

# connections

PRICELESS

Volume XXVIII, Number 4

Published by the Peace & Justice Network since 1986

May 2010

## SAVE THE DATES

**SAT, MAY 1**  
**CINEMA AND LITERACY DAY**  
**EMPIRE THEATRE, STOCKTON**  
**(P 18)**

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



Peace & Justice Network  
of San Joaquin County  
P.O. Box 4123  
Stockton, CA 95204  
209/467-4455

Nonprofit Org. U.S.  
Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 488  
Stockton, CA

## Let's build a radio station!

The Peace and Justice Network of San Joaquin County (PJM) is proud to announce that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has recently granted the organization a permit to construct a non-commercial educational radio station. The permit is the result of over a three-year endeavor to pursue an alternative, educational source of programming for the Stockton area.

### Background

The attempt at pursuing a license evolved when University of the Pacific announced in 2005 that they wanted to sell their local non-commercial radio license. UOP previously had originated local programming with some student participation. Due to budgetary constraints, they started to relay the Capital Public Radio feed from Sacramento on KUOP. Owned now by Cal State University at Sacramento, KUOP is owned now operated as a studio-free satellite facility of KXJZ.

Individuals in the Stockton area—some connected to PJN—first discussed the possibility of buying KUOP in 2006, but the price considerably more than the nonprofit could afford. PJN then set its sight on the possibility of applying for a radio channel. PJN sought the expertise of Common Frequency, a Sacramento area nonprofit that works with grassroots groups, to pursue a radio project.

Common Frequency had identified that PJN had the option of applying for three different channels in 2007 that would cover Stockton. However, just before the filing opportunity, religious broadcaster Educational Media Foundation ((EMF) which operates under the moniker K-LOVE) took two of the channels PJN had the option to apply for. EMF owns hundreds of stations nationally and feeds a commercial-sounding Christian Contemporary format via satellite to all their educationally-licensed radio channels that they obtain for free from the

government. In Stockton, they can be heard on a least five different radio channels. Recently, EMF commenced broadcasting on the KSTN channel on Mt. Diablo. The third channel PJN was looking at was negated by the attempts of CPR to upgrade a station CSUS owns in the foothills.

### A breakthrough

It first appeared that the out-of-town broadcasters EMF and CPR had blocked PJN's ability to apply for a new frequency. At the last minute, however, PJN's engineer found a small slice of a frequency centered near Tracy that may reach into Stockton. PJN applied for this channel and the FCC granted their application.

PJN is consulting with Common Frequency and the UC Davis radio station on proper developmental strategies for station construction and organization. The FM frequency currently licensed is much lower in wattage than other stations in the area and most likely will best be received on car radios. The intended programming will be a mix of eclectic independent music not heard on other stations, and a focus on community affairs programming and non-commercial news.

PJN will begin developing the programming aspects in about a year, after funding issues are finalized. The community affairs programming will from individuals and groups that support the PJN mission statement: "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." Programming will include material produced locally with an emphasis on issues and voices left out of the mainstream media.

**Come to  
the initial  
organizing  
meeting for the  
new radio station**

**Saturday, May 15**

**10 am to 12 pm**

**Peace & Justice Center**

**231 Bedford Rd, Stockton**

**209/467-4455**

## Earth Day Celebration

"Walk Softly"

A central illustration of a globe with a grid of latitude and longitude. Around the globe, a diverse group of people of various ages and ethnicities are holding hands, forming a circle. The people are drawn in a simple, stylized manner.

**Music,**  
Jens Jarvie  
SOMER MOON  
West Coast Dance Project  
Sonora Community  
Drum Circle  
Clan Dyken  
Thick Soup

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

**Free Stuff, Booths, Speakers, and Food By: Aimee's Kitchen**  
Hear Local Candidates  
The Green Party of Calaveras County  
& Blue Mountain Coalition For Youth & Families For More Info: 209-293-4379

Sponsored By:

# Every day is tax day

Bruce Giudici

As we enter spring, enjoying the gifts of warm weather and the great outdoors, it is a good time to focus on those things money cannot buy. Money is so yesterday—habits can change, and must, if we mean to leave a planet we can live in. I think I read that on a bathroom wall. Anyways...

We live in a very wealthy country—in fact, the richest county that has ever been. Yet we are made to feel poor. Budgets for basic needs are cut—food and housing assistance, drug treatment, job training, transportation. Donations to the food bank are, of course, always welcome.

All investments are slashed—

every level of education, public transportation, green energy—while the only investment most of us have—our homes—are foreclosed on by rich corporations that get direct funding from our own government.

And fundraising is in—rummage and sales, car washes, or door-to-door sales of cookie dough and candy bars by our kids. Take your pick. Taxes are for bombs and interest on the debt that bought the bombs.

Is this our reality—or is it all a lie? You decide.

In this issue, the focus is on how we can do better with what we have. Individually, our consumption habits can make a big difference. Communally,

governmental actions funded by our tax dollars can move us toward a better world. It works in other countries. Can we change?

Yes, we can. Yet, we are made to feel that we are powerless. When we see and hear arguments that we cannot afford, cannot invest, cannot move forward—we must get informed and speak the truth. Using the information in this issue as a start, follow the sources and become more informed on matters financial. You don't have to be an accountant—just functional. Progressives are generally perceived as financial lightweights, which undercuts many of our best arguments.

As a reminder, I will be leading a discussion/training session on financial issues between 7 and

Bruce Giudici, editor



8:30 the last Thursday of each month at the Peace Center, 231 Bedford Rd, in Stockton. My expertise is in non-profit financial management; the discussions will start there, and move into progressive economics and how we can finance a better world. Abandon your "never good at math" mindset and share some time. We'll love to see you there. Tax day, like Earth Day, may have passed; it's now time to realize that every day is not only earth day, but also tax day. Enjoy.

## Feedback

### Community action gets results

Editor,

In response to the Record's editorial on March 22, titled "Tuxedo station mail call: Miracle Mile gets its way with no regard for the larger cost," the Record missed an opportunity to commend grassroots activism and a pro-Stockton attitude. We opted for a positive "can do" spirit rather than a defeatist outlook. Because the editorial portrayed our informed and educated citizens who passionately collaborated to save the post office as naïve and misguided, we felt it is our duty to provide the rest of the story.

Last summer, Stockton's Tuxedo Park Station was placed on the United States Postal Service's (USPS) list of 3,200 stations under consideration for closure. By July, that number had been reduced to about 700. When this community heard that Tuxedo Park was still on the USPS's potential cut list, we asked, "Why Stockton?" So, our residents wrote to the postmaster in support of the station. Yet Stockton remained on the closure list when that list was reduced to just over 400 in September and then to under 250

stations in November. With only half a percent of post offices closing nationally, we once again asked "Why Stockton?"

That outcome triggered our residents to mobilize, rally, lobby, and make the case that Stockton's University Miracle Mile is a viable community that needs our post office. These actions did not cost the USPS one dime. The USPS is still going to close about 250 post offices (out of 37,000 post offices nationally and out of the 3,200 stations first identified for possible closure). We just didn't think it needed to be in our community. So in a wholly American tradition, we organized at the grassroots level and convinced the postal service to keep our Tuxedo Park. In their confirmation letter to the citizens, the USPS stated

"it is in the best interest of the community to keep Tuxedo Park Station open."

What the newspaper should have reported was that people got involved and engaged in shaping outcomes for their community. And that maybe next time Sacramento or Washington needs to cut something, people will now know that they can make a difference so decisions don't always have to be at Stockton's expense. What our Congressman, our City Council, and our citizens

understand as democracy in action the Record labeled "pestering." The editorial tried to pull defeat from the jaws of victory and by doing so missed a great chance to tout a triumph for our community and to champion our city. Saving Tuxedo Park is an impressive victory for Stockton.

Emily Ballus

Executive Director, Miracle Mile Improvement District

### Need money? tax the rich

Editor,

To solve the state budget problem, we need to raise taxes on corporations & the wealthy. The top 5% of households holds 62% of all private wealth in the U.S.—yet how it is that, in California, the estate tax has been eliminated? And how is it that the top income tax rate is a puny 9.55%?

Besides the multitude of loopholes and tax cuts for corporations, in California, an interesting creature called the "S corporation" has a tax rate of just 1.5%. Is it any wonder then that corporate tax accounts for a mere 10.7% of the state's 2009-2010 general fund revenue? By comparison, the sales/use tax (which is a regressive tax, meaning those at the bottom pay a higher percentage of their income towards the tax) in Stockton

is currently 9%; and overall, it accounts for 34.6% of the state's general fund.

Not only is the situation a travesty, but it is also a widely held myth (even among activists like those who grace the pages of 'Connections') that the middle class holds the greatest burden when it comes to state/local taxes. In fact, the 2007 figures reveal an entirely different story:

Bottom 20%	~~~11.7%	of income goes to state/local taxes
next 20%	~~~ 10.5%	
middle 20%	~~~ 9.5%	
next 20%	~~~ 8.7%	
next 15%	~~~ 8.0%	
next 4%	~~~ 8.0%	
top 1%	~~~ 7.1%	

And bear in mind that the bottom 20% has a household income range of less than \$18,000, while the next 20% has one ranging from \$18,000 to \$30,000. Those at the first top 1% take in \$430,000 or more annually.

It is long overdue that activists of all kind take on this issue of taxation, stop the ridiculously coward doublespeak of 'revenue enhancements/options/sources,' and demand that corporations and the wealthy have their taxes substantially increased.

Vinh Pham

## Connections

Editor: Bruce Giudici, 786-3109; bgiudici@caltel.com

Layout: Laurie Litman

Proofreader: Debbie Cousyn

Ad Rep: Karen DeGroot, 943-0840

Distribution Coordinator: John Morearty

Distribution Site: Lela Nelson Realty

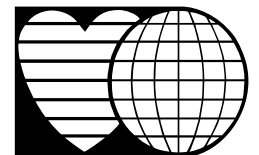
Distributors: Suzy Arnett, Rosemary Atkinson, Antoinette Celle, Jerry Croskrey, Clarence Edwards, Daniel Fong, Steffani Migliori, John Morearty, Heather Ryan, Dean and Marcia Savage, Julie Vaughn, Susan Von Sosten, Stan Thomas, Jim Walsh

Community Calendar: vacant

Deadline: 7th of each month (except Aug & Dec)

Circulation: 8,000

CONNECTIONS is a monthly publication of the Peace & Justice Network of San Joaquin County. The views expressed in CONNECTIONS are those of the authors and are not necessarily endorsed by the Network. News, articles, letters and calendar items should be sent to the Peace & Justice Network, P.O. Box 4123, Stockton, CA 95204. The editor reserves the right of final decision on copy. Call (209) 467-4455 for more information. PJN is on the internet: <http://www.pjnsjc.org>



### Peace & Justice Network

#### Board of Directors

Co-Chairs: Christie Kelley  
Vice-Chairperson: Elena J. Kelly  
Treasurer: Bruce Giudici  
Secretary:

#### Members-at-large:

Daniel Fong, Paula LeVeck, John Morearty, Sammy Nunez, Larry Pippin, James Walsh

#### Organizational members:

Hispanics for Political Action, Single Payer San Joaquin, United Nations Foundation, Youth Matters

"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."

# Carbon offsets—part of the solution or modern indulgences?

Laurie Litman

Author George Monbiot compares carbon offsets to papal indulgences—a way to get absolution from your (carbon emission) sins.

It's very seductive. Pay a certain amount of money for projects that offset the carbon you put into the system and you've done your part. Simple. No impact.

But the easy answers often have a catch. In the case of carbon offsets there are many catches.

Carbon offsets are slippery things. There's little regulation of this voluntary market and the benefits are generally unproven. In some cases they may be outright scams. While many carbon offset sellers claim third party certification, there are no uniform certification criteria. In the worst cases, carbon offsets may actually have secondary effects that increase greenhouse gas emissions.

As an attempt to come up with a solution to mitigate unavoidable personal carbon emissions, carbon credits are commendable. They provide a market where a willing purchaser contributes funds to a project that reduces or prevents greenhouse gas emissions. These include such activities as renewable energy projects, planting trees, encouraging transportation efficiency, etc.

Proponents of carbon offsets rightly point out that the potential good from carbon offsets can add to our toolchest to counter climate change—it's not an either/or proposition—and in the fight against climate change we need every tool we can get.

The bottom line? Offsets will not solve our climate change troubles, nor will they absolve you from responsibility. Use them wisely but know their limitations and potential for abuse. Research carefully before purchasing offsets and verify whenever possible.

Some of the major carbon offset marketers in the U.S. include:

**Bonneville Environmental Foundation**, a non-profit that sells renewable energy credits.

**CarbonCounter.org** funds energy efficiency, renewable energy, cogeneration, transportation efficiency and reforestation projects.

**CarbonFund.org**, a non-profit that funds renewable energy, efficiency and sequestration projects.

**Native Energy**, a privately held Native American energy company, helps build new wind farms and biomass generators owned by Native Americans and/or farmers.

**Solar Electric Light Fund** provides solar power to rural villages in developing countries.

**Terrapass** is a for-profit company. Funds go toward a variety of wind, biomass and efficiency projects.

## 10:10 Diary—April

Laurie Litman

This week I am participating in the No Impact Experiment (see the manual and other details at <http://noimpactproject.org/experiment/>). Each day this week we focus on a different aspect of our day-to-day life to try to minimize our carbon footprint. Yesterday was trash day and today is transportation day. Tomorrow will be food.

It's a marvelous way to re-examine your own personal lifestyle. You get to make your own rules, based on your own needs and expectations. The manual gives suggestions and the other participants are very supportive.

To me, the most interesting part of the experiment has been the blog where people share their experiences at the end of each day. The group includes people from all over the world, with many different living situations and at various starting points.

There are wonderful stories of people/families sincerely working to find ways to change their energy-rich habits. Little things, like the woman who normally bought a bottle of water each morning but found that filling her metal bottle with tap water worked just fine. Another woman drives 20 miles round trip for Peets coffee but can't quite give that up—she'll do it less often. And the person who took the bus for the first time despite nervousness at not knowing how the system works.

These stories of little things are encouraging. I don't think anyone who goes through this week-long exercise will ever be able to throw away trash or jump in the car or eat a fruit out of season without a mental wince. This awareness is the first step to real lifestyle changes. And the types of life changes that decrease carbon emissions also make for a richer, happier life.

But the cynic in me looks at the well-meaning discussions on how to avoid using q-tips or tissues and compares those impacts to others we have little control over. There are a lot of things we can and must do as individuals, but the institutional carbon emissions—for example, from the countless plane trips associated with our growing war in Afghanistan or the Post Office's refusal to recycle its daily mountain of paper—swamp any personal changes we can make.

That institutional damage to the atmosphere can only be stopped through political will, a quality that seems in short supply these days. That is why we need an energy policy that seeks to honestly decrease carbon and other greenhouse gases. The sad fact is that the political games and number tricks being played by politicians and industry will not fool Mother Earth.



*A low impact man, Lennon walks to the Food Co-op for groceries.*

## Get ready to party on 10/10/10

Join the Global Work Party that is happening on October 10, 2010.

The UN meeting last October in Copenhagen didn't result in the progress we wanted, although 117 countries—most of the world's nations—supported the 350 ppm carbon target.

So there's a lot more work to do. And now our two favorite organizations—10:10 and 350.org—have developed a new strategy with the slogan “Get to Work.”

The tenth day of the tenth month of the tenth year of the millennium is the big starting point for action.

The 10/10 Global Work Party will be held in every corner of the world where communities will get to work. Some suggestions: cover a school with solar panels, insulate homes, erect windmills, plant

**The tenth day of the tenth month of the tenth year of the millennium is the big starting point for action.**

trees, paint bikepats, launch or harvest local gardens.

The goal is a huge day of effort to show leaders a snapshot of a clean energy future.

The pressure on our political leaders on 10/10/10 is just in time for the next big UN conference in Mexico in December. At that time 350.org will stage the largest piece of public art in the planet's history to show that passion is as important as science and economics to make this happen.

Other projects include a “Great Power Race” for students in colleges in China, the U.S., and

India competing to see who can come up with the most, and the most creative, climate solutions and political pressure in the U.S. Senate to back the proposed Cap-and-Dividend approach to energy legislation that would stop letting big polluters pour carbon into the sky for free.

For more information and to register your party, go to <http://www.350.org/about/blogs/getting-work-2010-our-new-plans>.

So who will take the lead in organizing the Stockton/San Joaquin Work Party?

# Driven to Destruction: the Streetcar Conspiracy

[Driven to Destruction is a series from the blog Firedoglake that outlines how America became so dependent on the personal automobile, and how we must break this dependency if we want to create a sustainable way of life for future generations.]

Jim Moss

For 100 years, commercials from auto and oil companies have helped create a national ethos in which the automobile is king. But clever advertising is far from being the only culprit. Our love affair with our cars has also been fueled by the devious actions of a few major corporations – most notably General Motors.

The PBS documentary “Taken For a Ride” describes how the once ubiquitous electric streetcar was driven into the ground by the automobile. It wasn’t a fair fight:

When you’re talking about public transportation in America, for the first part of this century, you’re talking about streetcars. Trolleys ran on most major avenues every few minutes.

In 1922, only one American in ten owned an automobile. Everyone else used rail. At that time Alfred P. Sloan (President, General Motors) said, ‘Wait a minute, this is a great opportunity. We’ve got 90 percent of the market out there that we can somehow turn into automobile users. If we can eliminate the rail alternatives, we will create a new market for our cars. And if we don’t, then General Motors’ sales are just going to remain level.’

Sloan had the idea that he wanted to somehow motorize all the major cities in the country. (GM bought) the largest bus-operating company in the country and the largest bus-production company. And using

that as a foothold, GM moved into Manhattan. They acquired interests in the New York railways and between 1926 and ‘36 they methodically destroyed the rails.

When they finally motorized New York, GM worked hard to create the impression of a nationwide trend away from rail. But there was no trend. Buses were a tough sell. They jolted. They smelled. They inched through traffic. City by city, it took the hidden hand of General Motors to replace streetcars with Yellow Coach buses.

The piece-by-piece destruction of the streetcar industry didn’t stop with General Motors. A number of corporations in the auto and oil industries realized that it was in their best interests to work together:

In 1936, a company was founded that would grow to dominate American city transportation.

**“This is a story about how things got the way they are. Why sitting in traffic seems natural. Why our public transportation is the worst in the industrialized world. And why superhighways cut right through the hearts of our cities.”**

National City Lines had no visible connection to General Motors. In fact, the director of operations came from a GM subsidiary, Yellow Coach, and members of the Board of Directors came from Greyhound, which was founded and controlled by General Motors.

The money to start this new company also came from Greyhound and Yellow Coach. Over the next few years, Standard Oil of California, Mack Truck, Phillips Petroleum and Firestone Tire would join GM in backing this venture. National City Lines grew quickly. By 1946 it controlled public-transit systems in over 83 cities. From Baltimore to St. Louis, Salt Lake City to L.A., the company had grown into an empire.

And this empire was created for one reason – to absorb as much of the streetcar industry as possible, and then to shut it down. Since this conspiracy of corporations was methodically destroying a very efficient and beneficial industry, there was antitrust action taken – but all that came of the proceedings were fines of \$5000 for each company involved and \$1 for the treasurer of GM who oversaw much of National City Lines’ operations.

The opening words of “Taken For a Ride” tell us why this tragic bit of history is so important for us today:

This is a story about how things got the way they are. Why sitting in traffic seems natural. Why our public transportation is the worst in the industrialized world. And why

superhighways cut right through the hearts of our cities.

We might add, “And why when gas hits \$4 a gallon, politicians on both sides of the aisle start chanting ‘drill, baby, drill.’” We are addicted to oil because we are addicted to driving. And we are addicted to driving in large part because of the profit lust of a handful of men who ran a handful of corporations back in the 1930’s and 40’s.

This profit lust still exists today. The historical parallels are eerie. When the streetcars were shut down and GM conspired its way to soaring sales, many people who could not afford cars were left with few transportation options. Meanwhile, the government could do no better than laughably small fines.

The more things change, the more they stay the same. Big Oil And Big Auto continue to rule the American transportation scene. These days, Standard Oil (ExxonMobil) is raking in record profits and GM is receiving huge government bailouts because it is now “too big to fail.”

Looking back at the lessons of the streetcar’s demise, it is clear that breaking our dependency on the automobile will not be easy. There are many powerful forces working dilligently to maintain the status quo. How can we keep corporate interests from dominating the energy policy of the 21st century?

For links and other information go to the full article at <http://seminal.firedoglake.com/diary/41383>

## 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:

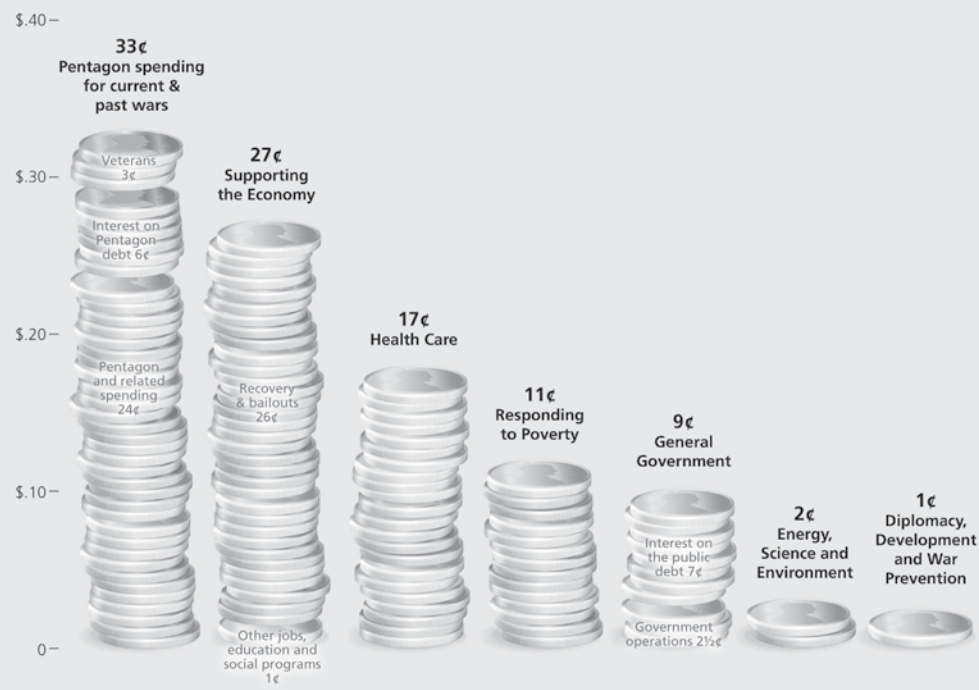
- U.S. mail; please send me envelopes
- Online donation through PJN website: [www.pjnsjc.org](http://www.pjnsjc.org) (click on donation button)
- Automatic Bank Transfer
- I've enclosed a check for my first contribution. Arrangements will be made by me with my bank for future pledges.

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.

# Where Do Our Income Tax Dollars Go?

For each dollar of federal income tax we paid in 2009, the government spent about:



*For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also* -Matthew 6:21

**The federal budget is a reflection of our country's moral values.**

If this budget is out of balance with your values, please tell your representative and senators. At FCNL we make it easy to get in touch with your legislators: go to [www.fcnl.org](http://www.fcnl.org) and follow the "Contact Congress" link, or contact us at the telephone number or address below.

## War Is Not the Answer!

More details at [www.fcnl.org/09taxchart](http://www.fcnl.org/09taxchart)

FRIENDS COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL LEGISLATION • 245 SECOND STREET, NE • WASHINGTON, DC 20002 • (800) 630-1330 • WWW.FCNL.ORG 2/10

## By the numbers

**Total Pentagon spending for current & past wars 33% (\$1,039,531)**

- Pentagon and related spending 24% (\$767,463)
- Pentagon budget, nuclear weapons, and "military-related" programs throughout the budget
- Interest on Pentagon debt 6% (\$176,544)
- Interest due on the portion of the federal debt that was generated by past Pentagon spending
- Veterans 3% (\$95,524)
- Veterans' affairs and related programs

**Supporting the economy 27% (\$850,453)**

- Recovery & bailouts 26% (\$815,227)
- Troubled Assets Recovery Program, American Recovery and Renewal Act, other one-time infusions into the economy
- Other jobs, education and social programs 1% (\$34,926)
- All other employment and education supports, community development funds, child care assistance, social services programs

**Health care 17% (\$532,094)**

- Includes Medicaid, public health, Indian Health,
- National Institutes of Health, Centers for Disease Control and related programs

**Responding to Poverty 11% (\$354,632)**

- Assistance with food, housing, income, education, energy and other essentials for qualifying individuals and families

**General Government 9% (\$299,140)**

- Federal government operations 2.6% (\$83,363)
- Legislative, judiciary, Department of Justice, most of the Department of Homeland Security, IRS, Treasury, etc.
- Interest on the public debt 6.8% (\$215,777)
- Interest due on the portion of the federal debt that was generated by past spending on civilian programs

**Energy, science and environment 2% (\$72,944)**

- EPA, NSF, NASA, NOAA, Department of the Interior (most), Forest Service, Natural Resource Conservation Service

**Diplomacy, development and war prevention 1% (\$36,094)**

- Entire State Department, including diplomatic corps and Agency for International Development, support of the U.N. and other international institutions, nonmilitary direct aid to other countries.

Please note: The percentage of your federal income tax dollars spent on current and past wars went from 43% in 2008 down to 33% in 2009 because of economic recovery and bailouts. Military spending still consumed the greatest portion of your tax dollars in the 2009 tax year. Based on the president's budget proposals, the amount of your tax dollars devoted to war in 2011 will rise to 39%.

*Source: FCNL calculations based on estimated expenditures reported by the White House OMB. This analysis covers the \$3,184,888 million "federal fund" budget, which is the spending supported by income taxes, estate taxes and other general revenues. Not included are trust funds, such as Social Security and Medicare, which are supported by dedicated revenues. For more info go to [www.fcnl.org/09taxchart](http://www.fcnl.org/09taxchart).*

Peace and Justice Network



of San Joaquin County

## IS IT TIME TO DO YOUR ESTATE PLAN?

- ◆ Revocable Living Trusts
- ◆ Durable Power of Attorney
- ◆ Will

*If you want to get started please contact me:*

**Christopher K. Eley, Attorney at Law**  
A Professional Corporation  
343 E. Main Street, Suite 710  
Stockton, CA 95202

Email: [eleylaw@gmail.com](mailto:eleylaw@gmail.com) Phone: 209-466-8511

CHAKRAS PHOTOS ♦ AURA Pictures

209 ♦ 933 ♦ 9743

SPiritualCrafts ♦ EVENTS

New Consciousness GALLERY  
&  
learning exchange

"Something else in Mind"

Crystals ♦ Stones ♦ Wiccan ♦ Earth's Art

Various Workshops offered to enlighten and enrich your life check our website for details:  
[www.somethingelseinmind.com](http://www.somethingelseinmind.com)

1604 E. Harding Way ♦ Stockton, CA

TAI CHI ♦ REIKI CLASSES ♦ Kung Fu

Meditation ♦ Divine Openings

Membership includes a subscription to *Audubon Magazine & Hoot Owl*.

Make checks payable to ... National Audubon Society.

Send to: Audubon

PO Box 7755, Stockton, CA 95207

\_\_\_\$35 Individual \_\_\_\$38 Family \_\_\_\$20 Student \_\_\_\$21 Senior

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Questions about Audubon? Call Dave Wagner 943-6997.  
[www.sanjoquinaudubon.org](http://www.sanjoquinaudubon.org)

Join our  
LOCAL

# Audubon

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

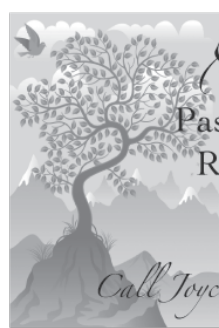
## Henry Paine Camera Repair

*An owner-operated shop. You are welcome  
to come in and ask questions about our work.*

147 E. Alpine, Stockton, 95204  
(209) 942-2821 — open M-F, 1:00-6:00 pm

*Efficient and reliable repair of your camera.*

**FREE ESTIMATES**



## Spiritual Counseling

Past-Life Regression • Tarot Card  
Reading • Energy Consultation  
• 30 Years Experience

*Call Joyce McCallister for an appointment:  
926-4074*



## PACIFIC COMPLEMENTARY MEDICINE CENTER

*serving Stockton since 1984*

Yi-Po Anthony Wu, M.D., M.P.H.  
Medical Director, Internal Medicine

Teresa M. Chen, Ph.D.  
Program Coordinator

Dorel Rotar, L.Ac., MTOM  
Brian Chee C. Loh, L.Ac., O.M.D.  
Shu-Chuan Susan Wang, L.Ac., Ph.D., O.M.D.  
*Licensed Acupuncturists, Herbalists*

**The Best of Eastern and Western Medicine  
for Health and Healing**

- Internal Medicine • Acupuncture & Moxibustion •  
East & West Herbs •  
Chinese Health Exercises (Tai Chi & Qi Gong)

### Shop at the Herb Store

Specializing in Traditional Chinese Herbal Remedies  
wide variety of western herbs & nutritional supplements  
imported teas ❖ vitamins & minerals ❖ health bars  
essential oils ❖ healthcare & educational books ❖  
over-the-counter medications

Store Hours: Monday-Friday 9 a.m.- 5 p.m.

**645 West Harding Way • 464-4800**  
Visit our website @ <http://www.wuway.com>

# START treaty gets new life

## Status

Russian President Medvedev and American President Obama signed the START follow-on agreement on April 8, 2010 in Prague, Czech Republic. This treaty limits the total number of deployed strategic weapons to 1,550 each, which is a 30% decrease from the 2,200 that were allowed in the previous START agreement. The next step is for the treaty to be submitted to the Senate in late May or early June. Hopefully it will be reported out of the Foreign Relations Committee before the Senate summer recess begins.

## History

The original START agreement between Russia and the United States expired on December 5, 2009. The treaty was originally negotiated in the 1980's under Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush's presidencies, and it was ratified in the U.S. senate in 1991.

The treaty allowed for greater inspections and information sharing between the U.S. and Russia for verification purposes. It also allowed for no more than 6,000 deployed nuclear weapons and no more than 1,600 delivery systems for each country. With the expiration of the treaty in December, the verification procedures also expired, making it necessary that the START follow-on agreement be signed and ratified as soon as possible.

## Details

The START follow-on agreement is still being negotiated between Russia and the United States. Like the original START agreement, verification is a crucial element of the START follow-on agreement and it will continue many of the verification methods from the original treaty.

Examples of improved verification methods are information sharing regarding missile tests and on the ground inspections. The purpose of the increased verification procedures is to ensure that neither side is cheating or violating conditions of the new treaty. The new agreement will also allow for refurbishment of the U.S. nuclear



stockpile through Life Extension Programs, and it will not limit missile defense systems in Russia or the United States.

Like the original START agreement, the follow-on agreement will also set firm limits on the number of deployed strategic weapons in each country. In July of 2009, Presidents Obama and Medvedev agreed to terms for the new START treaty. They agreed that each country would limit deployed strategic warheads to 1,675 each and limit the delivery systems to 1,100 each, which is a significant decrease in deployed weapons from the original START treaty.

## Benefits

One merit of the START follow-on agreement is that it has strong bipartisan support. Various foreign policy experts support the START follow-on agreement, including former Secretary of State George Schultz, former Secretary of Defense William Perry, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, former Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee Sam Nunn, former national security advisor Brent Scowcroft, and former START negotiator Ambassador

Linton Brooks. Their support emphasizes the necessity of this treaty.

Another reason the treaty has such support is that it will make the United States safer, as it helps prevent nuclear terrorism by preventing nuclear materials from falling into the wrong hands. With fewer deployed strategic weapons, there is less chance of nuclear materials being stolen. Also, the START follow-on agreement will help maintain a healthy nuclear relationship with Russia. Increased verification procedures and improved data sharing will allow a relationship of trust to exist between the two countries.

**ACTION:** With 67 votes needed in the senate for ratification of the treaty, bipartisan support is necessary for the treaty to pass. Ratification is possible with your support. Contact your senators to encourage them to support the START follow-on agreement when it comes before the senate this year.

*Source: Friends Committee on National Legislation 4/8/10 release, FCNL, 245 Second St NE, Washington, DC 20002 800-630-1330 <http://www.fcnl.org>*

**The START follow-on agreement  
limits the total number of  
deployed strategic weapons.  
With fewer strategic weapons,  
there is less chance of nuclear  
materials being stolen.**

# Iran sanctions a mistake: voices

The statements below from Iran's leading human rights activist and U.S. diplomats and national security officials who have served in both Republican and Democratic administrations point the way forward for a sensible and effective U.S. policy toward Iran.

Sanctions and threats will not help Iranian reformers in their struggle with hardliners or make Iran more likely to compromise with the international community. The U.S. can exert positive influence on the political debate inside Iran and increase the chances of agreement by constructive actions that discredit those in Iran who argue that the U.S. cannot be trusted and will always be hostile to Iran.

**Shirin Ebadi**, Nobel Peace Prize winner, lawyer, and Iranian human rights activist, 2/12/10

"The Iranian people are against military attack as they are against sanctions, because sanctions.... will only worsen the situation of the Iranian people. You western governments, are you punishing our people or are you punishing our government?"

**Colin Powell**, former Secretary of State, National Security Advisor, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff 3/19/10

"I don't see a set of sanctions coming along that would be so detrimental to the Iranians that they are going to stop that program, so ultimately, the solution has to be a negotiated one....The Iranians are determined to have a nuclear program. Notice I did not say a nuclear weapon. But they are determined to have a nuclear program, notwithstanding the last six or seven years of efforts on our part to keep them from having a nuclear program."

**Zbigniew Brzezinski**, National Security Advisor to President Jimmy Carter 2/10

"[Is] Washington willing to engage in negotiations with some degree of patience and with sensitivity to the mentality of the other side? It would not be conducive to serious negotiations if the United States were to persist in publicly labeling Iran as a terrorist state, as a state that is not to be

trusted, as a state against which sanctions or even a military option should be prepared. Doing that would simply play into the hands of the most hard-line elements in Iran. It would facilitate their appeal to Iranian nationalism, and it would narrow the cleavage that has recently emerged in Iran between those who desire a more liberal regime and those who seek to perpetuate a fanatical dictatorship."

"These points must be borne in mind if and when additional sanctions become necessary. Care should be taken to make certain that the sanctions are politically intelligent and that they isolate the regime rather than unify all Iranians. Sanctions must punish those in power—not the Iranian middle class, as an embargo on gasoline would do. The unintended result of imposing indiscriminately crippling sanctions would likely be to give the Iranians the impression that the United States' real objective is to prevent their country from acquiring even a peaceful nuclear program—and that, in turn, would fuel nationalism and outrage."

**James M. Lindsay and Ray Takeyh**, "After Iran Gets the Bomb," March-April 2010. (Lindsay is a Senior Vice President and Takeyh a Senior Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. Takeyh, an Iranian-American, worked under Dennis Ross at the State Department in 2009.)

"Washington might also be tempted to seek to further undermine Iran's economy by imposing broad-based economic sanctions, an idea that enjoys considerable support on Capitol Hill. But such measures would wind up punishing only Iran's disenfranchised citizenry (which is why Iranian opposition leaders have strenuously opposed them). The wiser course of action would be to strengthen and better monitor existing export controls, in order to make certain that Iran's nuclear and defense industries do not have access to dual-use technologies, and to reinforce targeted sanctions against the Iranian leadership and the business enterprises controlled by the Revolutionary Guards. Washington should push, both inside and outside the UN, for travel bans on Iranian leaders and

measures denying Iran access to capital markets, for example. It should also find ways to penalize foreign businesses that invest in Iran's dilapidated oil industry. Smart sanctions of this kind would punish Iran's leaders but spare ordinary Iranians, who have no say over the regime's actions."

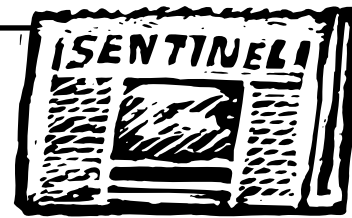
**James L. Jones and Thomas R. Pickering**, "Afghanistan Study Group Report," 1/30/08. James Jones is now National Security Advisor to President Barack Obama; he is a retired Marine Corp general and former head of NATO. Thomas Pickering is a retired career diplomat who has served in many posts, including as President George H. W. Bush's ambassador to the United Nations.)

"[The U.S. should] develop a strategy towards Iran that includes the possibility to resume discussions with Iran to coax greater cooperation from Tehran in helping to stabilize Afghanistan. Establish, with U.S. allies, a cooperative net assessment of what Iran is doing in Afghanistan to map out a sound strategy that seeks to convince Tehran to develop a more constructive role there and includes the possibility to reestablish direct talks on Afghanistan."

**Flynt Leverett and Hillary Mann Leverett**, "Another Iranian Revolution? Not Likely," 1/5/10 Flynt Leverett and Hillary Mann Leverett negotiated with Iran as officials in the administration of President George W. Bush

"As a model, the president would do well to look to China. Since President Richard Nixon's opening there (which took place amid the Cultural Revolution), successive American administrations have been wise enough not to let political conflict—whether among the ruling elite or between the state and the public, as in the Tiananmen Square protests and ethnic separatism in Xinjiang—divert Washington from sustained, strategic engagement with Beijing. President Obama needs to begin displaying similar statesmanship in his approach to Iran."

*Source: Friends Committee on National Legislation 4/5/10 release, FCNL, 245 Second St NE, Washington, DC 20002 800-630-1330 <http://www.fcnl.org>*



## 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/worldlatest/>

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>

# The meaning of Obama's healthcare reform

Don Bechler

The healthcare reform bill adopted by the House of Representatives and signed into law by President Obama on March 23 has been hailed widely as an historic victory for working people. Some have gone so far as to compare it to the adoption of the Social Security and Medicare bills years ago. Even those who criticize aspects of the bill argue that it marks a step forward that warrants our support.

No one could be opposed to a healthcare reform bill, however incremental, if it represented even a small step in the right direction. But is this really the case?

## Will 32 million people get access to healthcare?

The main claim put forward by the proponents of the Obama healthcare bill is that 32 million people in the U.S. will finally have access to healthcare. This fact alone is historic, we are told.

Putting aside the fact that 15 million of the current 47 million Americans without healthcare insurance will not be covered under this bill, the expansion of healthcare coverage to these 32 million people will not take effect until 2014.

This means that, based on current patterns, an estimated 100,000 people will be left to die between now and 2014 for lack of healthcare, while millions more are driven into dire poverty or desperation in their quest to fund their medical needs—all this at a time when unemployment has reached Depression-era levels.

True, the bill's proponents say, but 32 million people—even with this built-in delay—is huge.

It would be huge if these 32 million were actually to receive healthcare.

But this is not the case. As Rose Ann DeMoro, executive director of National Nurses United and member of the Executive Council of the AFL-CIO, stated, this is an "insurance bill"—not a "healthcare reform bill."

Low-income people will get government subsidies to purchase healthcare insurance from private companies, while middle-income people will be pressured to buy commercial health insurance policies, or else face a stiff penalty on their taxes. But this does not mean that these erstwhile 32 million uninsured people will actually get access to healthcare. These are two separate questions.

Families who cannot pay the high premiums, deductibles and co-payments charged by the private insurance companies—estimated to be between 15% and 18% of most family incomes—will have no choice but to default, thus returning to the ranks of the uninsured.

Millions of middle-income people will have to fork over an estimated 9.5% of their income to pay for healthcare coverage, but, according to the Physicians for a National Health Program (PNHP), this insurance will cover an average of only 70% of their medical expenses. "This will leave them vulnerable to financial ruin if they become seriously ill," notes the March 23 PNHP statement. "Many will find such policies too expensive to afford, or, if they do buy them, too expensive to use because of the high co-pays and deductibles."

Firedoglake.com, which has done a careful study of the Obama

healthcare bill—points out:

"The bill will impose a financial hardship on middle-class Americans who will be forced to buy a product that they can't afford to use. A family of four making \$66,370, for example, will be forced to pay \$5,243 per year for insurance. In addition they will have to pay \$5,882 in annual out-of-pocket medical expenses."

The Obama healthcare plan is modeled closely on the Massachusetts plan. Looking at the Massachusetts model to understand what we can expect to get nationwide, a 2009 study by the state of Massachusetts found that 21% of residents forgo medical treatment because they can't afford it. They have health insurance, but they can't afford to use it.

## Will the Obama bill contain healthcare costs?

This may have been true in Massachusetts, the Obama healthcare proponents reply, but under the Obama bill, healthcare costs will be contained. They argue that the Obama bill will stop insurance companies from hiking rates 30% to 40% per year.

This is another myth.

The Obama bill explicitly allows insurance companies to unilaterally raise prices without ceilings or caps—as well as to monopolize local markets to shut out competitors.

Dr. Marcia Angell, editor emeritus of the prestigious *New England Journal of Medicine*, told the *Bill Moyers Journal* (PBS, March 5) that, "the commercial insurance industry will be able to charge whatever they like." Asked about the cost-regulation measures vaunted by Obama

plan proponents, Dr. Angell replied, "If these companies are regulated in some way that cuts into their profits, all they have to do is just raise their premiums. And they'll do that."

But even these regulations will have little to no effect. A main problem with the Obama bill is lack of enforcement. Also, the private insurance companies fought for, and secured, language in the Obama bill that continues to exempt them from anti-trust laws and leaves them free to raise rates without fear of competition.

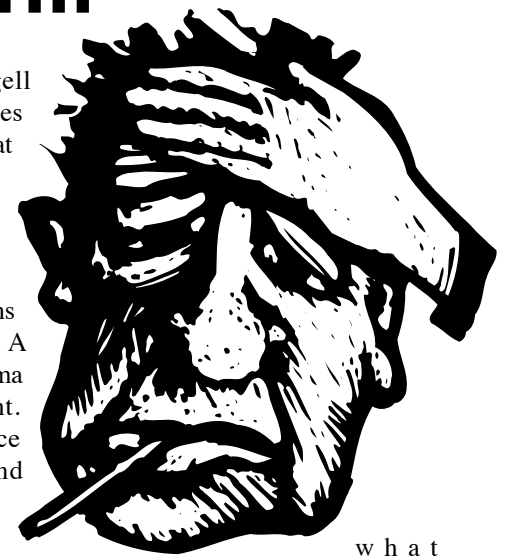
Healthcare reform advocates had campaigned strongly for a "public option" that would enable people to purchase health insurance directly from the government. They argued that this would be a way to genuinely contain healthcare costs, as it would provide real competition to the insurance companies.

The insurance companies—echoed by the Republicans and many "Blue Dog" Democrats—cried bloody murder. This was an anti-American and anti-free market proposal, they said. Tea Party activists took to the streets to protest this "Hitler-inspired totalitarian" provision.

Clearly the insurance companies feared that the public option, which would not be driven by the profit motive and could therefore keep costs down, would become so popular and would grow so much that eventually they would be iced out of the healthcare equation. And had the public option been included in the plan, these companies could have been driven out of business.

But as early as last summer, President Obama had made a back-room deal with the for-profit hospital industry that the public option would not be part of any final bill voted by the Congress. This scandalous fact was revealed by *New York Times* Washington reporter David Kirkpatrick and has not been denied by the White House.

So, while labor was pounding the pavement for the public option last fall, Obama had already made a deal that there would be no public option in the final health reform legislation. And this is exactly



what

happened: There was no public option. Obama betrayed his promise to the labor movement, but kept his promise to the private insurance companies that fund both the Democratic and Republican parties.

## Will the bill stop coverage denials for pre-existing conditions?

What about the claim by proponents of the Obama bill that it will stop the health insurance industry from denying coverage to patients with pre-existing conditions?

The Physicians for a National Health Program March 23 statement explains that "the much-vaunted insurance regulation of ending denials on the basis of pre-existing conditions is riddled with loopholes, thanks to the central role that insurers played in crafting the legislation."

One such loophole is this: The bill does not prohibit the private insurance companies from dropping people in individual plans when they get sick. If people with pre-existing conditions manage to get health insurance, they can always be dropped later.

Again, the main problem is lack of enforcement: The bill does not empower a regulatory body to keep people from being dropped when they're sick. There are already many states with laws prohibiting people from being dropped when they're sick, but without an enforcement mechanism, there is little to hold the insurance companies in check.

This brings up a number of other fundamental problems with the Obama healthcare bill.

(continued next page)

**"This healthcare legislation is the biggest assault on women's reproductive rights in 35 years. It is a national shame that a Democratic president who pledged the repeal of the Hyde Amendment would proudly issue an executive order affirming it."**

## Subsidies through Medicare cuts/excise taxes

Under the bill, insurance companies will be handed close to \$500 billion in taxpayer money "to subsidize the purchase of their shoddy products," as the PNHP statement puts it. "Not only will this enhance their financial and political power, and with it their ability to block future reform," the PNHP text continues, "but the bill will drain about \$40 billion from Medicare payments to safety-net hospitals, threatening the care of the tens of millions who will remain uninsured."

Another way that the government subsidies for the uninsured will be paid for is by taxing many, if not most, of the employer-based healthcare plans, that is, the so-called "cadillac" union plans. This provision pits low-wage workers against the unionized workforce, sowing tensions and divisions in the working class.

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) President Tom Buffenbarger explained his union's opposition to this measure:

"The IAM opposes the excise tax, period. We believe it is unfair to our current members and particularly unfair to those members we hope to organize in the future. If a temporary exemption is the best this Congress can offer the American people after the promises of the last election, they will have earned the wrath of voters in the next election.

"By stringing this 'fix' out until 2018, our members will be pressured to agree to benefit cuts year after year in the vain hope they will be able avoid the excise tax. Companies will seek to shift costs while still cutting benefits to avoid eight years of healthcare premiums accelerating at 15% to 20% percent per year. This is a huge ping-pong ball that our elected leaders are trying to shove down the throats of hard-working Americans."

## Sacrificing women's rights and immigrants' rights

If all this were not enough to make it clear that the "Obama bill should not have passed—as it will only make things worse," to quote Dr. Marcia Angell, the bill sacrificed women's reproductive rights for corporate profits. Jane

The much-vaunted insurance regulation of ending denials on the basis of preexisting conditions is riddled with loopholes, thanks to the central role that insurers played in crafting the legislation."

Hamsher, from firedoglake.com, wrote:

"This healthcare legislation is the biggest assault on women's reproductive rights in 35 years. It is a national shame that a Democratic president who pledged the repeal of the Hyde Amendment would proudly issue an executive order affirming it. How far we've come since 2007, when Barack Obama swore that his first act in office would be to sign the Freedom of Choice Act."

National Organization for Women (NOW) President Terry O'Neill was equally blunt:

"As a longtime proponent of healthcare reform, it pains me to have to stand against what many see as a major achievement. But feminist, progressive principles are in direct conflict with many of the compromises built into and tacked onto the legislation.

"The bill contains a sweeping anti-abortion provision. Contrary to the talking points circulated by congressional leaders, the bill passed today ultimately achieves the same outcome as the infamous Stupak-Pitts Amendment, namely the likely elimination of all private as well as public insurance coverage for abortion.

"President Obama made an eleventh-hour agreement to issue an executive order lending the weight of his office to the anti-abortion measures included in the bill. This move was designed to appease a handful of anti-choice Democrats who have held up health care reform in an effort to restrict women's access to abortion."

And if this were not enough,

O'Neill writes, "The bill imposes harsh restrictions on the ability of immigrants to access healthcare, imposing a five-year waiting period on permanent, legal residents before they are eligible for assistance such as Medicaid, and prohibiting undocumented workers even to use their own money to purchase health insurance through an exchange. These provisions are counterproductive in terms of controlling health care costs; they are there because of ugly anti-immigrant sentiment."

In a nutshell, the Obama healthcare reform is NOT good for working people. In fact it marks a big step in the wrong direction. And the main reason for this is that it's a plan based on the very private insurance companies that have created the healthcare fiasco we face today in our country.

## Do the health insurance companies hate this bill?

No. It's not a bill that the insurance companies hate, as so many have claimed. In fact, the bill is almost identical to the plan written by AHIP, the insurance company trade association, in 2009.

Nationally syndicated columnist E.J. Dionne Jr. wrote in the *San Francisco Chronicle* that, "the ultimate paradox of this Great Health Care Showdown" is that, "Democrats have rallied behind a bill built on a series of principles that Republicans espoused for years." He continues:

"Republicans have said that they do not want to destroy the private insurance market. This bill not only preserves that market but



## Contact Your Reps

Pres. Barack H. Obama, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Washington DC 20500. 202-456-1414; [www.whitehouse.gov](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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

strengthens it by bringing in 32 million new customers. The plan before Congress does not call for a government 'takeover' of health care. It provides subsidies so more people can buy private insurance.

"Republicans always say they are against 'socialized medicine.' Not only is this bill nothing like a 'single-payer' health system along Canadian or British lines. It doesn't even include the 'public option' that would have allowed people voluntarily to buy their insurance from the government. The single-payer idea fell by the wayside long ago, and supporters of the public option—sadly, from my point of view—lost out last December."

## Concluding comments

Yes, there are some good provisions in this legislation such

as funding for community health centers and the expansion of Medicaid and SCHIP. But these provisions could have—and should have—been stand-alone measures had there been the political will to fight for genuine change.

These positive provisions, however, pale in comparison with the poison pills contained throughout the legislation—poison pills built into a plan that not only fails to curb the power of the private insurance companies, but in fact further entrenches their power and monopoly over the delivery of healthcare. This incontrovertible fact belies the claim by some that the bill can serve as a pathway toward a single-payer system.

Source: *Single Payer Now* release 4/1/10 415-695-7891 [www.singlepayernow.net](http://www.singlepayernow.net)

# 5 myths about your taxes

Roberton Williams/  
Rosanne Altshuler

April is here, which means it's almost time to pony up and render unto Caesar. We've gathered our receipts and other documents, and dragged ourselves to the strip-mall tax preparer or fired up do-it-yourself software to determine how big our refund is—or how much we owe Uncle Sam. No one likes to pay taxes, but as we get ready to stand in line at the post office on the 15th, it might be useful to dispel some of the most common myths about this springtime ritual.

## 1. The poorest and the richest Americans pay no taxes

About 45 percent of households will owe no federal income tax in 2010, according to our estimates. Half of them earn too little, while the other half—mostly middle- and lower-income households—will take advantage of tax credits such as the earned income credit, the child and child-care credits, the American Opportunity and Lifetime Learning credits, which help pay for college, and the saver's credit, which subsidizes retirement saving.

But even citizens who pay no income tax still pay other kinds of taxes. They pay Social Security and Medicare taxes when they work, sales taxes when they buy things and property taxes on their homes. Drivers pay gasoline taxes, and smokers and drinkers pay excise taxes on tobacco and alcohol. According to our research, more than 75 percent of us will pay at least some form of federal tax in 2010.

Those who pay no federal taxes are mostly the low-income elderly or very poor families with children. Even about half of those with annual incomes under \$10,000 pay some federal tax, most often payroll taxes on wages.

And yes, the richest Americans pay taxes, too. Though a tiny minority manage to avoid federal income tax through elaborate tax planning, 99.7 percent of those with annual incomes above \$1 million will pay federal taxes this year, surrendering 27 percent of their earnings to the government.

The average American taxpayer pays 18 percent.

## 2. Americans are overtaxed

In 2007, federal, state and local taxes claimed about \$3.8 trillion, or 27 percent of U.S. gross domestic product. That's nearly \$13,000 for every American. Two-thirds of tax revenues went to the federal government.

It may sound like a lot, but other developed countries collect even more. In 2006, taxes in 30 of the world's richest countries averaged 36 percent of GDP; only Mexico, Turkey, South Korea and Japan had tax rates lower than ours. And taxes in many European countries exceeded 40 percent of GDP because these nations offer more extensive government services than the United States does.

Americans do pay far more in individual income taxes than residents of other wealthy nations. Nearly 37 percent of U.S. tax revenue came from personal income taxes in 2006, about 10 percentage points more, on average, than in other industrialized countries. But we pay much less in sales taxes; 17 percent of 2006 U.S. tax receipts were from taxes on goods and services, or about half the 32 percent average for rich countries.

Bottom line: We may hate our taxes, but we pay far less than people in other wealthy countries.

## 3. Higher taxes could eliminate the federal deficit

Washington spends more than it takes in through tax revenues, resulting in a projected budget deficit of almost \$1.35 trillion in 2010, or 9 percent of GDP, according to the Congressional Budget Office. Couldn't we get rid of the deficit by raising taxes?

No. A study we conducted at the Tax Policy Center found that Washington would have to raise taxes by almost 40 percent to reduce—not eliminate, just reduce—the deficit to 3 percent of our GDP, the 2015 goal the Obama administration set in its 2011 budget. That tax boost would mean the lowest income tax rate would jump from 10 to nearly 14

percent, and the top rate from 35 to 48 percent.

What if we raised taxes only on families with couples making more than \$250,000 a year and on individuals making more than \$200,000? The top two income tax rates would have to more than double, with the top rate hitting almost 77 percent, to get the deficit down to 3 percent of GDP. Such dramatic tax increases are politically untenable and still wouldn't come close to eliminating the deficit.

## 4. Most people's tax returns are way too complicated

No one claims that our tax system is simple. After all, the Internal Revenue Code runs more than 3 million words, and the instructions for the widely used 1040 form take up more than 100 pages. Small wonder that three out of five tax filers pay someone to prepare their returns, and another one in five uses software.

But most Americans have relatively simple tax returns. Nearly two-thirds of us claim the standard deduction and don't have to itemize our deductible expenses. And 40 percent of us file one of the simpler tax forms: the 1040A or the 1040EZ. The 2009 EZ has just 13 lines. Relatively few of us get income from any source besides wages and salaries, interest, dividends, and pensions, so it's not hard to tally how much we took in.

So why do taxes seem so complicated? Blame Congress. Legislators use the tax code not just to collect revenue but also to encourage and reward specific activities. The 1986 Tax Reform Act greatly simplified the income tax by getting rid of many special provisions and cutting the number of tax brackets. Since then, Congress

has expanded the earned income and child-care credits, created the child, saver's, and education credits, established health savings and Roth retirement accounts, imposed different tax rates on dividends, created a class of long-term capital gains with a lower tax rate and doubled the number of tax brackets.

# Reaching out, making a connection

Liza Sysay

First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge the Bracelets Brings Smiles (BBS) youth for doing a wonderful job in establishing such an amazing club. This is truly a student lead group that went above and beyond to become a well-built team on their own. Their desire is to give back to the Stockton community as much as they can. They figure that one way is to make bracelets which will bring smiles and contribute hope to the people in need.

On Saturday March 27th, a few of the students took some time out of their personal schedules to volunteer at the Stockton Family Homeless Shelter. The group showed very strong leadership skills by organizing the whole event on their own. They spent the afternoon making beautiful bracelets with children and adults. They also had a variety of activities for the children to participate

in such as board games, card games, spelling games, coloring activities, building blocks, and puzzles. The families at the shelter were very appreciative and the participating kids gave great ideas of different activities to bring on their next visit. I am proud to say that the students were very kind, caring, fun, and showed true professionalism. They did an amazing job!

A lot of people seem to underestimate the abilities of today's youth. I'm glad that I have the opportunity to work with such remarkable teens. They are incredibly talented and great example of strong young leaders. I believe that today's youth need more encouragement to help them build their path to succeed. Sometimes people need support to be structured and we are here to supply that moral assistance.

Liza Sysay is YMCA Program Coordinator at Franklin High School.

Last year's stimulus bill added temporary tax cuts that benefit house and car buyers, workers, and families with children, but also make tax returns longer and harder to complete.

## 5. You should aim for a big tax refund

It's wonderful to receive a big check in the mail. And having to write a check to the IRS is never fun. But you're better off owing the government a small amount on April 15 than receiving a huge refund. Here's why: Even though it seems like you pay your income taxes once a year, you actually pay them all year long as your employer withholds taxes from your paycheck. When you file your tax return, you are refunded the difference between the tax you owe and the cash your employer withheld.

Three-quarters of Americans allow their employers to withhold too much; income tax refunds averaged nearly \$2,300 in 2008. In effect, we're giving the government an interest-free loan. You'd be

better off stashing these withheld wages in an interest-bearing bank account and writing a check to the IRS on April 15.

It's not hard to cut the amount of money withheld from your paycheck. Just give your employer a W-4 form asking to withhold less each payday. Your human resources office should have the form, and it's easy to fill out. But there is a catch: If you owe too much (and there are specific rules defining what "too much" is), you may have to pay a penalty—usually interest on the unpaid tax. And if you're not careful, you may end up owing more in taxes than you saved.

Roberton Williams is a senior fellow of the Tax Policy Center, a joint venture of the Urban Institute and the Brookings Institution. Rosanne Altshuler is the center's director.

Source: The Tax Policy Center release 4/10/10, <http://www.taxpolicycenter.org> & The Urban Institute, 2100 M St NW, Washington, DC 20037 <http://www.urban.org>

# Why are we afraid to tax the super-rich?

Les Leopold

Our nation is already deeply in debt. How can we possibly afford to invest in our infrastructure, renewable energy, health care, our schools ... and create the millions of jobs that our unemployed desperately need?

We are told that we're already living well beyond our means ... that entitlement programs like Medicare and Social Security will bankrupt us. Forget the solar panels, the smaller classes and the new jobs ... we've got to cut back on government programs at all levels.

Meanwhile, the super-rich are still having a ball. In his annual shareholder letter, mega-investor Warren Buffett wrote, "We've put a lot of money to work during the chaos of the last two years. When it's raining gold, reach for a bucket, not a thimble." And Forbes Magazine adds, "Many plutocrats did just that. Indeed, last year's wealth wasteland has become a billionaire bonanza. Most of the richest people on the planet have seen their fortunes soar in the past year."

Which brings us back to the federal budget. There are two sides to every ledger: the expenses and the income. We need to start looking at the income side. With a fairer tax system, we could retrieve some of that money downpour that the elite has been siphoning away from us for decades.

In the 1950s the marginal tax rate on those earning more than \$3 million a year (in today's dollars) was 91 percent. By 1990 it was 28 percent. The IRS says that the top 400 richest tax filers actually paid a rate of just 16 percent in 2007 (the latest numbers we have). Yep, the richest earners ... people who took in an average of \$343 million each ... probably paid a lower rate than you did. Something to consider as you sign your 2009 return.

By the way, those 400 people who do so well on tax day have a combined net worth of nearly \$1.37 trillion. (According to *Forbes Magazine* their wealth has gone up on average by more than 16 percent over the past year ... the worst economic year since the Great Depression during which 29 million Americans are without

work or forced into part-time jobs.)

How do we even wrap our minds around a number so large? Here's the example that brings it down to earth for me. If we had progressive taxes that reduced their wealth to a trifling \$100 million each, we'd have enough money to set up a trust fund whose interest could provide tuition-free higher education for students at every public college and university in perpetuity. Imagine that. Our kids could actually leave college without carrying tens of thousands of dollars of debt on their backs.

Could those 400 special people be able to get by on just \$100 million a year? I think they might.

So why are we so fearful of taxing the super-rich? Here are the arguments I've heard.

## 1. They've earned it.

Really? The concept of "earning" is murky when you consider the array of corporate welfare programs we provide. Oil companies have their depletion allowances. Big sugar farmers have their sweet subsidies. The health insurance industry is exempt from anti-trust laws.

One way corporations spend their welfare checks is by providing top management with mind-boggling compensation packages. For instance, in 2009, our financial wizards netted about \$150 billion in bonuses—as if in reward for crashing the economy. Were it not for our \$10 trillion (not billion) in bailout funds, they would have earned nothing at all. In fact, the financial sector's reckless gambling has lost us over \$6 trillion in wealth. But the execs did quite well, thanks to taxpayer largesse.

You'd think we'd be crying out for a windfall profits tax to reclaim our money. But no.

## 2. Redistribution of income is un-American.

During the 2008 campaign, Joe the Plumber got his 15 minutes of fame when he slammed Obama for daring to utter the phrase "redistribution of income." Of course, we redistribute income primarily through progressive

taxation—having the rich pay a higher rate.

Joe didn't mention that we already live in a world of massive redistribution. Only it's from the bottom to the top. We still hear about how poor folks game the system and mooch off our hard earned tax dollars. They go to emergency rooms and don't pay. They get Medicaid for free. And many don't pay any taxes at all (mostly because their incomes are so impossibly low). But all of that is chump change compared to the gaming going on at the other end of the economic scale.

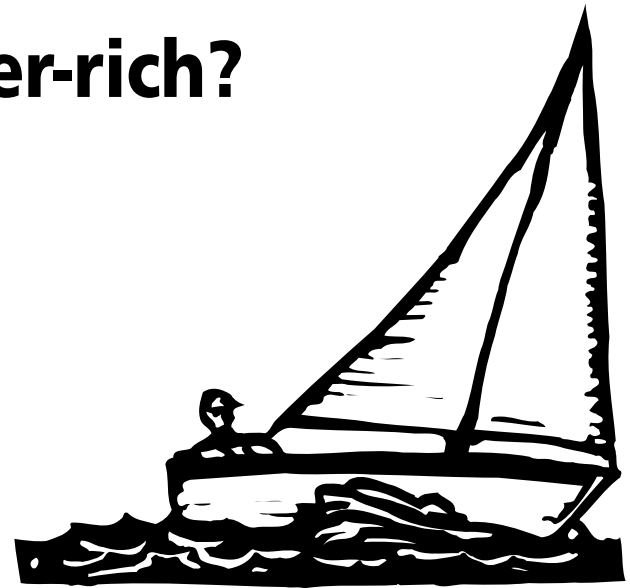
Just think of all the scams corporations and the rich are running: ever-rising credit card fees, predatory mortgages, usurious interest rates, check cashing ripoffs, monopoly pricing. They turn income into lower taxed capital gains, find offshore tax shelters, collect subsidies for their runaway shops. And then they netted the big one: Wall Street bailouts. Post-bailout, these too-big-to fail companies are getting even bigger. It all adds up to a major redistribution plan ... from the many to the few.

During the post-WWII boom we had one of the fairest income distributions in the world. Not anymore. Today the gap between rich and poor is wider than at any time in U.S. history. Here's a telling statistic: In 1970 the compensation ratio of the top 100 CEOs compared to the average worker was 45 to one. By 2008 it was 1,071 to one. You think they got that much smarter?

## 3. If we tax the wealthy, we'll hinder investment and kill jobs.

This was the justification politicians and pundits used when they started cutting taxes and eliminating regulations in the late 1970s. Tax cuts were supposed to create a robust investment class whose dollars would fuel the new service economy. Since only the wealthy can make such investments, the argument went, we have to make sure they have the money they need to invest. Otherwise, where will all the new jobs come from?

In theory this sounds good. But we tried this experiment, and it



didn't work. When we cut taxes on the super-rich, we got a different kind of investment boom than the politicians and economists had promised. The wealthy literally ran out of investments in factories, equipment and even services. So they flocked to financial investments ... which were supposedly safer and more profitable anyway. The super-rich laid their money down in the Wall Street casino, and helped puff up bubble after bubble. Profits in the financial sector soared. In 1960, the sector accounted for about 15 per cent of all corporate profits. By 2008 (before the crash, that is), it was almost 40 percent. The financial sector crashed as the direct result of tax cuts for the super-rich and Wall Street deregulation.

## 4. Government's too big already. We should be cutting the public sector, not raising taxes to expand it.

Many people (like those in and around the Tea Party) dislike tax scams by the wealthy, but dislike government even more. They're outraged that public sector workers often have better wages and pensions than people in the private sector. They've made attacking public employees the new national blood sport.

With unemployment so high, public sector workers are an easy target. Why should taxpayers, many of whom have no pensions, finance the pensions of public sector workers? Why should we protect public sector jobs when we ourselves are unemployed?

Here's one reason: Because cutting state and local payrolls would actually add to our

economic woes. If we fire public sector workers, they'll stop paying taxes ... which will only add to the tax burden on those people who still have jobs.

Laid off public sector workers ... and even those whose wages and benefits have been cut ... don't buy as many goods and services. This drop in demand triggers layoffs in the private sector ... and a further slide in tax revenues. In short, public sector cutbacks contribute to an economic death spiral: plummeting tax revenues and ever more cutbacks.

By failing to tax the super-rich, we're burrowing even deeper into a billionaire bailout society in which the rich keep on gambling away our money, knowing that we will bail them out if they lose. Yes, we need to regulate Wall Street. But we also need to recognize that these gambling addicts have too much money in their pockets. And society needs that money for constructive investments, not for more gambling.

In the end the real fiscal crisis is in our minds. We don't have to keep fighting over the scraps the wealthy have left us. We can build a new kind of economy, but only if we can summon up some courage. Do we have the nerve to tax the super-rich?

*Les Leopold is the executive director of the Labor Institute and Public Health Institute in New York, and author of The Looting of America: How Wall Street's Game of Fantasy Finance Destroyed Our Jobs, Pensions, and Prosperity...and What We Can Do About It (Chelsea Green, 2009).*

*Source: AlterNet 3/12/10 <http://www.alternet.org/story/146020/>*

# Will new CAFE standards change the cars we drive?

BC Upham

How will new fuel efficiency requirements change the look, feel—and price—of your next car? Experts say expect prices to rise, and smaller, lighter, technologically advanced vehicles to grow in number.

## An overview

New Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards published last week require most automakers to raise the average fuel efficiency of the vehicles they sell to 34.1 miles to the gallon by the 2016 model year rising to 35 mpg when efficiency gains in air conditioning are included. Currently, the CAFE for cars stands at 27.5 mpg, and 23.1 for light trucks.

The standards are expected to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by about 30 percent between 2012 and 2016, and save the country \$240 billion from fuel savings, pollution reduction and reduced imports. Automakers have accepted the new standards

because they are firm, ending a period of uncertainty; and nationwide, so manufacturers do not have to contend with a patchwork of different state requirements.

## More expensive on the front end, cheaper over time

So how will the average new car in 2016 be different from ones on the lot today? First off, it will cost more.

The new standards are expected to cost automakers \$52 billion, and those costs will trickle down to consumers: the price tag on a new car will be \$1,100 higher, according to Consumer Reports. But fuel savings will be significant: up to \$3,000 over the life of the average vehicle.

Of course, the cost of meeting the standards for less efficient cars could be much higher—it could cost \$9,000 more to bring a full-sized pick-up up to par, according to TireBusiness.com.

## New spins on old technologies

The CAFE standards are not going to single-handedly usher in the era of the electric car. All-electric vehicles like the Nissan Leaf have garnered a lot of press attention, but the technology is still very expensive compared to gasoline engines.

Rather, the standards will first and foremost incentivize improvements to gasoline engines. Dual-clutch and seven or eight speed automatic transmissions could increase fuel efficiency, along with lighter components.

Diesel engines, which are typically more fuel-efficient, are likely to be more familiar in the States as a result of the change. More hybrids like the Prius, Chevy Volt and others will help automakers meet the new standards.

Style may be sacrificed for efficiency, with designers focusing on aerodynamics from the get-go.



There's a reason the Prius and Volt have the same tear-drop shape.

For an example of the "typical car of 2016" one might look no further than the diesel Volkswagen Golf, a compact, aerodynamic car that gets 38 miles to the gallon—and is still capable of carrying four people fairly comfortably.

## Will cars be as safe?

The most astonishing thing about the recent CAFE changes is how little acrimony there has been over the standards. In the past, car makers raised a number of arguments against better fuel efficiency requirements, including the spectre of lighter, more fuel-efficient cars causing additional traffic fatalities. And in fact, data

suggests that anywhere from 1,300 to 3,900 more people died on American roads each year as a result of the last set of regulations, in the 1970s and 1980s.

The increase is attributed to the lighter weight of more efficient cars, meaning there is less bulk shielding passengers in a collision. Fatalities per vehicle mile driven has steadily fallen in the last several decades however.

American automakers seemed reluctant to raise this, or any other argument this time around, perhaps because two of the Big Three were, and still are, relying on the federal government to survive.

Source: Triple Pundit: People, Planet, Profit 4/5/10 <<http://www.triplepundit.com>>

# Canadian cement plant first to capture CO<sub>2</sub> in algae

Timothy B. Hurst

A Canadian company called Pond Biofuels is capturing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from a cement plant in algae—algae the company ultimately plans on using to

make biofuel. It's no secret that the process of manufacturing cement is both energy intensive and dirty. Global cement production alone emits roughly five percent of greenhouse gas emissions annually, both as a byproduct of limestone decarbonation (60%) and from the burning of fossil fuels in the cement kilns (40%). And as the demand for concrete-intensive infrastructure soars in developing countries like China and India, global emissions from cement plants—and other industrial sources—will continue to rise.

But a Canadian company called Pond Biofuels sees some real opportunity in all those industrial greenhouse gas emissions. At the St. Marys Cement plant in

southwestern Ontario, Pond Biofuels has become the first to successfully use carbon dioxide emitted from a major industrial source to produce high value biomass from microalgae.

Pond Biofuels is capturing carbon dioxide and other emissions from a cement plant and using it to create a nutrient-rich algae slime which can be dried and used as a fuel. The algae will be grown at a facility adjacent to the stacks, harvested, dried using industrial waste heat, from the cement plant and then used along with the fossil fuels that are currently used in its cement kilns. The company says they hope to demonstrate the scalability of the industrial pilot project and to show that it can be employed on virtually any industrial stack.

"To resolve the problem you have to have an industrial solution, not a laboratory solution," Terry Graham, chairman of Toronto start-up Pond Biofuels told the

Toronto Star. "In a laboratory you can control everything. But you can't do that in the field," added Graham.

Several companies are developing promising technologies in the race to successfully capture, divert and repurpose industrial-scale emissions of greenhouse gases into algae-based biofuels, but investment in the fledgling industry has been slow to develop.

However, if the Pond Biofuels project shows that it can successfully produce a microalgae crop that can then be turned back into fuel to fire the kilns or converted to an algae-based biofuel—a process they are currently testing and hope ultimately to be fueling their trucks with—the three-year-old start-up is going to have a lot of interested venture capitalists knocking at its front door.

Source: Earth & Industry release 4/11/10 <http://earthandindustry.com>

## 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.



# Lowering income taxes while raising pollution taxes reaps great returns

As economic decisionmakers—whether consumers, corporate planners, government policymakers, or investment bankers—we all depend on the market for guidance. "In order for markets to work and economic actors to make sound decisions, the markets must give us good information, including the full cost of the products we buy," says Lester R. Brown, President of the Earth Policy Institute, in a recent release, "Lowering Income Taxes While Raising Pollution Taxes Reaps Great Returns." "Unfortunately, markets largely ignore the indirect costs of goods and services, thus grossly distorting the structure of the economy."

The most effective way to correct this massive market failure is to restructure taxes—lowering taxes on income while raising those on environmentally destructive activities. Widely endorsed by economists, tax shifting helps make sure the price of products reflects their full costs to society.

The first step in creating an honest market is to calculate these indirect costs. Perhaps the best model for this is a U.S. government study on smoking from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In 2006 the CDC calculated the cost to society of smoking cigarettes—including both the cost of treating smoking-related illnesses and the lost worker productivity from these illnesses—at \$10.47 per pack. This calculation provides a framework for raising taxes on cigarettes.

The many indirect costs of using gasoline—including climate change, oil industry tax breaks and subsidies, oil supply protection, and treatment of auto exhaust-related respiratory illnesses—total around \$12 per gallon (\$3.17 per liter), based on a conservative estimate by the International Center for Technology Assessment. If this external or social cost were added to the roughly \$3 per gallon average price of gasoline in the United States, a gallon would cost \$15.

Phasing in an incremental

gasoline tax rising by 40¢ per gallon per year for the next 10 years and offsetting it with a reduction in income taxes would raise the U.S. gas tax to the \$4 per gallon tax prevailing today in Europe. This will still fall short of the \$12 per gallon indirect costs, but combined with the rising price of producing gasoline, it should be enough to encourage motorists to use improved public transport and to buy plug-in hybrid and all-electric cars as they come to market.

Tax shifting is not new in Europe. A four-year plan adopted in Germany in 1999 systematically shifted taxes from labor to energy. By 2003, this plan had reduced annual carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions by 20 million tons and helped to create approximately 250,000 jobs. It also accelerated growth in the renewable energy sector.

Between 2001 and 2006, Sweden shifted an estimated \$2 billion of taxes from income to environmentally destructive activities. Much of this shift of \$500 or so per household was levied on road transport, including hikes in vehicle and fuel taxes. France, Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom are among the countries also using this policy instrument. In Europe and the United States, polls indicate that at least 70 percent of voters support environmental tax shifting once it is explained to them.

Environmental taxes are now being used for several purposes. For example, a number of cities are now taxing cars that enter the city center. Some governments are simply imposing a tax on automobile ownership. In Denmark, the registration tax on the purchase of a new car exceeds

the price of the car by 180 percent. A new car that sells for \$20,000 costs the buyer \$56,000. In Singapore, the tax on a \$14,200 Ford Focus more than triples the price, pushing it to \$45,500.

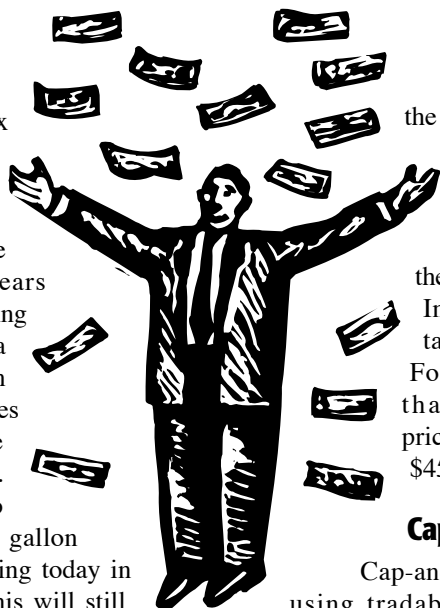
## Cap & trade

Cap-and-trade systems using tradable permits are sometimes an alternative to environmental tax restructuring. The principal difference is that with permits, governments set the allowed amount of an activity and let the market set the price of the permits as they are auctioned off or given away. With environmental taxes, in contrast, the environmentally destructive activity's price is incorporated in the tax rate, and the market determines the amount of the activity that will occur at that price.

The use of cap-and-trade systems with marketable permits has been effective at the national level, ranging from restricting the catch in an Australian fishery to reducing sulfur emissions in the United States, but it also has serious limitations. While economists largely prefer tax shifting for its efficiency, transparency, and predictable prices, both carbon taxes and cap-and-trade schemes are likely to result in a higher cost for burning carbon, thereby helping to correct the current market failure.

A market that is allowed to ignore the indirect costs in pricing goods and services is irrational, wasteful, and self-destructive. The key to building a global economy that can sustain economic progress is the creation of an honest market, one that tells the ecological truth.

Source: Earth Policy Institute release 4/7/10 Earth Policy Institute, 1350 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 403, Washington, DC 20036 [www.earthpolicy.org](http://www.earthpolicy.org)



Joanie McCulloch M.T.  
Massage Therapy

Myofascial Release • Chronic Pain Relief •  
Fibromyalgia Pain Relief • Swedish Massage •  
Deep Tissue Massage • Acupressure • Reflexology  
GIFT CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE

1955 Lucile Ave, Suite B  
Stockton CA 95209

298-0393

1st time only:  
\$70 for 2 hours  
(1st hour devoted to  
myofascial release)

## Operating a Successful Business in a Down Economy!

Free and confidential business consulting  
Affordable training (no charge for many workshops)  
Call the SBDC to see how we can assist you

56 S. Lincoln Street • Stockton, CA 95203  
209-954-5089  
[www.sbdcdelta.org](http://www.sbdcdelta.org)



LAW OFFICES OF  
ANN M. CERNEY  
SHELLIE LOTT  
LANGLEY KREUZE

Attorneys at Law  
45 Hunter Square Plaza, Stockton  
104 N. School St. #205, Lodi  
948-9384 or 369-1333

- Personal Injury
- Social Security
- Wills
- Probate
- Trusts
- General Practice

Se Habla Espanol • Thai • Vietnamese



Roger K. Lang, D.D.S., Inc.

3031 W. March Lane, Suite 318E  
(Go north on I-5, exit March Lane, go west to  
"The Fountain" and turn right)

(209) 956-0601

Fax: (209) 952-8845

Email: [info@drklangdds.com](mailto:info@drklangdds.com)

Web: [www.drklangdds.com](http://www.drklangdds.com)

"Together, we will walk the pathway to health and wholeness."

## Publications

Technical Writing & Editing / Graphic Design / Web Sites

InfoWright

PO Box 162644  
Sacramento 95816  
916.444-5118  
[llitman@pacbell.net](mailto:llitman@pacbell.net)



# State Water Bond: Learn the basics

Next November, you'll be asked to vote on an \$11.1 billion water bond. Foothill Conservancy has joined the Regional Council of Rural Counties, the Sierra Nevada Alliance and many others in opposing the bond. The following article excerpts from the Planning and Conservation League website will help explain why.

Here is what the water bond will do to the state of California:

- \* Fund new dam construction
- \* Direct public money to fund private mitigation
- \* Reduce future conservation funding
- \* Increase debt service and hurt environmental programs

It has been three decades since the New Melones Reservoir was constructed, drowning the lower reaches of the Stanislaus River. If this bond is approved, it will roll back 30 years of progress away from destructive dams. At the same time, the financing promised to environmental groups will be used as a justification for slashing existing environmental projects and programs.

The environmental community must unite to reject this destructive bond measure and work together to produce alternate financing

strategies that fund environmental protection without imperiling those very resources.

## Fund new dam construction

The proposed bond allocates \$1.05 billion of its \$11.1 billion for "Water Supply Reliability" projects in integrated regional water management plans, "including, but not limited to, local and regional surface water storage projects." This money may be used to finance environmentally destructive projects like expanding the Pardee Dam, which would flood miles of Mokelumne River habitat.

The proposed bond also allocates an additional \$3 billion for water storage projects. It identifies "Surface storage projects identified in the CALFED Bay-Delta Program Record of Decision" as the first in a list of prospective funding candidates. These surface storage projects include the Temperance Flat dam on the San Joaquin River and the off-stream Sites Reservoir to divert water from the Sacramento River.

While the legislation was being drafted, environmental groups attempted to ensure that

these surface storage projects would have to compete with other storage options, like groundwater management, on a level playing field. However, the bond's final language is carefully crafted to favor dams. Some of the criteria may appear to preclude dams from consideration, but instead have been carefully worded to support their selection. It is not a coincidence that Governor Schwarzenegger signed the bond measure at Millerton Reservoir, the site of the proposed Temperance Flat Dam.

## Direct public money to fund private mitigation

The proposed bond uses taxpayer money to reduce or offset the adverse environmental effects of new water infrastructure projects. This use of taxpayer monies is unprecedented. Taxpayer funds have been and should continue to be used to pay for costs associated with broad public benefit projects. The proposed water bond measure changes this long-established practice. Instead of the user who benefits from the project being responsible for reducing or avoiding the project's significant adverse effects on the existing

environment, the taxpayers, who will receive no benefit from the project, will foot the bill in order to protect the existing environment from the project's significant harm. In addition to setting a bad precedent on who should pay for a new water project and its impacts, this funding strategy means there will be less public funds for restoration of the environment.

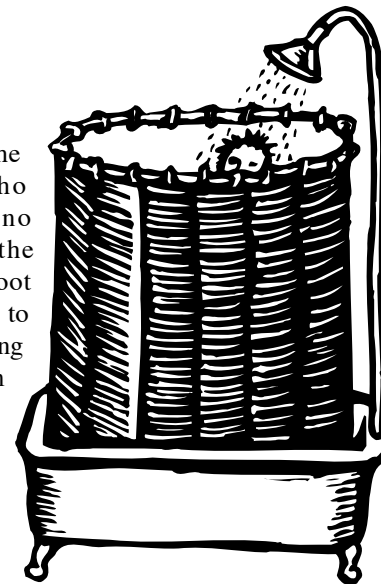
## Reduce future conservation funding

While the bond includes \$1.78 billion for restoration and conservation projects, it is unlikely that any of that money would be granted in the short term. First, half of the \$11.14 billion in bonds would not be sold until July 1, 2015, and since the dam funding would be continuously appropriated before then, it is unlikely that conservancies and land trusts would receive their allocations in the next six years. Second, the state has billions of dollars from Proposition 84 that have not been appropriated, and California cannot currently sell past bonds because of state's diminished bond rating. It is doubtful that the state would prioritize conservation and restoration before the infrastructure funding.

Before the environmental community would see any money from this bond, California will have a new governor, a new budget, and hopefully a more sound economy. Under those conditions the environmental community would have the opportunity to pass a slimmer bond, without conceding to state funding for new destructive dams.

## Increased debt service hurts environmental programs

Since the bond was crafted to garner votes for the entire water package, it includes many pet projects. Newspapers across the state have labeled the bond "pork" and referred to the bond's authors



as "renowned pork chefs." It is unfortunate that restoration and conservation projects, which voters have historically supported, are being grouped with the rest of the package and perceived as pork. With the economic downturn and the sacrifices Californians have been asked to make to balance the budget, this is not a strategic time for our community to ask for funding that we will not see for years.

Passing this bond will cost the general fund up to \$800 million annually in debt service once all the bonds are sold. Siphoning more money for debt service will undoubtedly have an adverse effect on top environmental priorities. The 2009-2010 California budget process gutted important environmental programs. Cuts to the Department of Parks and Recreation will result in the closure of probably more than 100 parks. Funding for the Williamson Act was eliminated. Funding for the Department of Fish and Game and the Office of Environmental Health Hazards Assessments was severely slashed. We can expect further cuts as the state attempts to balance this year's budget.

Since increasing the debt service would require even greater cuts, any environmental benefit from new bonds would have to outweigh the negative impacts from greater cuts. While one may hope that the new bond would offer funding for new environmental projects, recent experience suggests that it will not. When Proposition 84 passed in 2006, instead of adding funding to conservation and restoration projects, it was simply used to backfill budget cuts. If this turns out to be the case, the bond's supporters in the environmental community will have traded their sign-off on dams for empty promises.

Source: *Foothill Focus Spring 2010* <http://www.foothillconservancy.org> and the *Planning and Conservation League website*. <<http://www.pcl.org>>

## June propositions in a nutshell

**Proposition 13:** Senate Constitutional Amendment 4 of 2008, authored by Senator Roy Ashburn (Property tax: new construction exclusion: seismic retrofitting)

Quick take: another cut in property taxes, which has gotten California into the financial fix we face today. Recommend: No

**Proposition 14:** Senate Constitutional Amendment 4 of 2009, authored by Senator Abel Maldonado (Elections: open primaries)

Quick take: hurts political parties in general and third parties, specifically, that can't raise enough funds to run, as it helps well-/self-funded campaigns. Recommend: No

**Proposition 15:** Assembly Bill 583 of 2008, authored by Senator Loni Hancock (Political Reform Act of 1974: California Fair Elections Act of 2008)

Quick take: public funding pilot project for state Secretary of State election in 2014 & 2018; baby steps toward public financing of all campaigns. Recommend: Yes.

**Proposition 16:** Two-thirds vote requirement for local public electricity providers (Initiative constitutional amendment)

Quick take: hurts small electrical companies, would ensure existing energy providers monopoly power essentially forever. Recommend: No.

**Proposition 17:** Allows auto insurance companies to base their prices in part on a driver's history of coverage (initiative statute)

Quick take: hurts low-income uninsured drivers, whose rates will increase, making it less likely they will get insurance. Recommend: No.

# Deficit reduction: Wall St. v. Main St.

Dean Baker

In the middle of the worst downturn since the Great Depression, with unemployment projected to remain at elevated levels for most of the next decade, we have the bizarre spectacle of a presidential commission on the deficit. The commission is supposed to issue a report to Congress by the end of the year on how to get the long-term deficit under control.

This commission contains more than a bit of the theater of the absurd. At the moment, the only force sustaining the economy and keeping unemployment from rising further is the large deficit being run by the government. If we snapped our fingers and eliminated the deficit tomorrow, we would see the unemployment rate rise well into the double digits. The deficit creates demand in the economy. It is really simple; if the government spends more money, then it will employ more people. If we cut back this support for the economy, fewer people would be employed.

But Washington politicians have trouble saying what is obviously true. So, instead of talking about putting 15 million people back to work, we are talking about curbing the deficit. This would be like creating a commission on water conservation as we struggle to get enough water to quench a fire threatening the capital. But that's where politics in the United States is right now.

The deficit commission's co-chairs, former Wyoming Sen. Alan Simpson and Erskine Bowles, a former chief of staff to President Clinton, insist that everything is on the table. In particular, they have both touted their willingness to



support cuts in Social Security. It is always impressive to see wealthy and well-connected people who have the courage to take away benefits for which middle-income people have worked and paid.

As the Social Security trustees report shows, Social Security benefits will be fully funded by its designated tax through 2037. The Congressional Budget Office projects that the payroll taxes will be sufficient to pay full benefits through 2044. So, when Simpson and Bowles say that they are anxious to cut workers' Social Security benefits, they are pledging to take away benefits that these workers have already paid for with their taxes. These guys probably rip off employees on their wages too.

If Simpson and Bowles really care about the deficit, they would look to where the money is and support a tax on financial speculation. A modest set of financial transactions could easily raise more than \$100 billion a year. A modest tax on trades (e.g. 0.5 percent on stock trades and 0.02 percent on trades of futures and credit default swaps) would have almost no impact on ordinary investors. In fact, such taxes would just raise transactions costs back to where they were in the late 80s or early 90s, years when the United States certainly had a vibrant capital market. However, even

these modest taxes would impose substantial costs on traders who are actively speculating in these markets, and they could raise lots of money.

The United Kingdom raises the equivalent of \$40 billion a year in the United States by just taxing stock trades. Applying the tax to trades of futures, options, credit default swaps, and other derivative instruments traded by banks would substantially increase this amount.

The opponents of this tax insist that it will not raise much revenue and that it is not possible to do without an international agreement. These objections are just excuses to protect Wall Street. The experience of the UK shows that the claims are not true (i.e. lies). The UK shows that it is possible to have the tax in one country and that it can raise plenty of revenue. When people tell us otherwise, we should just tell them to go collect their paycheck from Goldman Sachs and stop bothering us with nonsense.

So, when the deficit commission issues its report, if it comes with a recommendation to cut Social Security and without a recommendation for a fiscal transaction tax (FTT), we know what to do with it. Such a report would be worth as much as one of Lehman's Repo 105's or a credit default swap from AIG. Congress should send this deficit commission report back to Wall Street and tell them where to put it.

Dean Baker is a macroeconomist and co-director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research <<http://www.cepr.net/>> in Washington, DC.

Source: *truthout!* Op-Ed 4/5/10 [www.truthout.com](http://www.truthout.com)

With a tax on financial speculation, a modest set of financial transactions could easily raise more than \$100 billion a year.



Emulating Jesus Christ's  
Radical Acceptance of All People

Come Celebrate With the  
Episcopal Church of St. Anne  
1020 W. Lincoln Road  
Stockton, CA 95207  
(209) 473-2313

Sunday Mass, 8 & 10 a.m.  
(Childcare provided at 10 a.m.)  
Tuesday 6:30 a.m. Mass  
Wednesday 7:00 p.m. Youth Group  
Thursday 6 p.m. Healing Mass

Decisions, Decisions...



Is your home ready for *your* retirement?

- \* Organizing & Clutter Control
- \* Homekeeping
- \* Care for the Pack Rat

MaryAnne & Jeanne (209) 948-5365  
[Simplify@HowToClean.com](mailto:Simplify@HowToClean.com)  
MA Sibert & Co., est. 1973



**TORI L. DAVIS, L.C.S.W.**  
Licensed Clinical Social Worker, License #18235

**Psychotherapy/Consultation/Trainings**

7510 Shoreline Drive, Suite A7  
Stockton, CA 95219  
(209) 477-8482



**LELA NELSON REALTY**  
2222 Pacific Avenue • Stockton, CA 95204

(209) 467-1200  
(209) 942-5673 Fax  
(209) 466-6243 Res.  
E-Mail: [LelaNelson@aol.com](mailto:LelaNelson@aol.com)  
Website: [www.lanelson.com](http://www.lanelson.com)

**E. Lela Nelson**  
BROKER





**Glenda Maxwell, C.M.T.**  
Professional Massage Therapy

Myofascial Release - Accupressure  
Trigger Point Therapy- Pre Natal  
Facelift Massage-Spa Treatments

**209-329-1137**



By Appointment Only

**Stebbins of Stockton**  
Your Neighborhood Services Dealer

**Mark Stebbins**  
General Bldg and Electrical Contractor  
U-Haul Rentals and Real Estate

209 467-4070  
stebbinsmark007@comcast.net

1311 South Center Street  
Stockton, CA 95206  
#773245






**Balance Physical Therapy & Pilates**

**Kathleen Smith Wong, PT, MFA**  
Physical Therapist  
Pilates Rehabilitation Specialist

2540 Pacific Avenue  
Stockton, California 95204

Tel 209-946-0806  
Fax 209-946-0927






**Kent L. Wilson**  
Attorney at Law  
General Practice

242 N. Sutter St. #207, Stockton, CA 95202

Flat Fees  
No Hourly Charges

Stockton (209) 941-8511  
Calaveras County (209) 754-4570

**The Holisticzone**

**Rev. Gay Lynn Saunders, D.C.**

by appointment only (209) 607-2669

- ♥ Pain control, Self-discovery & Emotional Balancing incorporating: Craniosacral Therapy, Reiki, B.E.S.T., Alchemical Hypnotherapy
- ♥ Detoxification and Nutritional Balancing incorporating: Supplementation, Individualized Diet & Live Food Principles

## The T is Not Silent

# What it takes

Elena Kelly

In Hinduism, the elephant-headed God is named Ganesh. He is known as the remover of obstacles. It is believed that just chanting his name repeatedly is powerful enough to remove any obstacle from your path. When I was a child, I had never heard of Ganesh, but I sure could have used some help in the obstacle removing department.

In my school I had several strikes against me. It was a very small school, twelve in my graduating class. I was the only adopted kid in the whole school. I was the only one who didn't live with biological parents. Beyond that, I had no idea who my bio-parents were. I was the only sissy boy. I liked soft things, pretty things, and I was not athletic at all, in fact, I was very awkward and clumsy.

I know what it's like to face obstacles. I have lived with gender identity disorder for over fifty of my almost fifty-five years on this planet. But I wasn't very old when I learned to use my supposed weaknesses as tools to my advantage. It was the early 1960's and the U.S. involvement in Vietnam was increasing. I was in second or third grade. One day, some of the boys began saying how much they hated the Vietnamese. No doubt they were parroting what their parents were saying at home. The more they blasted and cursed the Vietnamese people, the worse I felt.

Finally I had enough and I spoke up. I said they had no right to hate these people. I told them that even though I was adopted I knew that I was part Vietnamese. They all fell silent at that moment. One boy said I didn't look Vietnamese because I didn't have eyes like them. I told them I was only a little bit Vietnamese, not enough to have inherited the eyes. Of course I had no idea what ethnic makeup I was.

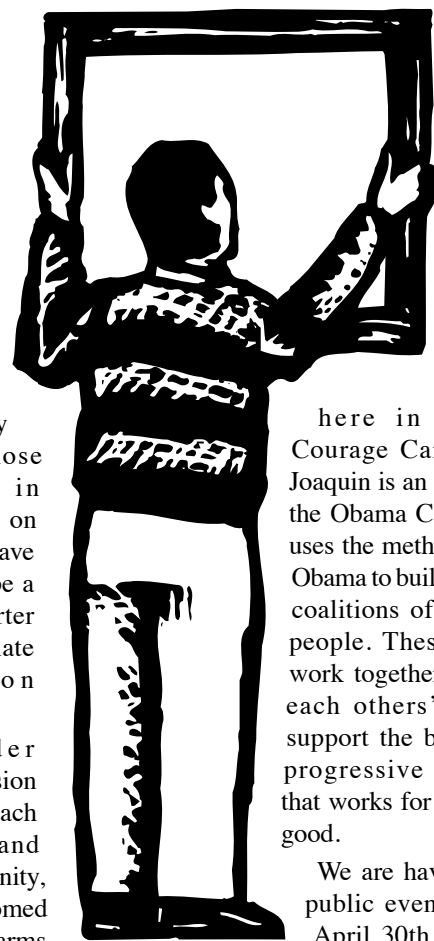
From my earliest memories I have stood up for those who were overpowered by others. I defended the Mexican immigrants in the area when others called them names and refused to befriend them. Most of my best childhood memories

were of being in Mexican households and experiencing their warm hospitality and love. Those experiences in childhood and on into adulthood have caused me to be a fervent supporter of compassionate immigration policies.

My gender identity confusion caused me to reach out the gay and lesbian community, and they welcomed me with open arms. I stood and received communion with them at the Metropolitan Community Church, and I prayed with many who lay dying from AIDS. I officiated at countless funerals when that horrible disease ripped the life out of them. There were many who warned me that I would get the disease just by associating with them, and frankly in those days no one knew for sure how it was contracted. But I didn't care. These beautiful people were being ravaged and many in their families and in society turned their backs. I could not.

I have lived in Stockton for nineteen years and have seen four of my children complete high school and some have gone on to college here. I have owned houses and rented apartments, shopped at hundreds of stores, attended scores of religious services and even taught and lectured at UOP. I love this town. Sure, it's not perfect, but show me one town that is. It's been my home for longer than any other place I have ever lived. There have been many times that I have been moved to take action, to speak up, to protest openly, to take sides in conflict. I became passionate enough to get off my sofa and get out there and try to do something about it.

I am excited to share with you that some of your neighbors



and I have decided to start a Courage Campaign chapter

here in Stockton. Courage Campaign San Joaquin is an outgrowth of the Obama Campaign and uses the methods of Camp Obama to build community coalitions of progressive people. These coalitions work together to promote each others' causes, to support the building of a progressive community that works for the common good.

We are having our first public event on Friday, April 30th at 6:00. It is a Mardi Gras themed

party with free homemade gumbo, cornbread, and even mint juleps. We are inviting all people who are passionate about building a united coalition of progressive organizations and individuals, and who are willing to consider taking a leadership role in helping build and maintain that coalition. We will provide all you need. You only need to be willing to give a little time each month to make this dream a reality.

We have a Facebook page that gives more information about the party and that will let you RSVP. You can see it at <http://www.facebook.com/event.php?id=110300902320935&index=1>. To learn more about Courage Campaign visit [couragecampaign.org](http://couragecampaign.org).

What is your passion? What issue would get you to overcome the obstacles and get out in the community working for change? Can we count on you to bring your passion for change so that together we can build a better Stockton?

*Rev. 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](mailto:elena.kelly@comcast.net).*

# Nine myths about socialism in the US

Bill Quigley

Glenn Beck and other far right multi-millionaires are claiming that the US is hot on the path toward socialism. Part of their claim is that the US is much more generous and supportive of our working and poor people than other countries. People may wish it was so, but it is not. As Sen. Patrick Moynihan used to say "Everyone is entitled to their own opinions. But everyone is not entitled to their own facts." The fact is that the US is not really all that generous to our working and poor people compared to other countries.

Consider the US in comparison to the rest of the 30 countries that join the US in making up the OECD—the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. These 30 countries include Canada and most comparable European countries, but also include some struggling countries like Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Korea, Mexico, Poland, Slovak Republic and Turkey.

When you look at how the US compares to these 30 countries, the hot air myths about the US government going all out toward socialism sort of disappear into thin air. Here are some examples of myths that do not hold up.

## Myth No. 1: The US government is involved in class warfare, attacking the rich to lift up the poor

There is a class war going on all right. But it is the rich against the rest of us and the rich are winning. The gap between the rich and everyone else is wider in the US than any of the 30 other countries surveyed. In fact, the top 10 percent in the US have a higher annual income than any other country. And the poorest 10 percent in the US are below the average of the other OECD countries. The rich in the US have been rapidly leaving the middle class and poor behind since the 1980s.

## Myth No. 2: The US already

## has the greatest health care system in the world.

Infant mortality in the US is fourth worst among OECD countries—better only than Mexico, Turkey and the Slovak Republic.

## Myth No. 3: There is less poverty in the US than anywhere.

Child poverty in the US, at over 20 percent or one out of every five kids, is double the average of the 30 OECD countries.

## Myth No. 4: The US is generous in its treatment of families with children

The US ranks in the bottom half of countries in terms of financial benefits for families with children. Over half of the 30 OECD countries pay families with children cash benefits regardless of the income of the family. Some among those countries (e.g. Austria, France and Germany) pay additional benefits if the family is low income or one of the parents is unemployed.

## Myth No. 5: The US is very supportive of its workers

The US gives no paid leave for working mothers having children. Every single one of the other 30 OECD countries has some form of paid leave. The US ranks dead last in this. Over two-thirds of the countries give some form of paid paternity leave. The US also gives no paid leave for fathers.

In fact, it is only workers in the US who have no guaranteed days of paid leave at all. Korea is the next lowest to the US and it has a minimum of eight paid annual days of leave. Most of the other 30 countries require a minimum of 20 days of annual paid leave for their workers.

## Myth No. 6: Poor people have more chance of becoming rich in the US than anywhere else

Social mobility (how children move up or down the economic ladder in comparison with their

parents) in earnings, wages and education tends to be easier in Australia, Canada and Nordic countries like Denmark, Norway and Finland, than in the US. That means more of the rich stay rich and more of the poor stay poor here in the US.

## Myth No. 7: The US spends generously on public education

In terms of spending for public education, the US is just about average among the 30 countries of the OECD. Educational achievement of US children, however, is seventh worst in the OECD. On public spending for childcare and early education, the US is in the bottom third.

## Myth No. 8: The US government is redistributing income from the rich to the poor

There is little redistribution of income by government in the US in part because spending on social benefits like unemployment and family benefits is so low. Of the 30 countries in the OECD, only in Korea is the impact of governmental spending lower.

## Myth No. 9: The US generously gives foreign aid to countries across the world.

The US gives the smallest percentage of aid of any of the developed countries in the OECD.

In 2007, the US was tied for last with Greece. In 2008, we were tied for last with Japan.

Despite the opinions of right-wing folks, the facts say the US is not on the path toward socialism.

But if socialism means the US would go down the path of being more generous with our babies, our children, our working families, our pregnant mothers and our sisters and brothers across the world, I think we could all appreciate it.

Source: *truthout* Op-Ed 4/12/10  
[www.truthout.com](http://www.truthout.com)



Revealing the Driving Forces Behind World Events and Creating Alternative Solutions

May 14-16, 2010

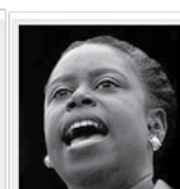
University Inn & Conference Center - Santa Cruz, CA

Ellen Brown - Ian Crane - David Ray Griffin - Annie Machon  
Jim Marrs - Cynthia McKinney - Michael Parenti - Peter Phillips  
Peter Dale Scott - Barrie Zwicker

Understanding Deep Politics will bring together ten distinguished speakers and hundreds of concerned citizens in one weekend for the purpose of challenging the mainstream perceptions of political reality - revealing the hidden forces behind many widely accepted historical and current events.



Peter Dale Scott



Cynthia McKinney



David Ray Griffin

This unprecedented and provocative conference will span three days, including an early Friday evening meet & greet get-together.

Please join us at this sure to be historic conference and expand this critical, deeper understanding of the causes of our societal dilemmas and help us forge new possibilities for the betterment of all.

For more information call: 707-672-4242 or visit:  
<http://understandingdeepopolitics.org>

The venue of the vibrant city of Santa Cruz will provide many opportunities to enjoy the central coast of California with its abundant natural beauty and close proximity to the San Francisco Bay area.



See Website for Ticket Pricing  
Early Bird specials and discounts until March 14th  
Weekend Pass or Day Pass - Cash or checks accepted at the door.  
To order by mail make checks payable to: "Progressive Promotions" and send to: P.O. Box 600, Arcata, CA 95524

Purchase your tickets online at:  
<http://understandingdeepopolitics.eventbrite.com>

## Adult co-housing in Grass Valley coming: new members welcome

Wolf Creek Lodge, a cohousing development soon to be built in Grass Valley, will serve active adults, mostly over 50 years of age. The Lodge is a unique, beautifully designed three-story structure with fully equipped, private homes and a large common house, open, wooded spaces, a living creek, edible landscaping and raised garden plots.

Our group of future residents has been together for three years, planning and helping design our new home under the guidance of the architect. The "green" construction of Wolf Creek Lodge is nothing short of miraculous. It is designed by Charles Durrett, who introduced cohousing to this country and has built more than 20 cohousing communities all over the USA. It exceeds the most stringent California guidelines for green, sustainable, energy efficient homes by 35%.

We are very fortunate to live in the Sierra Nevada Foothills, where we enjoy a mild climate, beautiful blue skies, a culturally rich community and access to all kinds of summer and winter outdoor activities.

Wolf Creek Lodge is one of the first cohousing developments in this country designed especially for adults who find that their large homes with much acreage out of town are increasingly becoming a burden to them.

What once was a dream of spaciousness and gracious living is becoming a liability. People are becoming isolated in their large homes after the children have left and often live in another part of the country. Their children worry about them, too, and wonder how much longer mom and dad can sustain a lifestyle that is not right for them anymore.

If we are not tied down to an oversized, expensive house and the endless chores that come with it, we can enjoy traveling and many other activities we didn't have time for. Cohousers enjoy the company of like-minded people and are happy if they don't have to get into the car to see their friends. The friends are right next door! And we can age in place and stay out of assisted living facilities, hopefully to the end of our lives.

We are looking forward to beginning construction in the spring of 2010. We are still welcoming new members and have a limited number of homes for sale. On the 3rd Saturday of every month we have a meeting and potluck—you are welcome to join us. Visit our website [www.wolfcreeklodge.org](http://www.wolfcreeklodge.org) or call us at 1-800-558 3775.

**UPDATE:** The bank loan has just come through and the project is a go.

## Drum classes offered

Young masterful djembe drum teacher, Jesse Servin, is offering lessons (first one free) to all levels—no experience necessary. When and where? Every first Tuesday of the month from 6:30pm–8:30pm at the Plea for Peace Center downtown at 630 E. Weber Ave. Cost: \$15–\$20 per lesson (sliding scale). For more info, contact David at 483-7384 or [dtotheq@comcast.net](mailto:dtotheq@comcast.net)

# Cinema & Literacy Day/The Big Read

Cinema and Literacy Day will take place on Saturday, May 1st, 2010 from 1:00pm to 10:00pm at Stockton Empire Theatre, 1825 Pacific Avenue in Stockton. <http://www.sjiff.org/cinematliteracy10>

The San Joaquin Film Society (SJFS), in association with the Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library, celebrates the National Endowment for the Arts' The Big Read with Cinema and Literacy Day. This unique SJFS World Cinema Series and SJFS Film Education initiative celebrates the power of storytelling through film and reading.

Cinema and Literacy Day is at the heart of The Big Read county-wide festivities. These will take place from April to May and focus on Jack London's *The Call of the Wild*.

**Featuring:** The Spotlight Film presentation of director Ken Annakin's classic cinematic adaptation of Jack London's *The Call of the Wild* stars Charlton Heston; a special screening of Wes Anderson's internationally-celebrated adaptation of Roald Dahl's "Fantastic Mr. Fox"—featuring the voice talents of George Clooney and Meryl Streep; "Short Stories on Film", an unforgettable short films collection featuring vivid, contemplative, and riveting original stories; and the global phenomenon "1000 Journals" with the presence of guest artist —international director, Andrea Kreuzhage.

### Admission

Admission is free for *The Call of the Wild* (reservation suggested); \$7.50–\$9.50 for each of the other programs; \$20.00–\$22.00 for a Day Pass. Discounts available for seniors, students, groups, and Film Society members. Advance tickets online at [www.sjiff.org](http://www.sjiff.org)/tickets or call (209) 423-4719.

### Schedule

#### 1:00pm—Short stories

Captivating and riveting short films from celebrated and rising writer-directors. In "Haber" (Dir. Daniel Ragussis) a brilliant

German chemist becomes the Father of Chemical Warfare. With "Immersion" (Dir. Richard Levien) a young immigrant from Mexico faces the struggles of education. In the celebrated Russian claymation "KuyGorozh" (Dir. Sergey Merinov), an older couple experiences rags, riches, and the consequences of greed. (62 minutes TRT)

#### 3:00pm—Fantastic Mr. Fox

"Fantastic Mr. Fox" is visionary director Wes Anderson's first animated film, utilizing classic handmade stop motion techniques to tell the story of the best selling children's book by Roald Dahl (author of "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" and "James and the Giant Peach"). Mr. and Mrs. Fox (George Clooney and Meryl Streep) live an idyllic home life with their son Ash (Jason Schwartzman) and visiting young nephew Kristopherson (Eric Anderson). But after 12 years, the bucolic existence proves too much for Mr Fox's wild animal instincts. Soon he slips back into his old ways as a sneaky chicken thief and in doing so, endangers not only his beloved family, but the whole animal community. (Dir. Wes Anderson, 93 min. USA, 2009)

#### 5:00pm—1000 Journals

Director Andrea Kreuzhage in person

"1000 Journals is a film about people whose lives are touched by 1000 traveling journals. These blank journals were released into the world in the summer of 2000, by Someguy, a San Francisco based artist. In September 2003, one of the 1000, number 526, returned to Someguy, filled. What happened to the other 999? This film tells their stories. 1000 Journals shares the experience of their worldwide journeys, and chronicles the self-governed collaboration of thousands of random people who have added to this global message in a bottle." (Dir. Andrea Kreuzhage; 88 min.; USA, Italy, Croatia, France, Australia, The Netherlands; 2007)

#### 8:00pm—The Call of the Wild

Spotlight Film—Free Admission for the Community

"John Thornton (Charlton Heston) a prospector in the 1897 Klondike Gold Rush is trying to eke out a living in the harsh conditions of the bitterly cold Yukon, with Buck the German Shepherd dog. Thornton struggles against unscrupulous rivals and natural hazards in the extreme conditions and is greatly helped by Buck who has his own story to tell. Man and dog forge a true bond of friendship, working together to survive life in the treacherous frozen North." (Dir. Ken Annakin, 100 min., United Kingdom, 1972)

#### Guest Artist: Andrea Kreuzhage

Andrea Kreuzhage has been working in the film industry since 1986. Based in Munich, Germany, she worked with partners all over Europe, the U.S.A., Japan, and Australia. In 1994, she moved to Los Angeles. Among her producing credits are the Sony Classics release "SLC Punk!" (Sundance 1999), directed by James Merendino; "Ave Maria" (Havana 1999, World Expo 2000), directed by Eduardo Rossoff; and "Bookies" (Sundance 2003), directed by Mark Illsley. Since 2003, Andrea's main focus has been feature length documentaries, among them "1000 Journals" (Berlinale 2008), her first film as director.

#### About the Film Society

The San Joaquin Film Society, Inc. (SJFS) is home to the annual San Joaquin International Film Festival and the year-round World Cinema Series. The Film Society is dedicated to celebrating the artistry, diversity, and power of filmmaking, bringing the world's best, rarest, and newest works in cinema arts and media discoveries to the Valley. Learn more at the Official Website: [www.sjiff.org](http://www.sjiff.org)

Connections may contain copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available in our efforts to advance understanding of environmental, political, human rights, economic, democracy, scientific, and social justice issues, etc. We believe this constitutes a 'fair use' of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law. In accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107, the material in this paper is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for research and educational purposes.

# May 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.*

## Thru May 2

79th Annual McKee Student Art exhibition. Haggin Museum, 1201 N Pershing Ave, Stockton. Art works by SJ Co 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

## Apr 22-May 19

Delta College Student Art Show. T 11am-4pm, W-Th 11am-6:30pm, F 11am-1pm. Reception: 4/22, 5-7 pm. SJ Delta College, LH Horton Jr Gallery, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Free. 954-5507.

## Sun, Apr 25

John Muir...alive! 8:30-11 am, as Don Baldwin enacts Muir's story in Muir's own words during worship services. Central United Methodist Church, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton. 466-5046.

## Mon, Apr 26

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.

## Thurs, Apr 29

Expert Seminar: Our Fiscal Mess. Join financial manager Bruce Giudici for a discussion on the hows and whys of our fiscal mess. 7-8:30 at the P&J Center (see p. 20).

## Apr 30-May 9

Grease, presented by SJDC Drama. Tillie Lewis Theatre, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Thur, Fri, Sat 8 pm, Sun 2 pm. \$13-\$15 954-5110.

## Sat, May 1

Cinema and Literacy Day Empire Theatre, Stockton (see p. 18)

AIDSWalk on the Waterfront (see article this page).

## Sun, May 2

7th annual Earth Day Celebration, 11am-6pm. Utica Park, Angels Camp. Booths, food, crafts, music, lots more. Free. 293-4379.

## Mon, May 3

Campaign for Common Ground meeting, 7 pm, Towers Building, 509 W Weber Ave, Stockton. ccgmemb@gmail.com (see p. 20).

## May 5-30

Barefoot in the Park, Thu 7:30 pm, Fri-Sat 8 pm, Sun 2:30 pm. Stockton Civic Theatre, 2312 Rosemarie Lane, Stockton \$15-\$25. 473-2424.

## Sat, May 8

New Dance Company presents ValleyDance2010 (see article this page).

Festival of Colors at the Micke Grove Zoo, 10 am-4 pm. A celebration of Cinco de Mayo, presented by the PLAY Multicultural Arts Network. 11793 Micke Grove Rd, Lodi. Price of zoo admission. 331-2138.

## Wed, May 12

Delta College Jazz Concert, Tillie Lewis Theatre, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Thur, Fri, Sat 8 pm, Sun 2 pm. \$5-\$8 954-5110.

## Fri, May 14

New Childrens Ballet Theatre, directed by Dorothy Percival, presents dance interpretations of children's literature. 7pm. Charlene Powers Lange Arts Theatre, Hutchins Street Square, 125 S Hutchins St, Lodi. \$8. 333-5550.

## Tue, May 18

Delta College Symphonic Band Concert, Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Thur, Fri, Sat 8 pm, Sun 2 pm. \$5-\$8 954-5110.

## Sat, Jun 5

Waldo Fest. Details in next issue.

## First Mondays

Campaign for Common Ground meeting, 7 pm, Towers Building, 509 W Weber Ave, Stockton. ccgmemb@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 Thursdays

Single Payer San Joaquin meeting, 6:30 pm, Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. bailey\_hcasj@sbcglobal.net

## Thursdays

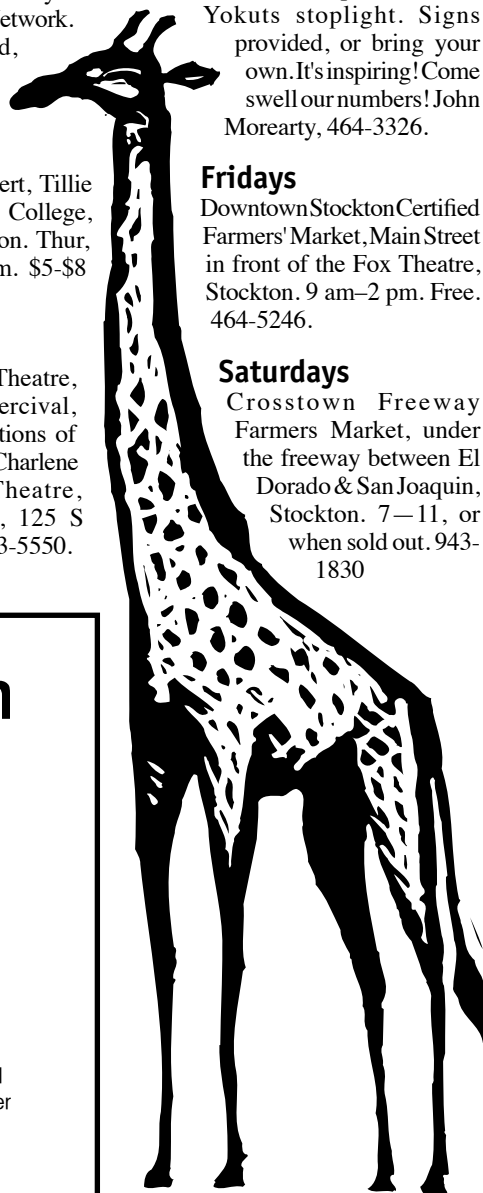
Peace demonstration every Thursday, 4-5:30 pm, Pacific Ave. along edge of Delta campus north of Yokuts stoplight. Signs provided, or bring your own. It's inspiring! Come swell our numbers! John Morearty, 464-3326.

## 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



## May 1: AIDSWalk on the Waterfront

With 300 new cases of HIV infection occurring in San Joaquin County in the last year, the annual AIDS Walk is more important than ever. Join "AIDS Walk on the Waterfront" on Saturday, May 1, at Banner Island Ballpark. Early registration is encouraged, at [www.awsj.org](http://www.awsj.org) or [www.active.com](http://www.active.com).

The AIDS Walk is an opportunity for friends and family members to commemorate the lives of loved ones who have died of AIDS. Community members and businesses are also encouraged to show their support for AIDS awareness in San Joaquin County. We are currently recruiting individual walkers, teams and team captains. In addition to the walk, there will be food, raffle, and other prizes.

Proceeds go to HIV/AIDS agencies in San Joaquin County. The donations provide aid to HIV/AIDS clients with food and transportation vouchers, help with basic living needs and assist with burial funds. AWSJ also collaborates to raise public awareness about the epidemic with World AIDS Day in December and National Condom Week in February.

Again, early registration is encouraged. Check-in is at 9:00 a.m. and the walk begins at 10:00 a.m. For more information, contact AIDSWalk at (209) 608-WALK (9255) or register online at [www.awsj.org](http://www.awsj.org).

## New Dance Company presents FREE ValleyDance2010

New Dance Company is proud to present ValleyDance 2010: Community in Motion at Weber's Point on Saturday, May 8, 2010. Admission is free. There will be information booths, food vendors, and performances from 11 am until 5 pm. This event promotes dance in the community by showcasing local dancers, and includes performances by New Dance Company. ValleyDance 2010 is supported in part by the Stockton Arts Commission. For more information on ValleyDance 2010, go to [www.newdancecompany.com](http://www.newdancecompany.com).

New Dance Company is San Joaquin Valley's premiere modern dance organization, dedicated to supporting the area's dance performers and choreographers, presenting dance concerts, and providing a variety of dance education programs. New Dance Company is a nonprofit, community organization that encourages dancers, members, students, and volunteers of all ages and dance styles to participate in the development of the local dance community.

## Stockton Chorale May Concert "Gospel Gathering"

The Stockton Chorale will lift your spirits with a "Gospel Gathering" featuring Robert Ray's "Gospel Mass" and Sir Michael Tippett's spirituals from his oratorio, "A Child of Our Time". The program will also include works performed by the Master Chorale and the Youth Chorale. The concert will be presented 7:30 PM on Friday May 14, 2010 at the Central United Methodist Church, 3700 Pacific Avenue, Stockton and at 3:00 PM on Sunday May 16, 2010 at St John's Episcopal Church, 1055 S. Lower Sacramento Road, Lodi. Single concert tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for students. Tickets are general admission and may be purchased at the door or by phoning the Stockton Chorale office at (209) 951-6494, or by contacting Chorale members.

## Astronomy in the park

The Oak Grove Nature Center presents "Astronomy in the Park" on Saturday, May 22 from 7-10 pm, hosted by the Stockton Astronomical Society (SAS). Starting at 7 pm, join us inside the Nature Center for astronomy-themed activities and crafts. SAS volunteers will provide telescopes for stargazing from 8-10 pm. Activities are free and open to people of all ages. Park entrance fee of \$5 is required per vehicle. Stargazing will be cancelled if it is too cloudy, but inside activities will still be held. Visit [www.mgzoo.com](http://www.mgzoo.com) for information on upcoming Oak Grove Nature Center events.

## 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.

## Bringing affordable housing to Stockton

Carol Ornelas of Visionary Home Builders will join Rollie Smith of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to address "The Livable Communities Act" (Dodd's Senate Bill #1619). The meeting will be held at the Family Resource and Referral Center, 509 W. Weber Ave. in Stockton, 7:00 p.m on May 3, sponsored by the Campaign for Common Ground. The public is invited.

HUD will be looking to bring federal funding to the San Joaquin Valley to help us plan and build sustainable communities. Carol Ornelas will tell us how this is happening in our own local area.

The legislation is aimed at helping communities plan and build in a sustainable fashion, cutting down on greenhouse gas emissions, using renewable energy, and providing for walkable, pedestrian friendly neighborhoods that save farmland and open spaces.

HUD will oversee "Livable Communities" grant programs and provide guidance and technical assistance to communities seeking to plan for the future. Often important sources of funding focus on the large metropolitan areas leaving the Great Central Valley of California underserved. HUD hopes to create a strong voting block from the whole San Joaquin Valley in order to bring the resources necessary to build livable communities.

### Expert Seminar: Our Fiscal Mess

On Thursday, April 29, join non-profit financial manager Bruce Giudici for a discussion on the hows and whys of our fiscal mess... what it is and how we can fix it. This is the first of many monthly last Thursday expert seminars...come and take part. 7-8:30 at the P&J Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. Free admission, donations always welcome.

## connections

Would you like Connections delivered to your home? It's FREE!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Peace & Justice Network, Box 4123,  
Stockton, CA 95204 (209) 467-4455

*Peace & Justice Network does not sell or donate our mailing list. Connections is supported by donations and advertisers.*

## Interested in a cooperative garden?

I have lived in Stockton, CA my whole life, and actually like living here. When I was a child in the 1980s living off of Davis road, it felt like we were in the country. There were fields, oak trees, livestock, and produce growing around my neighborhood. You could ride your bike on the Bear Creek levee, seeing nothing but farmland and the beautiful Delta.

Now if you ride on that same levee, all you see is a Target and tract homes as far as the eye

can see. We live in the valley: the valley is a place meant for growing food, not for building cheap housing and another Walmart supercenter. It is time for our town to come together in a positive way, while saving some of the last precious empty lots.

What if we started organic co-op gardens? There is an empty lot on Rosemarie Ln, behind UOP, that would be perfect. I am not exactly sure about how to begin petitioning to make this happen?

I'm not even sure who owns it but, I know that something like this could be the catalyst for change in our town. It makes zero sense for our community to continue building, when we have multiple empty residential structures and commercial structures: let's fill those up with families and workers first. For now, let's plant a co-op garden.

*Christina Thomassen  
christi95209@yahoo.com*

Guantánamo: a conversation this side of the wire.  
Led by Amy Goodman

Friday | 30 April 2010 | 8pm

Sciences Lecture Hall | UC Davis



Brandon Neely  
former GTMO guard



Amy Goodman  
Democracy Now!



Sami Elhaj  
former GTMO prisoner

A benefit on the fifth anniversary of  
*The Guantánamo Testimonials Project*

Limited Seating Available

Tickets can be purchased online (tickets.com), over the phone (530 752 1915),  
or in person (UC Davis Freeborn Hall | Davis Farmers Market)

**\$10 general / \$5 in advance for UCD students**

Center for the Study of Human Rights in the Americas  
University of California at Davis

<http://humanrights.ucdavis.edu>

(Mr. Neely and Ms. Goodman will be in Sciences Lecture Hall; Mr. Elhaj will participate via video-conference from Doha, Qatar)