yet its population (who are over 50 percent minority) face serious food security issues. That's to say, people are hungry. Fewer than 15 percent of school children in our community eat the recommended servings of fruit, less than 20 percent eat the recommended servings of vegetables, and over 44,000 families in San Joaquin County eat less than 3 three meals per day. Furthermore, one of the primary concerns in public schools is the increasing obesity among school children who daily fill themselves with unhealthy, and empty, calories!

Composed of seven established

community leaders, the Citizens Advisory Committee will help PUNTES increase access both to healthy food and to physical activity at the neighborhood level by developing a Community Supported Garden program, in teamwork with the City of Stockton. The Garden will not merely grow affordable, culturally acceptable fresh organic food in under-served neighborhoods; it will help families feed themselves. It will also be a center for gardening education and community celebrations.

PUNTES is registered with the Secretary of State as a charitable organization. Their mission is to spread the knowledge and effective use of sustainable technology, to implement the use of sustainable technology, and stimulate a critical, cooperative and positive attitude in underprivileged communities across the Americas.

For more information contact Executive Director Jeremy Terhune, jterhune@puentesc.org.

(adapted by permission from *BiLingual Weekly of Stockton*)

Al Gore still won't talk about meat

Mickey Z.

Al Gore penned a lengthy New York Times op-ed entitled, "We Can't Wish Away Climate Change," on February 28, 2010. As expected, Gore was wordy, made no effort to discuss the planet's top polluter (US Department of Defense), and, most of all, the former vice president once again opted to ignore the No. 1 cause of climate change: the meat-based diet. In fact, I ran a search on the nearly 2,000 words, but none of the following terms were found: meat, cow, livestock, methane, farm, diet or vegan.

Accepting the (unfortunate) reality that Al Gore is the planet's best-known climate change spokesperson, he has yet again squandered an ideal opportunity to educate, inform and provoke real change. Just as they served burgers and hot dogs at the Gore-inspired Live Earth concerts in 2007, the high-profile, green crowd simply refused to accept the convenient truth: According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, "the livestock sector generates more greenhouse gas emissions as measured in CO2 equivalent—18 percent—than transport. It is also a major source of land and water degradation."

Yes, it's much more than just climate change. What about the aforementioned water degradation? As the Sierra Club explained, groundwater is "frequently contaminated by factory farm pollution, generally

in the form of nitrates. Nitrate pollution, which can cause serious human health problems, seeps out of manure lagoons and into community sources of drinking water."

Let's consider deforestation. "In the Amazon the cattle sector is the largest driver of rainforest destruction, accounting for 60 to 70 percent of deforestation," wrote Nikolas Kozloff, author of *No Rain in the Amazon: How South America's Climate Change Affects the Entire Planet*. "To put it in concrete terms: every 18 seconds on average one hectare of Amazon rainforest is being lost to cattle ranchers. As if the carbon emissions resulting from cattle deforestation were not enough, consider bovine methane emissions."

As a result, the meat-based diet also plays a role in habitat destruction, animal and plant extinctions, world hunger and corporate welfare. Still, since climate change is the eco-topic most familiar to the general public, it may be the ideal place for Al Gore to start this discussion.

As vegan musician Moby explained, omitting the role of animals raised for food from efforts to address climate change is "like talking about lung cancer without talking about cigarettes."

How much longer can the world's best known environmentalist ignore such an issue?

In an open letter to Al Gore, Pamela Rice of the Viva Vegie

Society wrote: We're changing our light bulbs. We're buying high-mileage cars. We're dreaming up new green businesses to reduce the shoe-size of our ecological footprint. But even if we do all of this, a silent trend is working in the background that surely will wipe out all of our gains. We're eating too much meat—meat that from a health standpoint is far in excess. And the world is on a trajectory to double its consumption of meat by mid-century. Indeed, all of our efforts to cut greenhouse emissions will be wiped out if we don't reduce our meat consumption. And people need to hear this from you, Mr. Gore, as the person with the most credibility to get this fact out there. If they hear it from you, they will listen. It is an environmental imperative for humans to reduce their consumption of animal-based foods.

Mickey Z. is probably the only person on the planet to have appeared in both a karate flick with Billy "Tae Bo" Blanks and a political book with Howard Zinn. He is the author of 9 books—most recently "Self Defense for Radicals" and his second novel, "Dear Vito." He is a regular writer for Planet Green and can be found on the web at www.mickeyz.net <<http://www.mickeyz.net>>.

Source: *truthout* | Op-Ed 3/9/10 www.truthout.org

Lawn signs, mugs, T-shirts

"War is NOT the answer" lawn signs come from the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL). We are requesting a \$5 donation to cover costs (sorry, we can't ship lawn signs). We also have elegant pins made of pewter in the shape of the peace symbol for \$10. Also, handsome PJN T-shirts in many colors, and more. Come by the P&J Center to see these items, plus buttons and bumperstickers galore, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton CA 95204. Call 467-4455.



CA Rural Legal Assistance today

Raul Ferreira

California Rural Legal Assistance is a non-profit law firm which serves low-income people for free (with many branches through out California). The main cases that CRLA (Stockton office) advocates for is; Education Rights, Labor Rights, Public Benefits and Housing. And at the moment, we have an attorney

who will start in the near future to take cases that affect our gay and lesbian community.

With the way the economy is headed, and the state that California is in now, we are seeing our youth being expelled at an alarming rate, people losing their jobs and not getting paid what is owed them or being denied unemployment insurance,

our young and elderly losing their benefits and people getting scammed or evicted from their homes. California Rural Legal Assistance provides assistance to those in our community who couldn't afford someone to advocate on their behalf.

For more information on the CRLA, visit <http://www.crla.org>.

Climate change v. money: money is winning

Senate climate bill slows

Advocates of climate legislation are pushing to have a draft Senate bill finished before the spring recess begins on March 26. The bill's authors, Senators John Kerry (D-MA), Joe Lieberman (I-CT), and Lindsey Graham (R-SC), are now in the drafting stages but continue to meet with senators and interest groups in an effort to arrive at a politically viable carbon-pricing scheme.

As things stand, the draft will take a sector-by-sector approach to reducing emissions—a marked departure from the economy-wide cap-and-trade strategy employed in the House-passed bill (HR 2454) and its Senate counterpart, passed by the Environment and Public Works Committee. Under the strategy, electric utilities will be the first to have their emissions capped, something industry representatives say they are open to, so long as they see a legislative guarantee that others, like the manufacturing industry, will begin to share the burden in the future. Uncertainty, they say, could be more costly than cap-and-trade—the current lack of economic parity makes companies hesitant to invest in expensive alternative energy projects, even though such investments are likely vital to long-term success. Utilities are also requesting support in meeting new emission targets—requests include funding for carbon capture and sequestration projects and free emissions permits (40 percent in current negotiations) during the early stages of the program.

Graham heralded the shift in strategies with his much-discussed assertion that "cap-and-trade is dead." Still, he and his co-authors will likely use a cap-and-trade or cap-and-dividend mechanism to regulate utilities and later

manufacturers. Graham's remark, analysts say, was largely political, aimed at moving the discussion away from what opponents have referred to as "cap-and-tax"—a rhetorical change that Kerry and other climate proponents have been attempting to make for months, albeit unsuccessfully.

Graham sees a larger shift in the debate, however, particularly as climate skepticism apparently grows. "[T]he momentum around this large cap-and-trade bill to save the planet has been replaced by a business model," he said. "How do we create jobs and stay ahead of the Chinese and clean up the air? Once you start changing your perspective from 'Iowa is going to be beachfront property' to 'How do you create jobs and clean up the air?' you have a completely different focus." The remarks also serve as a reminder of the vastly different constituent expectations that the senators face. Like many lawmakers engaged in bipartisan efforts, Graham's work on the climate bill has earned criticism from his party back home. For a bill to pass, it will have to give 60 senators both the assurance that their state interests will be protected and the flexibility to frame the strategy in a politically palatable way.

The new focus Graham speaks of may be critical to winning bipartisan support for a comprehensive bill, but the emphasis on competitiveness and technology spending could also hinder international negotiations, depending on how it impacts the strategy's mechanics. And many opponents of cap-and-trade remain unmoved—"Cap and trade or a first cousin of cap and trade won't pass this year, in my judgment," said Senator Byron Dorgan (D-ND), an advocate of an energy-only bill.

So far, efforts to find a middle ground have won at least tentative support from 41 senators, while 29 remain generally opposed to the bill. Efforts now will focus on the additional compromises necessarily to win over undecided lawmakers—19 Democrats and 11 Republicans.

On March 9, President Obama made his first formal attempt to advance climate legislation in the Senate, something that supporters

have been urging him to do for some time. In a meeting with administration officials and key players in the Senate, the President again called for a consensus on a comprehensive bill this year, underscoring the importance of pricing carbon—not just focusing on energy measures, as many moderates have proposed—and pledged to make drilling and nuclear power concessions in return.

Meanwhile, Kerry, Lieberman, and Graham continued negotiations, meeting with major trade associations including the US Chamber of Commerce, the American Petroleum Institute, and the American Farm Bureau.

Senate Dems side with coal

On March 4, Senate Commerce Chair Jay Rockefeller (D-WV) and House Natural Resources Committee Chair Nick Rahall (D-WV) introduced companion bills in their respective chambers aimed at delaying greenhouse gas emission regulations from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The bills call for a two-year delay, meant to give Congress the necessary time to pass climate legislation. Rahall was joined by Representative Alan Mollohan (D-WV), a senior member of the Appropriations Committee in introducing the bill; Representative Rick Boucher (D-VA) is an original co-sponsor.

Meanwhile, two Democratic and eighteen Republican governors sent a letter to Congress, supporting action to block the regulations, but stressing that the kind of delay proposed by Rockefeller would be insufficient in guarding against the economic devastation about which they are "gravely concerned."

EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson has recently attempted to assuage concerns from Congress by promising a final "tailoring" rule to protect smaller sources, and initially raising the threshold from 25,000 to 75,000 tons of carbon dioxide equivalent per year. When asked whether she would support the proposed two-year delay, Jackson reiterated that she agrees a legislative approach is best, but that "the law says that EPA has to move forward on these issues."

Meanwhile, Kerry, Lieberman, and Graham continued negotiations, meeting with major trade associations including the US Chamber of Commerce, the American Petroleum Institute, and the American Farm Bureau.

Notably absent from the coalition is West Virginia Senator Robert Byrd (D), who said he has been sufficiently encouraged by Jackson's efforts. "I am continuing to have significant discussions about how to ensure the future of coal as a long-term energy resource," he said. "I am reluctant to give up on talks that might produce benefits for West Virginia's coal interests by seeming to turn away from ongoing negotiations." In an op-ed last fall, Byrd said that it would behoove his state to cooperate with rather than resist federal regulatory agencies, thereby increasing industry stability and attracting investors. The senator has lately taken a progressive stance on energy, continuing to champion coal interests but pointing to increased sustainability (both from "clean coal" and renewable energy projects) as central in West Virginia's economic future.

Meanwhile, Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) is attempting to block regulatory action with a resolution to overturn the EPA endangerment finding. Murkowski currently has 41 Senate co-sponsors, including three Democrats, and may push for a vote later this month. Although the resolution could clear the Senate with as few as 10 more votes, President Obama will likely veto it, should it arrive at his desk.

Mountaintop mining

Since being leaked to Alabama regulators last month, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposal for reducing

the environmental impacts of mountaintop mining has circulated widely among state regulators in coal-producing states. The proposal has been largely ill-received, both by the regulators and other government agencies like the federal Office of Surface Mining, Reclamation and Enforcement, prompting EPA to delay the release of new guidelines—originally scheduled for early March—for a minimum of several weeks.

The proposal calls for tighter water pollution standards and permit requirements, and would expand downstream monitoring for mining operations. Of particular issue is new language in the leaked version that would require additional monitoring in cases where water conductivity—a key indicator of many harmful pollutants—measures above 400 micro-siemens per centimeter. Many regulators consider this threshold unworkably low, particularly because EPA is also expected to release a report establishing 300 micro-siemens per centimeter as the maximum advisable conductivity to protect water quality and aquatic life. To achieve compliance under such regulations, companies would have to reduce mine size or curtail operations. According to Randy Huffman, Secretary of West Virginia's Department of Environmental Protection, "You can't do anything with that. You can't clean off a parking lot with that. There is just concern there."

Source: ESA Policy News 3/12/10 www.esa.org



Fair trade shoes, no sweat(shops)

John Morearty

John Perkins, who a few years ago wrote *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man*, now offers a list of athletic shoe manufacturers who treat their workers fairly and are environmentally responsible. The Autonomie Project, Equita/Veja, Global Exchange, No Sweat Apparel and Traditions Fair Trade all earn an A+.

Getting a grade of C are New Balance and Timberland.

Getting F are Nike, Reebok/Adidas and Puma.

Perkins compiled his ratings

using two of Co-op America's online tools, ResponsibleShopper.org and GreenPages.org. For details, go to those websites, or see pages 167-169 of Perkins' new book *Hoodwinked: An Economic Hit Reveals Why the World Financial Markets Imploded—and What We Need to Do to Remake Them*.

Perkins makes a strong case for the power of consumer boycotts to support responsible businesses, and force "predatory capitalists" to change their ways or go broke. In other words, don't buy their stories—and don't buy their stuff.



Contact Your Reps

Pres. Barack H. Obama, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Washington DC 20500. 202-456-1414; www.whitehouse.gov

Sen. Barbara Boxer, 1700 Montgomery St, Ste 240, San Francisco, CA 94111. 415-403-0100; 112 Hart Building, Washington, DC 20510. 202-224-3553, senator@boxer.senate.gov

Sen. Dianne Feinstein, One Post Street, Ste 2450, San Francisco, CA 94104. 415-249-0707; 331 Hart Building, Washington, DC 20510. 202-224-3841, senator@feinstein.senate.gov

Rep. Jerry McNerney (D-11th District) 2222 Grand Canal Blvd #7, Stockton, CA 95207. 209-476-8552. Fax 209-476-8587. 312 Cannon House Office Bldg., Washington DC 20515; info@jerrymcnerney.org, 925-833-0643, <http://www.JerryMcNerney.org>

Rep. Dennis Cardoza (D-District 18) 137 E. Weber Ave, Stockton, CA 95203. 209-946-0361, 503 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515, 202-225-6131.

Rep. Dan Lungren (R-District 3), 2262 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington DC 20515. 202-225-5716. Local office: 2334 Gold Meadow Way, Ste 220, Gold River, CA 95670. 916-859-9906.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, 2201 C St, NW Washington, DC 20520

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, State Capitol, Sacramento, CA 95814. 916-445-2841

State Sen. Lois Wolk (District 5), 31 E Channel St, Room 440, Stockton, CA 95202. 209-948-7930; State Capitol, Rm 4032, Sacramento, CA 95814. 916-651-4005

Assemblyperson Kathleen Galgiani (District 17), 31 E. Channel St., Rm. 306, Stockton CA 95202, 209-948-7479

Clinton sells out Honduras

Mark Weisbrot

Hillary Clinton's Latin America tour is turning out to be about as successful as George W. Bush's visit in 2005, when he ended up leaving Argentina a day ahead of schedule just to get out of town. The main difference is that she is not being greeted with protests and riots. For that she can thank the positive media image that her boss, President Obama, has managed to maintain in the region, despite his continuation of his predecessor's policies.

But she has been even more diplomatically clumsy than Bush, who at least recognized that there were serious problems and knew what not to say "The Honduras crisis has been managed to a successful conclusion," Clinton said in Buenos Aires, adding that "it was done without violence."

This is rubbing salt into her hosts' wounds, as they see the military overthrow of President Mel Zelaya last June, and the United States' subsequent efforts to legitimize the dictatorship there as not only a failure but a threat to democracy in the region.

It is also an outrageous thing to say, given the political killings, beatings, mass arrests, and torture that the coup government used in order to maintain power and repress the pro-democracy movement. The worst part is that they are still committing these crimes.

Today nine members of the U.S. Congress—including some Democrats in Congressional leadership positions—wrote to Secretary Clinton and to the White House about this violence. They wrote:

"Since President Lobo's inauguration, several prominent opponents of the coup have been attacked. On February 3rd, Vanessa Zepeda, a nurse and union organizer who had previously received death threats linked to her activism in the resistance movement, was strangled and her body dumped from a vehicle in Tegucigalpa. On February 15th, Julio Funes Benitez, a member of the SITRASANAA trade union and an active member of the national resistance movement, was shot and killed by unknown gunmen on a motorcycle outside his home. Most recently, Claudia

Brizuela, an opposition activist, was murdered in her home on February 24th. Unfortunately these are only three of the numerous attacks against activists and their families..."

Secretary Clinton will meet Friday with "Pepe" Lobo of Honduras, who was elected president after a campaign marked by media shutdowns and police repression of dissent. The Organization of American States and European Union refused to send official observers to the election.

The Members of Congress also asked that Clinton, in her meeting with Lobo, "send a strong unambiguous message that the human rights situation in Honduras will be a critical component of upcoming decisions regarding the further normalizations of relations, as well as the resumption of financial assistance."

This was the third letter that Clinton received from Congress on human rights in Honduras. On August 7 and September 25 Members of Congress from Hillary Clinton's own Democratic Party wrote to her to complain of the ongoing human rights abuses in Honduras and impossibility of holding free elections under these conditions. They did not even get a perfunctory reply until January 28, more than four months after the second letter was sent. This is an unusual level of disrespect for the elected representatives of one's own political party.

For these New Cold Warriors, it seems that all that has mattered is that they got rid of one social democratic president of one small, poor country.

In Brazil, Clinton continued her Cold War strategy by throwing in some gratuitous insults toward Venezuela. This is a bit like going to a party and telling the host how much you don't like his friends. After ritual denunciations of Venezuela, Clinton said "We wish Venezuela were looking more to its south and looking at Brazil and looking at Chile and other models of a successful country."

Brazilian Foreign Minister Celso Amorim responded with diplomacy, but there was no mistaking his strong rebuff to her insults: He said that he agreed

with "one point" that Clinton made, "that Venezuela should look southwards more . . . that is why we have invited Venezuela to join MERCOSUR as a full member country." Ms. Clinton's right wing allies in Paraguay's legislature—the remnants of that country's dictatorship and 60 years of one-party rule—are currently holding up Venezuela's membership in the South American trade block. This is not what she wanted to hear from Brazil.

The Brazilians also rejected Clinton's rather undiplomatic efforts to pressure them to join Washington in calling for new sanctions against Iran. "It is not prudent to push Iran against a wall," said Brazilian president Lula da Silva. "The prudent thing is to establish negotiations."

"We will not simply bow down to an evolving consensus if we do not agree," Amorim said at a press conference with Clinton.

Secretary Clinton made one concession to Argentina, calling for the UK to sit down with the Argentine government and discuss their dispute over the Malvinas (Falklands) Islands. But it seems unlikely that Washington will do anything to make this happen.

For now, the next crucial test will be Honduras: will Clinton continue Washington's efforts to whitewash the Honduran government's repression? Or will she listen to the rest of the hemisphere as well as her own Democratic Members of Congress and insist on some concessions regarding human rights, including the return of Mel Zelaya to his country (as the Brazilians also emphasized)? This story may not get much U.S. media attention, but Latin America will be watching.

Mark Weisbrot is co-director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research, in Washington, D.C. He received his Ph.D. in economics from the University of Michigan. He is also co-author, with Dean Baker, of Social Security: The Phony Crisis (University of Chicago Press, 2000) and president of // Just Foreign Policy! <<http://www.justforeignpolicy.org/>>.

Source: The Center for Economic and Policy Research 3/5/10 <http://www.cepr.net>

The Costs of War on Israeli Society: Two Unheard Perspectives

On Friday April 16, peacemakers are coming to Stockton from Israel, free to any who would like to hear them.

Peacemakers from Israel? From that beautiful troubled land on Mediterranean edge, olive groves and communes, red wine, sheeps milk feta cheese and sparkling cafes, and a city holy to all the children of Abraham? Land of home-made rockets and suicide bombers, bulldozers, F-16s, shrines and Walls?

Yes, two citizens of Israel, peacemakers: Ofra Yeshua-Lyth, a 60 year old Jewish woman, and Ismail Kharoub, an 18 year old Palestinian man (one of more than a million Palestinians who are Israeli citizens). A remarkable duo.

They will be available at no charge all day on Friday April 16, to any Stockton groups who would like to hear them. Their theme is, "The impact of continuing war on Israeli society."

That evening, they will address the same theme at an open community potluck, 6 pm, in the Fellowship Hall of Central United Methodist Church, just across Pacific Avenue from the UOP tower.

All presentations are free, sponsored by Central Methodist and generous Stockton donors. Their two-week speaking tour of central California and the coast is sponsored by New Profile, a feminist organization that aims to 'civilize' or demilitarize the structure and nature of Israeli



society; by The Refuser Solidarity Network, which was formed in April of 2002 to provide support for the growing military Refuser Movement in Israel; and by The Resource Center for Nonviolence in Santa Cruz.

To schedule a presentation by Ofra and Ismail on April 16, or for further info, please call John Morearty, 464-3326.

Some background

Ofra Yeshua-Lyth is a Jewish citizen of Israel, a professional journalist, once a correspondent in Germany and the U.S. for Israel's second largest newspaper, Ma'ariv. Presently she co-owns a Tel Aviv public relations and strategic consultancy. She recently published "A State of Mind: Why Israel must become secular and democratic." This memoir provides a personal examination of the basic contradictions within Israeli-Jewish identity which are generated by Israel's failure to separate State and religion. She argues that conflicts within Israeli society based on ethnic, social and

cultural gaps are a direct outcome of this failure, which is in the heart of the regional hostilities. Ofra's daughter is a military refuser..

Ismail Kharoub is a Palestinian citizen of Israel, he is eleventh generation from Yafa (Jaffa), a mixed city near Tel Aviv, with 60% Jewish and 40% Arab population. Ismail grew up going to both Arab and Jewish schools. Yafa, like many mixed cities faces lots of problems such as drugs, crime, and gentrification. When Ismail was in high school, he began participating in the Arab-Jewish youth partnership organization Sadaka Reut. With Sadaka Ismail was able to learn about his own Palestinian history and culture and reclaim this identity for himself. He continued working with Sadaka Reut after graduating from high school, living in a commune comprised of Jewish and Palestinians who do activist work for Sadaka and other organizations. Ismail has traveled for peace camps in England and information delegations in Belgium. He is currently attending art school in Tel Aviv.

Family members needed for study on law enforcement related deaths

The Investigative Sociology project at Sonoma State University (SSU) and Media Freedom Foundation are conducting a study on the commonalities of law enforcement related deaths in the San Francisco Bay/Northern California Area. We are seeking to interview individuals in families of people who have died in a law enforcement related incident

within the past twenty years. Students from the spring 2010 SSU Investigative Sociology class will be conducting confidential one-hour interviews with family members in April. The purpose of the study is to evaluate support programs for families who have experienced such a tragedy, and the lowering of the overall number of law enforcement related deaths.

SSU professors supervising the study include: Peter Phillips, Sociology Department, Tryon Woods and Diana Grant in the Criminal Justice Department. To arrange a confidential interview or refer a family contact, call or e-mail, Dr. Peter Phillips: peter.phillips@sonoma.edu 707-664-2588.

Emulating Jesus Christ's
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E. Lela Nelson
BROKER

The T is Not Silent

Transgender practicalities 101: the restroom

Elena Kelly

Ally McBeal aired for five seasons, going off the air eight years ago in 2002. In the very first episode, which contained a lot of controversial topics, the one issue that got the most press was the fact that it was the first television show to feature a unisex restroom in prime time.

At the time, I was a very closeted transgender woman (a girl born into a male body) and the thought of one restroom for both genders was very appealing to me. There were urinals for men with adequate sidewalls for privacy, but most of the facilities in the show's restroom were the stalls common to both gender restrooms. I couldn't see what the fuss was all about. Everyone who used a unisex restroom had plenty of privacy to do what we all do when we use the restroom.

Two years ago when I began my transition from male to female at my workplace, I faced the dilemma of which restroom to use. At that point I had a male body, but had begun to wear clothing appropriate to my true gender. Since my company had no gender-neutral restroom, and I had been using the men's restroom for over ten years, I decided to use it. While I was in there, I overheard two men talking about how disgusting it was that their coworker was "acting like he's a girl." I was shocked and afraid to make a sound for fear if they discovered I was in there, I could be harassed or worse.

Later the same day I had to pee again. This time I held it as long as I could stand it. Finally I went to the office of a woman friend and broke down in tears. I told her of the incident that morning with the two men. She called our Human Resources office and they assured me I had the right to use the restroom where I felt most safe and comfortable. I was very relieved to use the women's restroom.

Since that day nearly two years ago I have used only the

women's restroom and have never had a problem. I learned that the California Department of Fair Housing and Employment has statutes that require all places of public accommodation and employment to permit all people to use the restroom that matches their gender identity. In other words, anyone can use any restroom in California that they find most appropriate for themselves. Some municipalities have gone one step further and passed local ordinances that mirror the DFHE regulations.

I have fully transitioned now. My driver's license, passport, and all my other identifying documents reflect that I am physically a female. Beyond that, I look and behave like a female, so I don't get a second glance when I need to go pee at the Mall or the cinema. But what of those transgender women who cannot afford the expensive surgeries, or those who do not feel the need to transition as I did, yet they identify as female? Should they be forced to use the men's room and quite possibly become the victims of harassment, ridicule or violence?

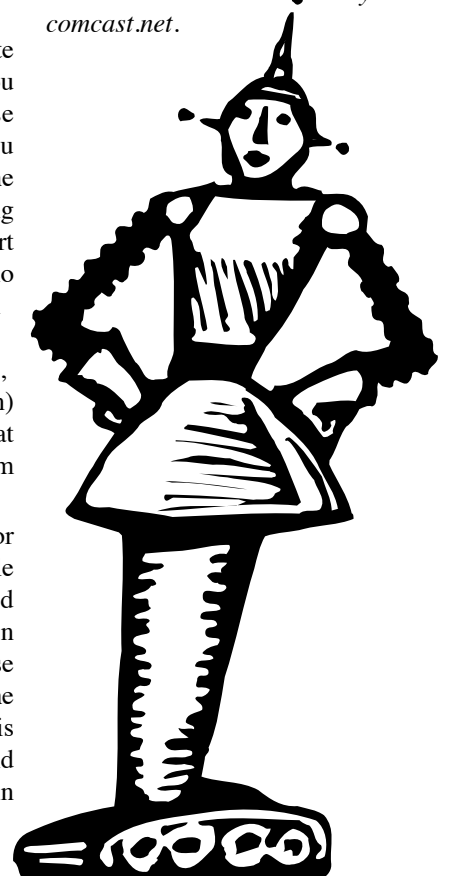
In California we are fortunate to have the DFHE ruling. If you identify as female you can use the women's restroom. If you identify as male, you can use the men's. But what if you are passing through Chicago's O'Hare airport and you have to pee. There is no such regulation or ordinance in Chicago. In fact, to date there are a total of four states (California, Colorado, Iowa and Washington) and the District of Columbia that have policies regarding restroom and gender specific facilities.

It is entirely inappropriate for a transgender woman to use male toilets. It is embarrassing and demeaning. Transgender women are women and for them to use male toilets is discriminatory. The same is applies if the situation is reversed. We all need to pee, and we all should be able to pee in peace.

The unisex restroom on Ally McBeal hasn't caught on yet. Just last month a transgender teenager was arrested and charged with lewd conduct just for peeing in a women's restroom. New York City has passed an ordinance to permit people to use the restroom that matches their gender identity. The ordinance came as the result of a civil suit filed by a transgender woman after she was forcibly removed from a restroom stall in a NYC restaurant, and she and her party were rudely ejected from the restaurant.

Everyone has a right to safe and appropriate restroom facilities. This includes the right to use the restroom that corresponds with one's gender identity. We who are transgender just want to live our lives with the basic civil rights everyone else has. That includes the right to pee in peace.

Elena Kelly is a co-chapter leader of Marriage Equality San Joaquin, Vice Chair of the Peace and Justice Network, and Director of the Stockton Transgender Alliance. She can be reached at elena.kelly@comcast.net.



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Sawznhammers

"Saw": a tool for analysis, taking things apart; a proverb, often trite
"Hammer": a tool for synthesis, putting things together; to pound away

Schools in pain

John Morearty

Stockton Unified spends approximately \$9,118 per year for each student. On the other hand, as my old friend George tells me, "California prisons are bulging with nonviolent drug offenders. They have no business there, but they are a lucrative business for some—the prison guards union, police, judges, prosecutors, 'tough on crime' politicians, the contractors who build and supply and even run our prisons. It's a huge racket—but these racketeers are not locked up, they are respectable citizens."

George is a grandfather, an organic gardener—and a lifelong professional in the California Department of Corrections. When we talk about these matters, George shakes his head. "I went into prison work as a young man because I believed in locking up bad guys. I still do, and I've faced death threats for it. But locking up nonviolent drug offenders, at \$30,000 a year, makes no sense."

Thirty-five year old Sammy Nunez agrees. He's been organizing the ESPINO Coalition, "Escuelas Si Pintas No, Schools Yes Prisons No." Sammy took Shakespeare courses while imprisoned at age 18 in Folsom; now he's married with five children. He founded Fathers and Families of San Joaquin, which works with young people of all colors, training them in family responsibility, communication skills, social analysis and community organizing. Lately they've hosted Youth Empowerment Summits at Delta College, with hundreds of young people from up and down the Valley. The theme was Changing the Odds—toward justice for everyone. Judges attended, so did probation workers, educators, environmental justice organizers—and foundations like Kellogg and Sierra Health.

"Spontaneous conversations happen with these people Way Up There," says co-worker David Childs. "Possessing some structured understanding from our

work with them, our youth can articulate their concerns. Funders are now calling us, asking for proposals."

"In this financial crisis," says Sammy, "the underlying structures of injustice are transparent. So we're holding ongoing community dialogues, a youth empowerment summer academy, strategizing not about young people but with them. How can we change systemic barriers against people of color in areas of education, jobs, incarceration, juvenile justice and health security?"

"Our society is cutting teachers and programs, ESL and GED classes at Delta, teachers are getting pink slips, and here we have audacity to propose that with public dollars we build three new prison institutions here in our county. When we push kids out of school, we push them into this pipeline to prison."

At 76, Beverly Fitch McCarthy agrees. She lives in an old jewel-box of a house with her eighty-nine year old husband John; who still plays the organ at St. Ann's Episcopal. Thirty years a teacher (25 at Delta College, also as a counselor), Beverly served on the Stockton City Council and founded the Susan B. Anthony Women of Achievement awards; she now chairs the Stockton Unified School Board.

"I voted against increasing K-3 class size from 20 to 30. What will happen to the children? The counselor loads will be increased, and the children who are in need of social counseling, economic counseling, psychological counseling, there's no way you can get around to all of them."

"We need counselors from K-4. We need to find out who has learning disabilities; because if you can't catch those quickly—I mean, our prisons are riddled with young men, men of all ages with learning disabilities. It has nothing to do with intelligence, it's how you process the information in your brain. So if you can catch those early...."

"Also the GATE children,

the bright ones. If they're bored they're going to get in trouble and drop out, there's a chance of losing them. The board voted to eliminate the position of GATE director; I voted against that.

"The latest research has shown that by the fourth grade you can probably tell which children will wind up in jail. They're using those figures to plan numbers of prison cells!

"We're just a bandaid society, we spend all this money on prisoners. If we would spend the same amount on young people.... What's our most precious natural resource? Children. But do they want to put money where the children are? No."

Christie Kelley has taught in public schools for more than twenty years, in the U.S. and Chile. She is currently Coordinator of Academic Tutoring (afterschool) programs for Stockton Unified. (She also volunteers as chair of the Peace and Justice Network, publisher of this newspaper.)

"Teachers are incredibly strong. They do 180 days, eight nine ten hours a day, weekends, they put in their own money, they do as much as they can, and then all they get is 'You're not doing enough.'"

"The elites just don't think a better public school system is necessary. They figure, enough people go to college. And you can believe their kids are not in public schools! There's no empathy, no sense of responsibility."

"Schools shouldn't exceed a certain number of students. When you have 800 or a thousand students, you can't provide the support system socially and emotionally that helps them be ready to learn. They're just another number. Teachers try; some schools do better than others in providing a community, but I think smaller school sizes would really make a difference."

"And more positive support for the teachers, giving them the opportunity to learn and to meet, talk, and exchange information about the students, so everybody knows all the kids and what's going on. A school should be a community of relationships."

Adrian Nickols, married with two young children, teaches in a tiny high school—20 students in his class, forty at the site. It's one of 29 sites in the S.J. County ONE system, which believes in "relationship based education"—everyone at a site knows first names, nobody can hide.

"I like the idea of helping kids. My students bring a lot of stress from home to the school—parents losing jobs, homeless, having to sleep at friends' houses. They act out, they're depressed, or they lose concentration at school, because their mind is no longer on education. The basic need to feel safe and secure is no longer being met, so they're having a hard time moving on to a higher order of needs, focusing on the academic."

"And they're depressed when they look at the future. I have 18 year old seniors who are applying for work and having a really difficult time landing a job that pays, some of them are trying to get apprenticeships or volunteer so at least they have a basic skill. But in this job market even a high school education doesn't mean much as far as finding a good job. And with the colleges cutting back, they're having a hard time even getting into college."

"So there's a lot more pessimism."

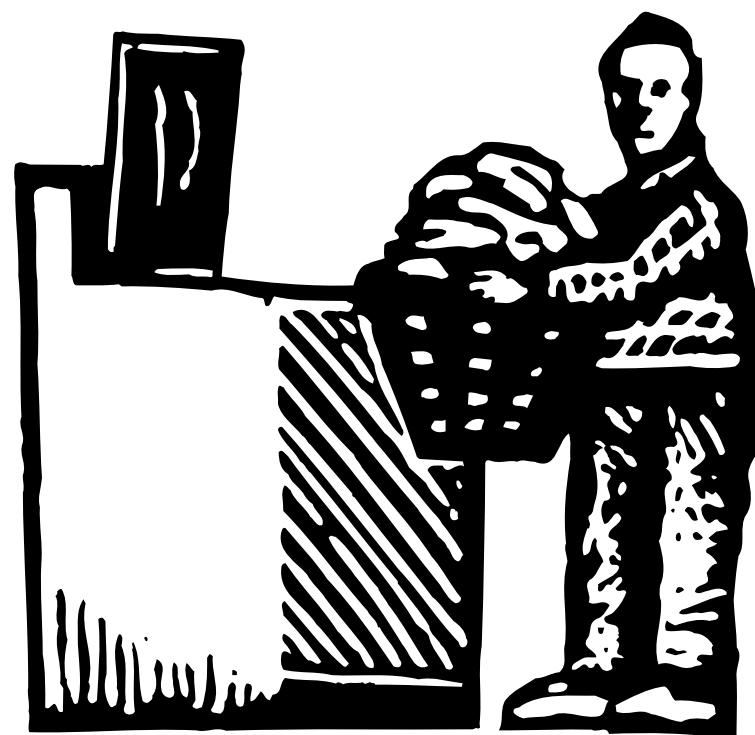
They need to see the fruits of their labor. Otherwise they don't see the real point in what they're doing."

"I like to talk with the parents and try to understand where they're coming from, and see if I can help them at all in any way. It feels like if I'm able to get through to some of the students that I'm working with, that it will have a really positive effect on the next generation. I'm an optimist; if I'm able to pass on not only an academic knowledge but also maybe some values, some feeling of responsibility to the community and towards each other, I feel like I've done my job."

Anne McCaughey is president of the Stockton Teacher's Association. She taught middle school in Stockton for fifteen years and loved it; she hopes to teach English and history next year at Edison High.

She says, "The schools need more money! Property tax is not very helpful, because poor communities would still be behind. Some kind of statewide funding is needed: an oil extraction tax, some kind of vehicle registration tax, or closing corporate loopholes so corporations pay more of their fair share."

Action?



March 28

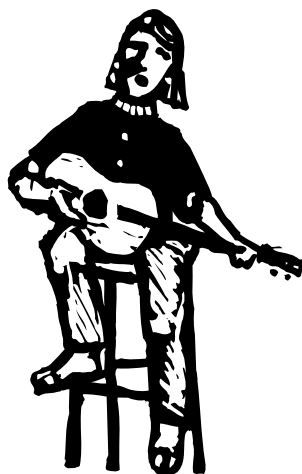
Woody Guthrie comes to Angels Camp

The life and song of folk singer Woody Guthrie returns to the foothills at the Bret Harte Theatre in Angels Camp on Saturday, March 28. Local musicians, players, and actors make up the Woody troupe who will transform the theatre into a musical history lesson of the twentieth century's most significant movements and events. The songs, ballads, prose and poetry captured in Guthrie's writings are "rollicking", "entertaining and inspiring, uplifting and humorous." The event is the last of a successful Ovation Performing Arts Series presented by the Calaveras Arts Council. Curtain is at 3:00 pm in the 350 seat auditorium where \$25 seats may be reserved in advance on-line at www.highsierratickets.com.

The performance is made up of storytelling, guitar playing, and a lot of singing. Familiar songs like 'This Land is Your Land', 'Travelin'', 'Bound for Glory', 'Do Re Mi', 'So Long, It's Been Good To Know You', 'Better World A'Comin'', and quieter songs like 'Deportee', and 'Worried Man' tell the story of Woody Guthrie's life and times as he traveled across America, singing "people songs."

Onstage you'll see guitars, mandolin, banjo, fiddle, standup bass, harmonica and more, in the hands of some of the region's best singers and players: Lillian McLeod, currently lead vocalist for No Regret; Hoyt Cory who performs as solo artist; Jeff Cooper of The Lavacats; and Richard Sholer of Coyote Hill. Joining them will be Amy Perkins, formerly of Oreo, an accomplished singer and actress with her musical roots in the right place. She is the real-life daughter of Lillian McLeod. Adding to the musical magic is multi-instrumentalist Rick Barlow of Swing Gitane and bassist Ron Cotnam of No Regret, The Grass Menagerie and Passin' Through. Together, these seven form a mighty musical force creating a "new" program that contains interesting additions to their successful past runs for Stage 3 Theatre Company.

Guthrie was a man of the people and an American icon. Just a man with a guitar, yet he changed his world. He gave focus and hope to generations of Americans, celebrating their triumphs and empathizing with their hardships—but always bringing humor, courage, comfort and hope



with him. His songs continue to speak to us all about thoughts, ideas, and feelings that are as relevant and meaningful today as when he lived. Even current recording artists of all genres, still immortalize Guthrie's works including John Mellencamp, Bruce Springsteen, Jonatha Brooke, and the Klezmatics.

Tickets will be available on-line from High Sierra Tickets up until 11:00 pm on the Thursday before the performance. After that, if not sold out, tickets will only be sold at the Box Office of the Bret Harte Theater starting at 2:15 pm the day of the performance. For up-to-date information, call the Calaveras Arts Council at (209) 754-1774.

Child Abuse Prevention Council

Experience The Lisa Project

Beginning Thursday April 1, The Child Abuse Prevention Council will host The Lisa Project, a fully interactive multimedia

experience that will take you beyond the headlines and statistics about child abuse. This audio tour and media exhibit will take you on a journey through the lives of San Joaquin children plagued by abuse.

At no other time has anyone had the chance to understand the plight of these children and to experience it through their eyes, their ears and their emotions. The Lisa Project promises to raise awareness through education as you take a child by the hand and listen to their story. Everything you thought you knew about child

abuse is about to change.

The Lisa Project will be open every Thursday through Sunday in April and is free to the public with a suggested parental rating of PG-13: Thursdays and Fridays from 5-9pm, Saturdays from 1-9pm and Sundays from 1-5pm. The location is the B & M Building at 125 Bridge Place in downtown Stockton between the Regal Cinemas and The Hotel Stockton. Advanced reservations for groups are available on other days. Please visit www.thelisa-project.org for more information, times and volunteer opportunities.



AIDSWalk San Joaquin spring flea market

Check out our Spring Flea Market in the Woodbridge Visitors Center parking lot on Saturday, April 10th from 8 am to 2 pm. Over 100 vendors will be "spring cleaning" and selling their wares. You'll find an enormous variety of collectibles, clothing, shoes, fine furniture, and tools...you name it, we'll have it. Join us for this one-of-a-kind shopping experience and help us raise money for AIDS WALK San Joaquin.

Get some cash for your treasures and reserve your space now for only \$20. For more information, call 365-8139.

BugFest on April 10

It's creepy...

It's crawly...

It's coming to the Oak Grove Nature Center!

The Oak Grove Nature Center's 2nd Annual "BugFest" will take place on Saturday, April 10 from 10 am-4 pm. Join us for a full day of buggy fun! Come see live insect displays from the Bohart Museum of Entomology. Grab a net and go on a guided insect collecting expedition. Have fun with bug-themed crafts, kid's games, live insect races, face painting, and raffle prizes. Dig in the dirt with the arthropod petting zoos. Enjoy fly-tying demonstrations by the Delta Fly Fishers. Or take a rest and listen to fascinating presentations given by local specialists. Refreshments and Audubon t-shirts will be on sale. All activities are free and open to the public. Oak Grove Regional Park entrance fee of \$5 is required per vehicle. Call (209) 953-8814 or visit www.mgzoo.com for more information.

Mediation Center open house welcomes new directors

On March 30, from 1:00-5:00 pm at the Mediation Center, 829 Rose Marie Lane, Ste D, the staff and Board of Directors of the Mediation Center of San Joaquin is celebrating the wonderful work of our executive director, Francine Poelstra. With our greatest appreciation, we wave goodbye as she heads off to her next great adventure.

Continuing our win-win approach to building a more peaceful community, we are eager and honored to introduce our new Executive Director, Bob Anderson and our new Director of Business, Marketing, and Training, Elise Willis. Many of you may know them, as they have worked extensively in this community.

This open house will also feature an introduction to new programs we are beginning and developing. We are excited to share with you and hear your feedback and suggestions. For more information, call 474-8794 or visit www.MediatorsRus.org

Eggman fundraiser

The Susan Eggman re-election fundraiser on Wednesday, April 21, 2010, at 5 pm will be held at Cort Tower on the 10th floor located at 343 E. Main Street in downtown Stockton. Susan will give us an eye-opening update on our City present and future. Dig out your sneakers and join us for the fundraiser and walking tour (inside and out) of downtown revitalized buildings. When was the last time you saw the inside of the old Kress Five and Dime Store and the old Katten Marengo's Department Store? Mahala Burns and Peggy Massey will be your hosts and guides. Refreshments and appetizers will be served. Tickets are \$35. For more information, call (209) 235-5222.

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April Calendar

Editor's note: if your event isn't listed, let us know. Send all copy to: bgudici@caltel.com by the 7th of every month.

Through May 2

McKee Student Art contest and exhibition. Haggin Museum, 1201 N Pershing Ave., Stockton. Hundreds of art works by SJ County students from K-12. Wed-Sun 1:30 - 5 pm. 1st and 3rd Thurs 1:30 - 9 pm. \$5 adult 18 & older, student/senior/youth age 10-17 \$2.50. Under 10/first Saturday free. 940-6300 info@hagginmuseum.org

Feb 25 - Mar 25

Figures: Monologue/Dialogue: Sariah Ha paintings & Yuji Hiratsuka printmaking. T 11am - 4pm, W-Th 11am-6:30pm, F 11am - 1pm. Reception: 2/25, 5-7 pm. SJ Delta College, LH Horton Jr Gallery, 5151 Pacific, Stockton. Free. 954-5507.

Mar 12 - 21

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, Studio Theatre, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Thur, Fri, Sat 8 pm, Sun 2 pm. \$10-\$12 954-5110.

Mar 2 - Apr 2

Photography (Calixtro Romias, Clifford Oto, Craig Sanders, Micheael McCollum) & pottery (Doreen Heath) art show. M-F 10-5. Tidewater Gallery, 223 E. Weber, Stockton. 463-4033

Mar 10 - Apr 2

HATS! The Musical, Thu 7:30 pm, Fri-Sat 8 pm, Sun 2:30 pm. Stockton Civic Theatre, 2312 Rosemarie Lane, Stockton \$15 - \$25. 473-2424.

Mar 19 - 21

Sierra Green wellness conference (see p 18). Ironstone Vineyards, Murphys. (209) 694-8399

Sat, Mar 20

Anevening of Polynesian entertainment, celebrating the 7th annual Spring Ho'ike with Na Hoku Mae Kanoelani. Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$15 advance/\$20 door. 547-1794.

Mon, Mar 22

Delta Sierra Club meeting, 7 pm. Central United Methodist Church Fireside Room, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton. 7 pm program with social time following. All welcome.

Thu, Mar 25

Wendi Maxwell and the Tres Hot Jazz Band, 7:30 pm. Valley Brew, 157 W Adams St, Stockton. \$10. 464-2739

Sat, Mar 27

Census Block Party, 10 - 4, Stribley Park, Stockton 941-0701. (see p 20)

Tues, Mar 30

Mediation Center Open House: meet the new leadership. 1 - 5 pm, 829 Rose Marie, Ste D, Stockton. 474-8794.

Thurs, Apr 1

Jazz series with Patrick Langham quartet at the Haggin - the music of Herbie Hancock, featuring Larry Lunetta. Refreshments 6:30, show 7 pm. Haggin Museum, 1201 N Pershing Ave, Stockton. \$5 adult 18 & older, student/senior/youth age 10-17 \$2.50. Under 10 free. 940-6300 info@hagginmuseum.org

Peace & Justice Network board meeting, Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 6 pm. All welcome. 467-4455

Mon, Apr 5

Campaign for Common Ground meeting, 7 pm, Towers Building, 509 W Weber Ave, Stockton. cgmemb@gmail.com

Apr 6 - Apr 30

Photography art show featuring Rich Turner. M-F 10-5. Tidewater Gallery, 223 E. Weber, Stockton. 463-4033

Sat, Apr 10

AIDSWALK San Joaquin Spring Flea Market, 8am - 2pm. Woodbridge Winery, 5950 E Woodbridge Rd, Lodi. 100 vendors. Info: www.awsj.org

Bugfest! at Oak Grove Nature Center, 10am - 4pm. 4520 W Eight Mile Rd. Free/parking \$5. 953-8814.



Thur, Apr 15

Stockton Symphony "Fantastic Finale" Concert featuring pianist Peter Takacs playing Saint-Saens, Schumann and Respighi 8 pm. SJ Delta College Atherton Auditorium, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. 951-0196. \$20-55.

Fri, Apr 16

UOP Library Associates book sale, 11am - 3pm. Community Room in the UOP Library. 946-2434.

Sun, Apr 18

22nd annual Earth Day Festival, 11am - 4pm. Victory Park, N Pershing & Argonne Dr, Stockton. Booths, food, crafts, bike ride, lots more. Free admission. 937-8389 or visit www.livegreensanjoaquin.org.

First Mondays

Campaign for Common Ground meeting, 7 pm, Towers Building, 509 W Weber Ave, Stockton. cgmemb@gmail.com

Fourth Mondays

Delta Sierra Club meeting, 7 pm. Central United Methodist Church Fireside Room, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton. 7 pm program with social time following. All welcome.

Second Tuesdays

Single Payer San Joaquin meeting, 6:30 pm, Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. cjbhcfasj@hotmail.com

Thursdays

Peace demonstration 4-5:30 PM, Pacific Ave. along Delta campus north of Yokuts stoplight. Signs provided, or bring your own. It's inspiring! Come swell our numbers! If not now, when? Info John Morearty, 464-3326

Fridays

Downtown Stockton Certified Farmers' Market, Main Street in front of the Fox Theatre, Stockton. 9 am - 2 pm. Free. 464-5246.

Saturdays

Crosstown Freeway Farmers Market, under the freeway between El Dorado & San Joaquin, Stockton. 7 - 11, or when sold out. 943-1830



MSM = truth? Check out the alternatives & decide for yourself

If you tap in to some of the alternative media, you will get a very different perspective on events. Especially now, when the mainstream media often acts as a cheerleader for whatever the administration does, it's necessary to go a little further to get your news. An internet connection is helpful.

Firedoglake <http://firedoglake.com>

Daily Kos <http://www.dailykos.com>

Emptywheel <http://emptywheel.firedoglake.com/>

Calitics <http://www.calitics.com/>

Eschaton <http://www.eschatonblog.com/>

Huffington Post <http://www.huffingtonpost.com>

Hullabaloo <http://digbysblog.blogspot.com>

Talking Points Memo <http://www.talkingpointsmemo.com>

TPM Muckraker <http://www.tpmuckraker.com/>

FiveThirtyEight.com <http://www.fivethirtyeight.com/>

Congress Matters <http://www.congressmatters.com>

Think Progress <http://thinkprogress.com>

Down With Tyranny <http://downwithtyranny.blogspot.com/>

Crooks and Liars <http://www.crooksandliars.com>

Media Matters <http://mediamatters.org/>

Common Dreams: <http://www.commondreams.org/>

Truth Out: <http://www.truthout.org/>

Raw Story <http://www.rawstory.com>

Open Left <http://www.openleft.com/>

AlterNet <http://www.alternet.org/>

Independent Media Center <http://www.indymedia.org>

The Nation <http://www.thenation.com/>

Hightower News <http://www.webactive.com/hightower/>

Mother Jones <http://www.motherjones.com/>

In These Times <http://inthesetimes.com/>

The Guardian <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/latest/>

Corporate Watch <http://www.corpwatch.org/home/PHH.jsp>

KPFA (94.1 FM) provides excellent coverage on many issues. You can listen on the internet at <http://www.kpfa.org>

Democracy Now! on KPFA, 94.1 FM and KVMR, 89.5 FM or on the web at: <http://www.democracynow.org>

We're on the web too!

The Peace & Justice Network of San Joaquin County (pjnsjc) website has information, calendar, media links, and more. Under construction and growing. Share your ideas on how the website should evolve.

<http://www.pjnsjc.org>

Talking It Through

Talking It Through is now two half-hour shows.

The Real Show hosted by Margee Ensign is on Monday at 6pm

Talking It Through is hosted by Adrian Nichols and Sammy Nunez every Monday evening at 6:30pm

SJTV: Stockton, Lodi and Manteca cable channel 26

EDUCATION • ENVIRONMENT • POLITICS • CULTURE

Sponsored by the Peace & Justice Network, InterFaith Council of San Joaquin County, Pacific Complementary Medicine Center

Check the TV page of Wednesday's Record for latest info.

March 27

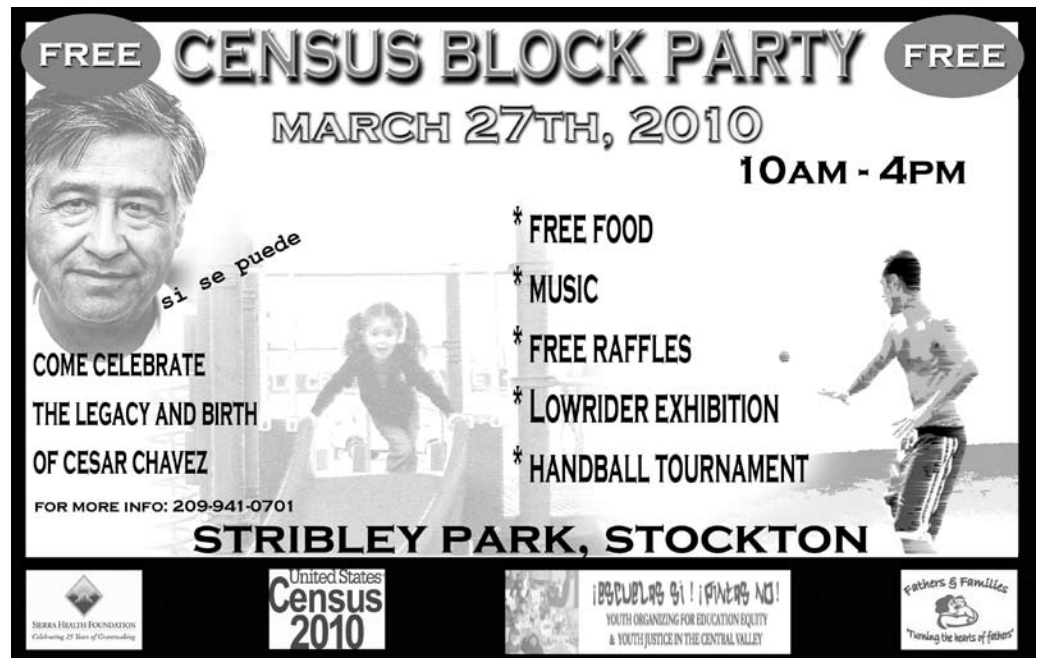
Healing The Hood— Census Block Party

Samuel Nunez

The San Joaquin Center for Fatherhood & Families (FFSJ), along with several youth and community groups, are planning the "Healing The Hood-Census Block Parties" in strategic South and East Stockton public parks to build community and reach the hardest to count populations. Our first event commemorates the birth and legacy of Cesar Chavez and is scheduled from 10-4 pm on March 27th at Stribley Park in East Stockton (see attached flyer).

According to The Census Project, San Joaquin County is home to the 13th-highest hard-to-count population in California, based on criteria such as ethnicity, immigrant status, English proficiency, income, employment and homelessness. FFSJ has partnered with Sierra Health Foundation and the Census as part of a collaborative effort in Northern California to support an accurate census count, which is essential to the equitable distribution of resources and political representation. Census data is used to determine the allocation of \$300 billion to \$400 billion annually for federal programs. After a 2000 Census undercount of more than 500,000 people, California lost an estimated \$1.5 billion of federal funding over 10 years, according to the U.S. Census Monitoring Board.

ACTION: If you are interested in getting involved, would like to set up a booth, or just want further information please don't hesitate to give us a call at (209) 941-0701.



FREE CENSUS BLOCK PARTY FREE
MARCH 27TH, 2010
10AM - 4PM

si se puede

**COME CELEBRATE
THE LEGACY AND BIRTH
OF CESAR CHAVEZ**

- * FREE FOOD
- * MUSIC
- * FREE RAFFLES
- * LOWRIDER EXHIBITION
- * HANDBALL TOURNAMENT

FOR MORE INFO: 209-941-0701
STRIBLEY PARK, STOCKTON

Logos: Sierra Health Foundation, United States Census 2010, Youth Organizing for Education Equity & Youth Justice in the Central Valley, Fathers & Families

Earth Day Celebration

"Walk Softly"



Vtica Park in Angels Camp
May 2, 2010 11-6 PM

Music, Local Bands & Clan Dyken Booths Speakers

Food By: Aimee's Kitchen

Sponsored By: The Green Party of Calaveras County & Blue Mountain Coalition For Youth & Families For More Info: 209-293-4379

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