

connections

PRICELESS

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November 2010

SAVE THE DATES

OCTOBER 26
LIBRARY PRIVATIZATION
STUDY SESSION
5:30 PM, CITY HALL (P 20)

NOVEMBER 2
VOTE!

NOVEMBER 9
89.5 RADIO MEET
PJN CENTER, 7 PM (P 20)

The work beyond election day

Bruce Giudici

On November 3, the work for progressives will be made more challenging—regardless of election results. With each passing day, the battle of ideas is shrinking to the maximum character string on a twitter post. Ignorance is not bliss when there are hard decisions to made. Here's what to look for in the coming months:

1) Tax cut extension—decision time. The deficit-producing Bush tax cuts were designed politically to expire at year's end. If the lame duck Congress or Obama does nothing, income and capital gains taxes will increase for everyone, the estate tax going back up for the most wealthy. Since these cuts

originally benefitted the richest Americans, their expiration would logically increase taxes on those most able to pay.

2) Deficit reduction study (AKA Catfood Commission) comes due. Scheduled to come after the elections, this report will recommend cutting benefits, raising beneficiary retirement age, increasing the tax rate, bumping up the taxable income limit, or any combination of these. Social security is a self-funded (and well-funded) retirement account that has been used for the past 30 years to hide outlandish general government account deficits.

3) Don't ask, don't tell. A Federal judge has overturned

this military policy, ruling it to be discriminatory against gays and lesbians. Congress will attempt to make such discrimination illegal by statute.

After the holidays, look for increased misinformation—directly proportional to the seats picked up by "conservatives" in Congress. First, look for attempts to overturn laws passed in this session—namely, the health care bill and financial system reform. Due to the Supreme Court-enabled corporate purchase of candidates, the distinction between lobbyist and legislator will be increasingly blurred. Second, when climate change legislation is brought up, look for a business-friendly law that

will do little but provide candidates cover for the next election. Third, with deficits and unemployment remaining high, lawmakers who promised butter and bombs will have to make a choice—military spending is at an all-time high, while domestic needs go unmet. Fourth, the drawdown of troops begins mid-year—amid military calls for endless war. And, finally, let the 2012 presidential election process begin! Every decision will be couched in terms of the future of America.

Hard decisions—every one. One hopes we are all ready for some innovation, compassion and sacrifice. It's going to be a bumpy ride.

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Propositions: progressive views

PROPOSITION:	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
ORGANIZATION AND RECOMMENDATION:									
Courage Campaign	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	
Credo	Y		Y		N	Y	Y	N	
CA Dem Party		N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y
CA Federation of Teachers		N	Y		N	Y	Y	N	Y
CA Labor Federation		N	Y		N	Y	Y	N	Y
CA League of Conservation Voters		N	Y		N		Y	N	Y
CA Nurses Assn		N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y
Calitics (California's leading progressive blog)	Y	N	Y		N	Y	Y	N	Y
League of Women Voters		N			N	Y	Y	N	N

Key

- 19 = Tax & regulate cannabis
- 20 = Congressional redistricting
- 21 = Save state parks
- 22 = Local government funds
- 23 = Dirty energy proposition
- 24 = Close corporate tax loopholes
- 25 = Majority vote budget
- 26 = Polluter protection
- 27 = Redistricting commission

Source: http://courage.3cdn.net/c1b7275241cecdf596_hnm6b3h4s.pdf

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

Focus on the other

Bruce Giudici

What does it mean to live in a God-fearing, Christian nation—that pays firefighters to watch homes burn, charges for 911 calls, cuts food stamps to pay for the unemployed while preserving a 15% tax rate for hedge fund billionaires? In this nation, we will now have an election to angrily replace spineless liberals for heartless conservatives. Tough love wins. When folks don't vote for compassion, though, that's what they won't get.

In this Orwellian world, war is a never-questioned constant, so the only spending cuts discussed hurt those with the least. And yet, the airwaves and newspapers have a tone of settling and of submission to power. Empowering the poor is out, pitying the target-audience upper middle class is

in, and "security" at any cost is assumed.

We can't tax the rich, because some of their spending might—just might—dribble down on the 99% of us who live beneath. Or so goes the general buzz. In a year or two, this will be shown as the farce it is. For now, however, we hear (and energized voters listen) to the salesmen of anger—regardless of level-headed arguments speaking of hard-nosed and compassionate solutions: taxing those who can pay (high income, commercial property, financial transactions), cutting unproductive/overpriced spending (Federal military, State prison system, and health care bloat), and investing in things that will pay off over the long haul (renewable energy, education, education and education). Voices advocating such a long-term vision need to be sustainably

supported.

Locally and beyond, we must embrace our neighbors as we do our families. The foreclosure next door isn't a profit opportunity, but another family made homeless—there but for fortune. We head into another holiday season, when the gifts should be less expensive, but no less thoughtful. Look around—and help a stranger. As we are forced from this rut of mindless consumption, new ways to share and grow emerge. In crisis, opportunity. I learned to share when I was 5 years old. Amidst this market of endless hype, it's hard to focus on helping the other. Make a resolution—a little early this year. And do something truly scary this season...vote!

Editor's note:

We live in a world of second-best choices. The alternative to today's

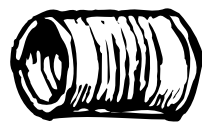
Bruce Giudici, editor



spineless liberal is tomorrow's heartless "conservative." Between these two there is a difference: to those on welfare, unemployment or food stamps; to gays and people of color; and to those who work toward a world with less violence. We've been here before. The 1994 election set progressives back 14 years. In 2010, a progressive movement that is marking time is not a stepping backward. This election, let's stay in the game, in a better position to move forward tomorrow.

On November 2, cherish the vote you have by exercising your right.

Feedback



Measure H is about balance

Editor,

On Friday, *The Record* officially endorsed Measure H, saying "Don't be fooled. Measure H is about two things: money and control."

The fire department overspends its budget every year, because special rules in the city Charter protect them, and only them, from being accountable. They overspent their budget last year by \$6 million—and more than \$4 million of that was for overtime. The average Stockton firefighter costs the taxpayers more than \$188,000 annually for salaries and benefits. These runaway costs must be balanced by deep cuts in other services. Layoffs have brought the police department to the lowest number of officers in over 20 years. If Measure H fails, the city will be forced to lay off more.

We all respect and value our firefighters, but in a time of increasing criminal activity, where should our city's limited resources be spent? I think we all know the answer to that.

Please take a few minutes to visit www.yesonmeasureh.com to become familiar with the issue.

Then, if you wish to provide support you can sign up online. For those willing to display a yard sign, you can also just respond to me by return email and I'll personally make sure one gets placed in the next week. Thanks for your consideration.

Kathy Miller, Vice Mayor,
City of Stockton

Blackston vs McNerney

Editor,

I no longer support Jerry McNerney to be our Congressman. When he ran the first two times, he told us that his first priority was to stop the wars in both Iraq and Afghanistan and bring our men and women back home. Yet, if you review his voting record, you will find that he continues to support the wars and thus sends our men and women in harm's way over and over and over. He says that he supports our troops but how can you support them when you allow them to serve multiple tours of duty?

What damage is being done to the families of our service men and women? Building a Veterans' hospital in the Central Valley of California is more than useful to service the needs of those who

have served, but why do we need to send more of our children off to war so that they can come back broken in mind, body and spirit? When asked about his support of the war, he can never give a reason—let alone a good reason.

A few of us have been working on a hospital-building proposal to bring a true and lasting peace to Afghanistan, but neither he or his staff has any interest in discussing this issue. We have found it much easier to deal with the government of Afghanistan than with the government of the United States of America. The Afghan Government has read our hospital proposal and accepted it. Meanwhile our elected officials have no interest. I have the impression that Jerry McNerney supports the wars and wants them to continue.

What is the real reason for fighting these wars? Oil. No surprise. So that means that our Congressman supports the interest of the oil industry over the interest of our families.

Mr. McNerney ran as a Progressive Democrat and we all supported him. The day he was elected we were dancing in the streets with happiness but nowadays we are marching in the

streets to stop these illegal wars that have been based on lies. We are no longer dancing in the street but crying at the funerals of those who have been killed on the other side of our world....

One of the first times I met him was at a private house with a number of other democrats who wanted to get his take on issues. During that night, I discovered that he was a co-sponsor on a bill to control immigrants from coming into the United States from our southern border. Having read the complete bill, I was more than shocked that a Progressive Democrat would support—let alone co-sponsor—a bill like this. It read more like a military operation to be launched on our border with Mexico. It would make it a federal crime to help a fellow human being who came from another country without the proper papers. If you were to provide them food, shelter or any other human needs, you would go to a federal prison for a number of years.

I expected more out of Jerry McNerney. He has been a very big disappointment and it is time to replace him.

Richard Blackston

Connections

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

Layout: Laurie Litman

Proofreader: Debbie Cousyn

Ad Rep: Karen DeGroot, 943-0840

Distribution Coordinators: Dean

and Marcia Savage, 209-339-1599

Distribution Site: Green's Nutrition,
1906 Pacific Ave, Stockton

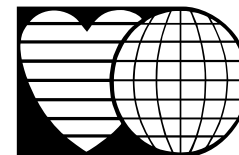
Distributors: Suzy Arnett,
Rosemary Atkinson, Antoinette
Celle, Jerry Croskrey, Clarence
Edwards, Daniel Fong, Catherine
Mathis, John Morearty, Heather
Ryan, Dean and Marcia Savage,
Julie Vaughn, Susan von Sostien,
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Walsh, Bill Witz

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

NO on Proposition 23

Dirty Oil proposition could set back climate change action for years

Texas oil companies are spending millions on a deceptive ballot campaign to pass Proposition 23, the dirty energy proposition that would effectively repeal California's landmark clean energy and climate solutions law, AB 32. Prop 23 puts at risk hundreds of thousands of clean technology and clean energy jobs in our state.

With continued lack of climate action at the national level, California's program stands today as the best model in the country for how to transition to clean energy to fight global warming. That's why the oil companies are turning their attention—and their cash—to California as their next target.

Why are Texas Oil Companies trying to Kill California's Clean Energy and Climate Law?

Because of California's innovative, forward thinking clean energy standards, the state has been a hotbed of investment and job creation in the clean tech, renewable energy, and energy efficiency industries. The oil companies who are bankrolling Prop 23 do not want to be required to reduce their emissions, and they do not want to compete with California's clean energy and clean technology industries.

With continued lack of climate action at the national level, California's program stands today as the best model in the country for how to transition to clean energy to fight global warming.

Which Oil Companies are funding Prop 23?

Valero and Tesoro are the two Texas oil companies that have, as of early August, contributed the overwhelming majority of the funds for the dirty energy initiative (more than \$4.5 million). Each oil firm owns refineries in California. According to the California Air Resources Board, Valero's Benicia refinery is California's eighth largest source global warming pollution. A refinery owned by Tesoro is the state's tenth largest emitter of global warming pollution.

How is the Dirty Energy Proposition Deceptive?

The oil companies claim Prop. 23 would only "suspend" AB 32's air pollution and health regulations until California's economy gets better. In fact, the dirty energy proposition would repeal the state's clean energy regulations until unemployment reached 5.5 percent or less for four consecutive quarters—a market condition that has only occurred three times in the last 30 years. Not only is this purposely deceptive, but it attempts to create a false and unsubstantiated choice between a healthy environment and a healthy economy.

http://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/solutions/big_picture_solutions/prop-23-background.html

10:10* Diary for October—10-10-10

Laurie Litman

The Global Work Party on 10-10-10 (see <http://www.350.org>) was a great success with 7347 events in 188 countries to "do something about climate change."

In Sacramento there were 14 events ranging from a 100-mile potluck (all food produced within 100 miles) to church bells rung at 10:10 in the morning.

Many individuals recognized 10-10-10 by staying out of cars, turning off their power, changing out light bulbs, and engaged in other activities to help the climate. The range of actions for 10-10-10 illustrated diverse things that can be done to slow and reverse climate change.

Restoration on the American River

I was involved in a Restoration Party along the American River. Our project was to remove invasive species and replant with natives. By doing this we hoped to make the environment healthier and more resilient to stress, including that expected from climate change.

The American River is a beautiful and unique environment with plants that are specially adapted to the river, and abundant wildlife. We have seen beavers, deer, coyotes, otters, sea lions, turtles, Swainson's Hawks, all kinds of birds and waterfowl, and more, just along our short stretch of the river right in the middle of urban Sacramento.

However, this area faces many threats, with climate change being the ultimate long-term challenge. Other threats include development and habitat loss, fire, disturbance from vehicles, campers, and much more. Invasive species can cause terrible damage by changing the habitat to be less friendly to native plants and animals.

Campaign to cut 10% of carbon in 2010— see <http://www.1010global.org/>



Working hard on 10-10-10 to restore and clean up the river.

Replacing non-native plants with natives will remove one major stressor on the ecosystem.

What did 10-10-10 accomplish?

This one-day Global Work Party was largely symbolic—it didn't stop climate change or even reduce that imminent threat. What it did, however, was help build the movement that will put political pressure on the governments of the world to make the necessary changes to do something about climate change.

Next month is the U.S. election. We need a Congress (and President) willing to stand up to the powerful Fossil Fuel Industry and find viable alternatives that don't add carbon to the atmosphere.

In California we need to stop Proposition 23, which would effectively kill the climate law, AB32, that puts California in the forefront of the country on addressing climate change. Prop 23 would not only gut California's law, it would discourage other

states from addressing climate change, thus setting back the effort many years.

At the end of November, the world's politicians meet in Cancun, Mexico, to try and move forward with the United Nation's Framework Convention on Climate Change. They failed last year in Copenhagen. We hope that the 10-10-10 organizing effort will help persuade them to work harder to reach some real solutions.

350.

We focus on the number "350" because 350 parts per million is considered the safe upper limit for CO₂ in our atmosphere. If we can't get below that, the damage we're already seeing from global warming will continue and accelerate. 350 is a symbol of where we need to go as a planet.

For more information visit <http://350.org>. Watch the video at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s5kg1oOq9tY&feature=player_embedded



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Join our LOCAL **Audubon**

World's biggest day of climate action: 7,000 in 188 countries

Just weeks before elections in the United States and climate talks at the United Nations, citizens from Afghanistan to West Virginia joined 350.org's "10/10/10 Global Work Party" to issue a unified demand that politicians stop dragging their feet and get to work on climate solutions.

Leading by example, citizens in 188 countries joined more than 7,000 climate "work parties" over the weekend to get to work installing solar panels, weatherizing homes, planting trees, and then calling politicians to ask a simple question, "We're getting to work, what about you?"

"The fossil fuel industry may have thought that the collapse of the Copenhagen talks and its victory in the U.S. Congress were the final word—that people would give up in discouragement," said acclaimed environmental writer and 350.org founder Bill McKibben. "The turnout today—at what is almost certainly the most widespread day of political action in the planet's history—demonstrates that people are fed up with the inaction of their leaders and ready to take matters into their own hands. Game on."

In the days surrounding the work party, U.S. President Barack Obama, Maldivian President Mohamed Nasheed, and Illinois Governor Pat Quinn all committed to install solar on their official residences. Mexico City and Parisian Mayors committed to cut their city's emissions 10% over the next year. Dozens of politicians, from US Senators to the President of the Timor-Leste Parliament joined rallies.

10/10/10 Global Work Party highlights include:

- * In Istanbul, Turkey, 7,000 marched for climate action.
- * In China, 30,000 students joined over 300 events across the country.
- * In Bangladesh, citizens demonstrated knee deep in the flood waters that are affecting hundreds of thousands of people.
- * In Hamadan, Iran, hundreds of students attended an environmental symposium.
- * In Afghanistan, groups of students planted trees in a valley

outside Kabul.

* In South Africa, a local business installed solar panels on the roof of an orphanage.

* In the United States, there were over 2,000 rallies with events in all 50 states, including 400 clean energy rallies in California.

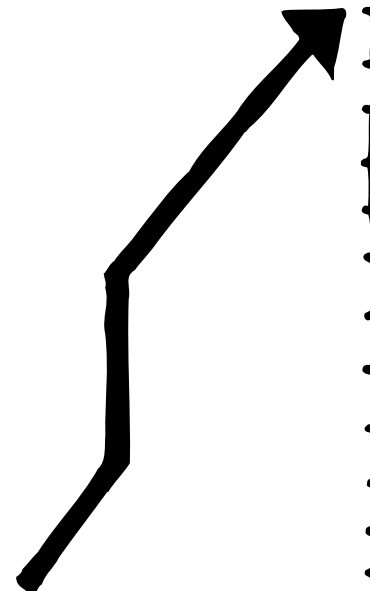
A diverse array of political voices including UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, UN climate chief Christiana Figueres, White House official Jon Carson, and President of the Maldives Mohamed Nasheed endorsed the 10/10/10 Global Work Party as a sign of important momentum for climate action.

"It's time for us to roll up our sleeves and get to work on building the clean energy future that will generate economic opportunity and provide a better, safer, healthier world for our children," said United Nations Secretary Ban Ki-moon. "On October 10, I encourage everyone to do his or her part to be part of the solution to the climate challenge."

Speaking from the climate meetings in Tianjin, China, UN Climate Chief Christina Figueres said: "I congratulate you on your work and I want to offer my personal support to the Global Work Party. When citizens are inspired to take action, it is easier for governments to initiate real climate change action."

Jon Carson, the chief of staff for President Obama's Council on Environmental Quality, told hundreds of 350.org organizers in a conference call Saturday night in Washington that, "The number one lesson we learned in the Obama campaign is that people respond to an effort that is getting something done. Tangible change in people's back yards is what brings more people to the fold. That's what you guys are doing tomorrow and that's what it's going to take to grow this movement."

President Nasheed, who joined the work parties by helping install solar panels on his roof in the Maldives, told 350.org supporters around the world, "As President of one of the world's most climate



vulnerable countries, I want to thank you for your tireless work and offer my wholehearted support for the Global Work Party on 10/10/10. For the Maldives, 350 is more than just a number: it is a passport to survival for our entire nation."

Photos from the weekend's events are stunning in their diversity and juxtaposition: cub scouts in West Virginia and young men in Afghanistan; biology students in Iran and cyclists in Israel; flood victims in Bangladesh and high school girls in Beverly Hills; the Governor of Illinois and orphans in Indonesia.

The Global Work Party came together online through websites, social networks, and a largely volunteer team around the world. "We've still got people hunched over laptops around the world today sending out emails, Skyping organizers, and trying to make sure the website doesn't crash," said Jamie Henn, 350.org co-founder.

McKibben said that the global nature of the work parties made them particularly heartening: "The size and spread of today's events surprised even those of us organizing them. They demonstrate a continuing-a growing-hunger for real action on the most desperate problem the planet faces. This has been the warmest year on record, scientists tell us. Now we're starting to turn up the political temperature too."

Source: www.350.org 10/11/10 release

The first thing Obama needs to do is...

John Chandley

When Jane Hamsher of FireDogLake recently asked people what Obama should do that didn't need Congress' approval, lots of folks came up with dozens of interesting and worthwhile suggestions. Some of those ideas have broad support -e.g., an executive order suspending further enforcement of DADT—and are consistent with what the President claims to believe is the right policy.

Other ideas would require the President to concede the policies he's implemented or the advice he's followed have been insufficient, misguided or just flat wrong. You don't normally see a President say, "I was wrong," or "I followed the wrong advice." Obama's interview with the New York Times Peter Baker is as close as this President has come:

"While proud of his record, Obama has already begun thinking about what went wrong—and what he needs to do to change course for the next two years. He has spent what one aide called 'a lot of time talking about Obama 2.0' with his new interim chief of staff, Pete Rouse, and his deputy chief of staff, Jim Messina. During our hour together, Obama told me he had no regrets about the broad direction of his presidency. But he did identify what he called 'tactical lessons.' He let himself look too much like 'the same old tax-and-spend liberal Democrat.' He realized too late that 'there's no such thing as shovel-ready projects' when it comes to public works. Perhaps he should not have proposed tax breaks as part of his stimulus and instead 'let the Republicans insist on the tax cuts' so it could be seen as a bipartisan compromise."

Does he really believe there were just "tactical" mistakes, and that accounts for the drubbing his Party is about to receive for following his lead? If I were to compile a list of things the President should do, acknowledging far more serious mistakes in judgment would be the first thing on my list. Without it, I don't think anyone will give him much credit for anything else he announces, even if they're things the public generally supports in principle.

This President has at least two serious problems for those who might be inclined to support him but remain unenthusiastic, disillusioned, or worse. First, his policies for economic recovery aren't working; they're stalled and not making a dent in unemployment or the economic insecurity facing millions of Americans. But equally important, people are losing hope in the country's ability to solve these problems. For many, Obama represented that hope, so if he fails, then his supporters' hopes for change fail with him.

To be sure, the Republicans worked to make him fail. They have functioned not as the loyal opposition but as the nation's enemy. They've sabotaged and underfunded recovery efforts and lied about every effort to make things better; they demonized the President and his proposals. They've become promoters of failure, not just Obama's failure, but the nation's failure. Their behavior continues to be beyond the pale.

An expectation to fight

But Obama's supporters expected him and his Party to confront and overcome such opposition, to fight for the public interests against all of the powerful forces resisting change and protecting their own wealth and privilege. He now has a serious credibility problem, a problem of trust as well as competence. So his first priority is to reestablish that trust, to rekindle hope.

My guess is voters first need him to acknowledge that the ideas and assumptions he and his closest advisers brought with them to solve the country's problems turned out to be inadequate to deal with how serious the country's problems have become.

1. He can explain that our economy is huge and the near depression he inherited turned out to be far more serious than he and his advisers imagined; he didn't cause the depression, but he has to take responsibility for that miscalculation. So just as many of his liberal critics claimed, we needed a much larger, more effective stimulus and a Plan B to redouble and refocus that effort if it wasn't enough. We still need that.

2. He needs also to concede he and his advisers put too much faith in the ability of the private sector to recover from such a serious financial collapse and loss of individual wealth. Market deregulation failed, catastrophically, so stop defending it. It was a mistake to assume that if we made the banks prosperous again, that would also take care of Main Street. That benevolent trickle down view was wrong, again. It's time to discard it.

3. Further, since his advisers knew that jobs always lag other aspects of recovery, especially in recessions linked to financial collapse, he and they should have realized we needed massive direct jobs programs, to complement and focus the stimulus. We don't need foolish symbolic gestures like leaving government positions unfilled. Instead, we needed then and need now more direct hiring by government to perform dozens of public functions, including much greater support for states to avoid layoffs of state funded teachers, firemen, police, and so on. He should have refused to compromise on this just to please a couple of timid, misguided Senators; they needed to step up.

4. The President apparently agrees we need to start rebuilding America's infrastructure. He can now make a commitment to tackle the trillions in investment backlog we've accumulated over recent decades. Go big, and tell the hypocritical deficit hysterics that Bush's \$700 billion tax giveaway to the richest 2 percent should instead be used to rebuild the country.

5. He needs to acknowledge that tackling the nation's problems requires a more fundamental challenge to the economic power, greed and corruption of America's major institutions, particularly America's largest corporations. They will not willingly give up their power nor willingly protect consumers or preserve the middle class. The resulting concentration of wealth at the top is destroying the middle class and systematically corrupting government, using Karl Rove, the US Chamber of Commerce and their conservative friends to launder billions to buy elections to maintain their power.

Without a formidable public challenge to the mega-corporations' economic power, concerns about individual liberty, which supposedly motivate libertarians/Tea Partiers, will be overwhelmed; ordinary real people can't hope to compete against multi-billion dollar corporate "persons." Nor can the public expect government to pursue policies in the public interest, let alone rescue the middle class from an inexorable decline and the increasing transfer of their wealth to the richest one percent.

The voters need to hear their President say these things, so they understand the problems they see in their lives are real, but have an identifiable cause -- instead of just letting right wing demagogues blame and demonize blacks, latinos, muslims, or nonexistent "socialists" and "others."

Such a statement would signal that the President understands it is he who much change and he who must step up, get engaged, and act more boldly. Without showing he's both honest and mature enough

to admit these things, voters will find it hard to believe any of his new initiatives, even if well intended, are anything more than electoral opportunism.

Once he's done that, the President can ask the voters to support him and any members of his Party prepared to fight for a better agenda. He can explain that the opposition party is not merely in denial on most of these problems; they are accomplices. Their "solutions" would make every problem even worse, and the country can't afford that.

What does he have to lose?

John Chandley (Scarecrow) has writes for Firedoglake/Seminal. He has a law degree, worked as legal counsel and energy policy adviser for a state energy agency for 20 years and then as a consultant on electricity systems and markets.

Source: <http://seminal.firedoglake.com/diary/author/scarecrow/> 10/17/10



Contact Your Reps

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

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

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

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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

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SUSD Board direction: Two views



Cazares: smart & energetic

Editor,
We've known Sara Cazares and her husband Larry Hernandez well for 15 years, and we enthusiastically support her for Stockton Unified School Board. She's a person of integrity, energetic, smart, eager to serve. She works hard, like her truck driver father. A Franklin graduate, Sara earned a B.A. from Harvard, married and moved back home.

Their teenage sons are modest and thoughtful, not by accident. She respects every person of every ethnicity, honors their traditions and struggles. After she taught third grade, parents paid her to tutor their children. In the Obama campaign she registered 800 voters, and didn't stop: her 60-member San Joaquin Grassroots Action volunteers and works for better health care and education.

Sara attended SUSD Board meetings for two years, and observed ineffectual squabbling and avoidance of responsibility. We say: those weary board members deserve a rest. And Stockton children deserve a living education, so they can build our community. Sara Cazares belongs to no faction; she will serve all the people.

John Morearty & Ria deGroot

McCarthy touts Ross

Editor,

One of the most rewarding aspects of political life is those occasions when you come upon an opportunity to "reach across the aisle" and work collaboratively with someone whose views would ordinarily be polar opposites of your own.

I would like to share with you some of my thoughts about my fellow Stockton Unified School District Board Trustee Bill Ross. What began as merely a working relationship has become a reciprocal friendship. I admire him as an honest, honorable community and SUSD leader. Bill is a man of high integrity and can be counted on to do the right thing for SUSD's students, our schools and our community. I commend Bill for his accomplishments as a SUSD trustee.



Bill has been, as he calls it, my "Sidekick". Others have termed us the "Book Ends" who work together in the best interests of our students. We have worked together to salvage the District from those who misused District money and failed our students.

Despite our progress, we still have a long way to go. I believe the interests of the District are best served by Bill's re-election to the Board of Trustees. His knowledge of business and budgets has been invaluable. Most important, his experience and integrity are essential to the Board if we are to keep SUSD moving forward in a new direction under new Superintendent Carl Toliver. Bill has been endorsed by the Stockton Teachers Association and the California School Employees Association

Beverly Fitch McCarthy

Fair and balanced: another side

[Editor's note: From time to time, readers comment that Connections lacks the "balance" which the mainstream media consistently and proudly achieves (SNARK!). So, in the interest of "balance," what follows are election recommendations from the right. These are provided for information purposes only and are by no means recommendations for these candidates or propositions.]

Propositions: The CA Republican Assembly (CRA), Assemblyman Chuck DeVore, Congressman Tom McClintock, Capitol Resource Institute, and Congressman John Campbell, and Robyn Nordell all agree on the following: Prop19--no; Prop20--yes; Prop21--no; Prop23--yes; Prop24--no; Prop25--no; Prop26--yes Prop27--no; disagreement on Prop 22

U.S. Senate
Carly Fiorina

U.S. Congress
David Harmer, District 11; Mike Berryhill, District 18

Board of Equalization
George Runner

State Senate & Assembly
Tom Berryhill, Senate District 14
Jack Sieglock, Assembly District 10;
Abram Wilson, Assembly District 15;
Jack Mobley, Assembly District 17;
Bill Berryhill, Assembly District 26

Lincoln Unified Schools
Ted H Bestolarides

Stockton Unified Schools
Sal Ramirez, Area 2; Dan Lee, Area 5;
Bill Ross, Area 6; Steve Smith, Area 7

Stockton's Measure H—YES

Tom McGurk, Stockton-East Water District

Lodi Unified Schools
Anthony R Silva, Area 1; Dana Baker, Area 3; Calvin Young, Area

4; Frank Michael, Area 6

Lodi City Council
Tony Amador; Larry D Hansen;
Alan Nakanishi

Lathrop Mayor
Kristy Sayles

Lathrop City Council
Brent Maynor

Manteca Unified Schools
Manuel A Medeiros, Area 2; Nancy Teicheira, Area 4; Chuck Carpenter, Area 5

Manteca City Council
Vincent Hernandez; Richard Behling

Tracy Mayor
Brent H Ives

Tracy City Council
Nancy D Young; Bob Elliott

Tracy's Measure E—NO

Ripon City Council
Chuck Winn

Source: www.RobynNordell.com

The Way We Forget

William Rivers Pitt

This country of ours has a monstrous capacity to forget. We are able to forget—if we ever knew—what happened two hundred years ago, one hundred years ago, fifty years ago, ten years ago. Worse, we are able to forget what happened one year ago, last month, last week, and even yesterday. We forget, we ignore, we refuse to know, and in our deliberate ignorance are found the seeds of further destruction, widely sown and also to be forgotten.

It has been made far too clear that our national amnesia certainly extends over the last two years. After an era of Republican rule that saw vast economic collapse, the abrogation of basic rights, the trashing of Constitutional law, two decade-long wars that still have no end in sight, a catastrophic terrorist attack that could have been prevented, the virtual annihilation of a major American city that could have been prevented, and the theft and waste of trillions of dollars, every available poll appears to indicate that the American people have already forgotten all about it, and are perfectly ready to let the wolves back inside the fence.

For proof, if proof is even required, I offer an article from the *New York Times* (http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/16/us/politics/16poll.html?_r=1&hp):

"It has been going on there for nine years and counting. Nearly 100,000 American troops are currently deployed there. More than 1,300 American service members have lost their lives there. The United States has spent over \$300 billion on the effort so far. Yet polling suggests that the war in Afghanistan is barely a blip on voters' radars as the midterm elections approach. In a nationwide *New York Times/CBS News* poll conducted last month, 60 percent of Americans said that the economy or jobs were the

most important problems facing the country. A mere 3 percent mentioned Afghanistan or the war."

Three percent mentioned as important a war that has been grinding out death and calamity for more than nine years. Three percent. The war in Afghanistan is all but forgotten. The dying, however, continues apace.

From the eighth of October through the fifteenth of October, a Friday through a Friday, 28 soldiers were killed in Afghanistan. Seventeen were killed in the last three days of that week. One was from the United Kingdom, one was from Poland, four were from Italy, twelve were from the United States, and the names of ten more have not been released at the time of this writing. The oldest of the dead was 34 years old, a Sergeant. The youngest was 19. Each and every one of them died from hostile fire—rocket, IED, mortar or small arms. For the week ending October 13th, 188 casualties—both the dead and the wounded—were officially reported. The total number of American soldiers killed as of the 15th stands as 1,334, and the total number of NATO fatalities stands at 2,161.

There is also this http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/afghanistan/2010-10-05-afghanistan-amputations_N.htm, a fact within facts:

"The number of U.S. soldiers who have suffered amputations in Afghanistan has increased sharply over last year as more troops move into Taliban territory, according to Army data. Amputations rose from 47 in 2009 to 77 through Sept. 23 of this year, or an increase of more than 60%, the Army reports. The chief cause of the injuries are improvised explosive devices—or IEDs—that are planted in the ground or along roads, according to the International Security

Assistance Force, which oversees military operations in Afghanistan. Coalition forces have been hit by more IEDs in recent weeks as the surge in U.S. troops allows for expanded operations into traditional Taliban strongholds in Kandahar and Helmand provinces in southern Afghanistan. The vast majority of amputations involve the loss of either an arm or leg, but a dozen soldiers this year have had multiple amputations, twice the number of such cases in 2009. At the NATO hospital, doctors amputated a major limb—a leg or arm—an average of once every other day in September, according to Navy Capt. Michael Mullins, a hospital spokesman. The operations included not only U.S. troops, but also NATO troops, Afghan soldiers and civilians, Mullins said."

Coverage of civilian casualties in Afghanistan is spotty at best—the "We don't do body counts" ethic continues apace—but the Predator drones have been hard at work, along with the rest of our fearful conventional arsenal, and the number of civilian dead and wounded stands tall in the thousands.

Argue against the war, or for it. Say we must withdraw, or that we must "finish the job," whatever that means. It would be nice if such a debate were actually taking place, because the debate is sorely needed. But we are incapable of even beginning to begin such a conversation. People are not disagreeing about the war. They are not even thinking about it, by a count of 97 to 3 percent. The media is to blame for this. The politicians are to blame for this. The economy is to blame for this. We are to blame for this.

It is amazing, astonishing, appalling, horrifying the way we forget.

Source: *truthout* | Op-Ed ; www.truthout.org/10/17/10

Argue against the war, or for it. Say we must withdraw, or that we must "finish the job," whatever that means. It would be nice if such a debate were actually taking place.

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The secret big-money takeover of America

Robert Reich

Not only is income and wealth in America more concentrated in fewer hands than it's been in 80 years, but those hands are buying our democracy as never before—and they're doing it behind closed doors.

Hundreds of millions of secret dollars are pouring into congressional and state races in this election cycle. The Koch brothers (whose personal fortunes grew by \$5 billion last year) appear to be behind some of it, Karl Rove has rounded up other multi-millionaires to fund right-wing candidates, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce is funneling corporate dollars from around the world into congressional races, and Rupert Murdoch is evidently spending heavily.

No one knows for sure where this flood of money is coming from because it's all secret.

But you can safely assume its purpose is not to help America's stranded middle class, working class, and poor. It's to pad the nests of the rich, stop all reform, and deregulate big corporations and Wall Street—already more powerful than since the late 19th century when the lackeys of robber barons literally deposited sacks of cash on the desks of friendly legislators.

Credit the Supreme Court's grotesque decision in Citizens United vs. the Federal Election Commission, which opened the floodgates. (Even though 8 of 9 members of the Court also held disclosure laws constitutional, the decision invited the creation of shadowy "nonprofits" that don't have to reveal anything.)

According to FEC data, only 32 percent of groups paying for election ads are disclosing the names of their donors. By comparison, in the 2006 midterm, 97 percent disclosed; in 2008, almost half disclosed.

Last week, when the Senate considered a bill to force such disclosure, every single Republican voted against it—thereby revealing the GOP's true colors, and presumed benefactors. (To understand how

far the GOP has come, nearly ten years ago campaign disclosure was supported by 48 of 54 Republican senators.)

Maybe the Disclose Bill can get passed in lame-duck session. Maybe the IRS will make sure Karl Rove's and other supposed nonprofits aren't sham political units. Maybe pigs will learn to fly.

In the meantime we face an election that marks an even sharper turn toward plutocratic capitalism than before—a government by and for the rich and big corporations—and away from democratic capitalism.

As income and wealth has moved to the top, so has political power. That's why, for example, it's been impossible to close the absurd tax loophole that allows hedge-fund and private-equity managers to treat much of their income as capital gains, subject to a 15 percent tax (even though they're earning tens or hundreds of millions a year, and the top 15 hedge-fund managers earned an average of \$1 billion last year). Why it proved impossible to fund expanded health care by limiting the tax deductions of the very rich. Why it's so difficult even to extend George Bush's tax cuts for the bottom 98 percent of Americans without also extending them for the top 2 percent—even though the top won't spend the money and create jobs, but will blow a \$36 billion hole in the federal budget next year.

The good news is average Americans are beginning to understand that when the rich secretly flood our democracy with money, the rest of us drown. Wall Street executives and top CEOs get bailed out while under-water homeowners and jobless workers sink.

A Quinnipiac poll earlier this year found overwhelming support for a millionaire tax.

But what the public wants means nothing if our democracy is secretly corrupted by big money.

Right now we're headed for a perfect storm: An unprecedented concentration of income and wealth at the top, a record amount

of secret money flooding our democracy, and a public in the aftershock of the Great Recession becoming increasingly angry and cynical about government. The three are obviously related.

We must act. We need a movement to take back our democracy. (If tea partiers were true to their principles, they'd join it.) As Martin Luther King once said, the greatest tragedy is "not the strident clamor of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people."

What can you do?

1. Read Justice Steven's dissent in the Citizens United case, so you're fully informed about the majority's pernicious illogic.

2. Use every opportunity to speak out against this decision, and embarrass and condemn the right-wing Justices who supported it.

3. In this and subsequent elections, back candidates for congress and president who vow to put Justices on the Court who will reverse it.

4. Demand that the IRS enforce the law and pull the plug on Karl Rove and other sham nonprofits.

5. If you have a Republican senator, insist that he or she support the Disclose Act. If they won't, campaign against them.

6. Support public financing of elections.

7. Join an organization like Common Cause, that's committed to doing all this and getting big money out of politics. (Personal note: I'm so outraged at what's happening that I just became chairman of Common Cause.)

Robert Reich is Professor of Public Policy at the University of California at Berkeley. He has served in three national administrations, most recently as secretary of labor under President Bill Clinton. He has written twelve books, including "The Work of Nations," "Locked in the Cabinet," "Supercapitalism" and his latest book, "AFTERSHOCK: The Next Economy and America's Future."

Source: <<http://robertreich.org/post/1263581986>>

What “Superman” got wrong, point by point

Rick Ayers

While the Meg Whitman-recommended education film *Waiting For Superman* has moving profiles of students struggling to succeed under difficult circumstances, it puts forward a sometimes misleading and other times dishonest account of the roots of the problem and possible solutions. The amped-up rhetoric of crisis and failure everywhere is being used to promote business-model reforms that are destabilizing even in successful schools and districts. A panel at NBC’s Education Nation Summit, taking place in New York today and tomorrow, was originally titled “Does Education Need a Katrina?” Such disgraceful rhetoric undermines reasonable debate. Let’s examine these issues, one by one:

Lack of money is not the problem in education.

Yet the exclusive charter schools featured in the film receive large private subsidies. Two-thirds of Geoffrey Canada’s Harlem Children’s Zone funding comes from private sources, effectively making the charter school he runs in the zone a highly resourced private school. Promise Academy is in many ways an excellent school, but it is dishonest for the filmmakers to say nothing about the funds it took to create it and the extensive social supports including free medical care and counseling provided by the zone.

In New Jersey, where court decisions mandated similar programs, such as high quality pre-kindergarten classes and extended school days and social services in the poorest urban districts, achievement and graduation rates increased while gaps started to close. But public funding for those programs is now being cut and progress is being eroded. Money matters! Of course, money will not solve all problems (because the problems are more systemic than the resources of any given school) – but the off-handed rejection of a discussion of resources is misleading.

Standardized testing is a reasonable way to assess

student progress.

The debate of “how to raise test scores” strangles and distorts strong education. Most test score differences stubbornly continue to reflect parental income and neighborhood/zip codes, not what schools do. As opportunity, health and family wealth increase, so do test scores. This is not the fault of schools but the inaccuracy, and the internal bias, in the tests themselves.

Moreover, the tests are too narrow (on only certain subjects with only certain measurement tools). When schools focus exclusively on boosting scores on standardized tests, they reduce teachers to test-prep clerks, ignore important subject areas and critical thinking skills, dumb down the curriculum and leave children less prepared for the future. We need much more authentic assessment to know if schools are doing well and to help them improve.

Poverty not a problem

Schools must be made into sites of opportunity, not places for the rejection and failure of millions of African American, Chicano Latino, Native American, and immigrant students. But schools and teachers take the blame for huge social inequities in housing, health care, and income.

Income disparities between the richest and poorest in U.S. society have reached record levels between 1970 and today. Poor communities suffer extensive traumas and dislocations. Homelessness, the exploitation of immigrants, and the closing of community health and counseling clinics, are all factors that penetrate our school communities. Solutions that punish schools without addressing these conditions only increase the marginalization of poor children.

Teachers’ unions are the problem

Of course unions need to be improved – more transparent, more accountable, more democratic and participatory – but before teachers unionized, the disparity in pay between men and women was disgraceful and the arbitrary power of school boards to dismiss teachers or raise class size without

any resistance was endemic.

Unions have historically played leading roles in improving public education, and most nations with strong public educational systems have strong teacher unions. According to a piece in *The Nation*, “In the Finnish education system, much cited in the film as the best in the world, teachers are – gasp! – unionized and granted tenure, and families benefit from a cradle-to-grave social welfare system that includes universal daycare, preschool and health care, all of which are proven to help children achieve better results in school.” In fact, even student teachers have a union in Finland and, overall, nearly 90% of the Finnish labor force is unionized. The demonization of unions ignores the real evidence.

Teacher education is useless

The movie touts the benefits of fast track and direct entry to teaching programs such as Teach for America, but the country with the highest achieving students, Finland, also has highly educated teachers. A 1970 reform of Finland’s education system mandated that all teachers above the kindergarten level have at least a master’s degree. Today that country’s students have the highest math and science literacy, as measured by the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), of all the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) member countries.

Tenure is a drag on teacher improvement

Tenured teachers cannot be fired without due process and a good reason: they can’t be fired because the boss wants to hire his cousin, or because the teacher is gay (or black or...), or because they take an unpopular position on a public issue outside of school.

A recent survey found that most principals agreed that they had the authority to fire a teacher if they needed to take such action. It is interesting to note that when teachers are evaluated through a union-sanctioned peer process, more teachers are put into retraining programs and dismissed

than through administration-only review programs. Overwhelmingly teachers want students to have outstanding and positive experiences in schools.

Charter schools allow choice and better educational innovation

Charters were first proposed by the teachers’ unions to allow committed parents and teachers to create schools that were free of administrative bureaucracy and open to experimentation and innovation, and some excellent charters have set examples. But thousands of hustlers and snake oil salesmen have also jumped in.

While teacher unions are vilified in the film, there is no mention of charter corruption or profiteering. A recent national study by CREDO, The Center for Research on Education Outcomes at Stanford University, concludes that only 17% of charter schools have better test scores than traditional public schools, 46% had gains that were no different than their public counterparts, and 37% were significantly worse.

While a better measure of school success is needed, even by their own measure, the project has not succeeded. A recent *Mathematica Policy Research* study came to similar conclusions. And the Education Report, “The Evaluation of Charter School Impacts,” concludes, “On average, charter middle schools that hold lotteries are neither more nor less successful than traditional public schools in improving student achievement, behavior, and school progress.”

Some fantastic education is happening in charter schools, especially those initiated by communities and led by teachers and community members. But the use of charters as a battering ram for those who would outsource and privatize education in the name of “reform” is sheer political opportunism.

Competition is the best way to improve learning

Too many people involved in education policy are dazzled by the idea of “market forces” improving schools. By setting up

systems of competition, Social Darwinist struggles between students, between teachers, and between schools, these education policy wonks are distorting the educational process.

Teachers will be motivated to gather the most promising students, to hide curriculum strategies from peers, and to cheat; principals have already been caught cheating in a desperate attempt to boost test scores. And children are worn out in a sink-or-swim atmosphere that threatens them with dire life outcomes if they are not climbing to the top of the heap.

In spite of the many millions of dollars poured into expounding the theory of paying teachers for higher student test scores (sometimes mislabeled as ‘merit pay’), a new study by Vanderbilt University’s National Center on Performance Incentives found that the use of merit pay for teachers in the Nashville school district produced no difference—even by their measures—on test outcomes for students.

Good teachers are key to successful education

We agree. But *Waiting for Superman* only contributes to the teacher-bashing culture which discourages talented college graduates from considering teaching and drives people out of the profession. According to the Department of Education, the country will need 1.6 million new teachers in the next five years. Retention of talented teachers is one key. Good teaching is about making connections to students, about connecting what they learn to the world in which they live, and this only happens if teachers have history and roots in the communities where they teach.

But a recent report by the nonprofit National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future says that “approximately a third of America’s new teachers leave teaching sometime during their first three years of teaching; almost half leave during the first five years. In many cases, keeping our schools supplied with qualified teachers is comparable to trying to fill a bucket with a huge hole in the bottom.”

(continued next page)

Why say yes to the party of no?

Ralph Nader

How does the Big Business-indentured Republican Party get away with expectations of a runaway election victory this November? If such a victory should occur in Congress and for many governorships and state legislatures, it will be due to a ten percent or so shift in voters who voted Democratic in 2008 and are expected to vote Republican this year or stay home in despair or disgust. The rest of the voters who do vote will still stay with their hereditary Republican or Democratic candidates.

So what is accounting for a possible ten percent shift? Let's briefly review some of the Congressional Republicans' voiced positions:

1. Trade

They want to do nothing about unfair Chinese trade practices that lure jobs away from our country though huge factory subsidies, and where workers are repressed

and counterfeit products abound. Imagine, Republicans coddling a communist regime, luring the auto parts, electronic, solar and drug ingredients industries away from America, often in violation of the World Trade Organization rules. And, in turn, China is exporting to the U.S. impure food, faulty tires, toxic drywall, lead-tainted toys and medicines which are contaminated, defective or harmful. Don't forget the dumping violations.

2. Banks

Republicans, led by Senator Richard Shelby and his banking friends, declared their adamant opposition to Professor Elizabeth Warren becoming head of the new consumer financial regulation agency. (To avoid a confrontation with them, President Obama made her a special assistant to organize this consumer watchdog.) Ms. Warren has a solid record of exposing and communicating clearly to families the tricks and traps of credit card companies, mortgage firms, and intermediaries

that have taken so many billions of consumer dollars with impunity.

3. Loans

The Republicans led by their House leader, John Boehner (Rep. Ohio), a total toady of the gouging student loan companies, opposed the Democrats successful reform of this taxpayer b o o n d o g g l e that guaranteed obscene profits and had the taxpayers absorb any student defaults. Boehner's lobbying should upset millions of parents who had to foot the bill for so many years.

4. Minimum wage

The Republicans are opposed to raising the federal minimum wage to what it was, adjusted for inflation, in 1968. They opposed an adequate budget for health and safety enforcement by OSHA, which would have helped to save the 58,000 American workers who die every year from workplace toxics and trauma. They are now blocking protections for coal miners pending in the Senate after the Massey mine disaster.

5. Corporate power

Republicans oppose doing anything about "too big to fail" even after Wall Street's reckless, avaricious collapse of the economy, costing 8 million jobs and trillions of lost pension and mutual fund dollars. Moreover, they do not support genuine enforcement of the anti-trust laws which are supposed to break up monopolization efforts, monopolies or oligopolies like Monsanto (seeds) or the big five banks,—bailed out by taxpayers and secure in their domination of well over 50 percent of all bank assets, deposits and the credit card business. This is by far the highest concentration of financial power in modern U.S. history. With few exceptions, the GOP want very few federal cops on the corporate crime beat.

6. Tax cuts for the rich

Fighting for the last billionaire and multimillionaire, Republicans are blocking ending Bush's tax cuts on incomes beyond \$250,000 per year.

Yes, Republicans want to reduce the deficit yet they want to end revenues of over 700 billion dollars over ten years of restored super-rich taxes. They are blocking renewal of the



estate taxes after their expiration on Dec. 31, 2009 left no taxes this year on the estates of the super-rich. (Over 99 percent of estates were already exempt from the federal estate tax.)

7. No public option

No matter that Republicans caved to the health insurance companies getting over 30 million new covered customers, starting in 2014, they supported the industry's blaming the federal government, no less, for this month's latest sharp hike in insurance premiums by Aetna and others largely on the policies of individuals and small business. The Republicans did this after blocking the "public option" that would have given consumers both a choice and the benefit of some competition to the big insurance firms.

8. Military bloat

Have the Congressional Republicans ever challenged the bloated, wasteful, contractor-corrupt military budget that makes up half of the entire government's discretionary budget? Even the Congress's own auditing agency—the Government Accountability Office (GAO)—declares the Pentagon budget un-auditable. Many Pentagon audits document the abuses of Halliburton, KBR, Blackwater and other firms in the deficit-driving, bloody Iraq and Afghanistan wars (both Republican espoused.) The Pentagon's burgeoning budget, now nearing \$800 billion a year, is deemed untouchable. (A few Republicans, like Charles Grassley and John McCain sometimes object to contracting abuses.)

9. No public works

President Obama wants a counter-recessionary public works program renovating airports, bridges, highways, rail and mass transit, drinking water and sewage treatment facilities and other infrastructures. Republicans sneer at this local job creation for much needed facilities.

10. Senate filibuster

Unlike any Republican Party since its creation in 1854, it has misused the filibuster threat, and any one of its Senators misuse the rules and block even going to a floor discussion or a nomination vote. The Party is earning its moniker as the Party of NO. Republicans have turned the U.S. Senate into America's graveyard.

There is much more, but enough has been cited to ask again—how are Republicans seen by the polls as front runners in the upcoming election?

The answer my friends, is not in the stars. The answer is in the clueless and spineless Democrats, busily dialing for the same corporate campaign dollars. The other answer is in the ten percent of the actual voters who need to seriously avail themselves of the facts and a modicum of thought. For if they don't, they will continue to pay bills handed to them and their children by their ruling corporatists in Republican clothing.

Ralph Nader <<http://www.nader.org/>> is a consumer advocate, lawyer, and author. His most recent book—and first novel—is, *Only The Super-Rich Can Save Us*.

Source: *CommonDreams.org* 9/24/10

Superman got it wrong (continued from page 9)

Check out the reasons teachers are being driven out in Katy Farber's book, "Why Great Teachers Quit: And How We Might Stop the Exodus," (Corwin Press).

In conclusion

Waiting for Superman could and should have been an inspiring call for improvement in education, a call we desperately need to mobilize behind. That's why it is so shocking that the message was hijacked by a narrow agenda that undermines strong education. It is stuck in a framework that says that reform and leadership means doing things, like firing a bunch of people (Rhee) or "turning around" schools (Education Secretary Arne Duncan) despite the fact that there's no research to suggest that these would have worked, and there's now evidence to show that they haven't.

Reform must be guided by community empowerment and strong evidence, not by ideological warriors or romanticized images of leaders acting like they're

doing something, anything. *Waiting for Superman* has ignored deep historical and systemic problems in education such as segregation, property-tax based funding formulas, centralized textbook production, lack of local autonomy and shared governance, de-professionalization, inadequate special education supports, differential discipline patterns, and the list goes on and on.

People seeing *Waiting for Superman* should be mobilized to improve education. They just need to be willing to think outside of the narrow box that the film-makers have constructed to define what needs to be done.

Rick Ayers is a former high school teacher, founder of Communication Arts and Sciences small school at Berkeley High School, and currently adjunct professor in teacher education at the University of San Francisco. He is the co-author, with his brother William Ayers, of the forthcoming "Teaching the Taboo" from Teachers College Press.

The quality of whose life? an introduction to America's modern anti-poor movement

Casey Gallagher

It's clear that there's a huge disconnect between our ideals and public policy. For example, The Huffington Post recently reported: "Americans vastly underestimate wealth inequality and support a more equal distribution of wealth." If this is true, why are we wasting billions of tax dollars locking people up simply for being poor?

In city after city nationwide, we have seen the introduction and enforcement of Quality of Life ordinances. Anti-panhandling statutes, such as the one in Las Vegas, where both panhandlers and the people who give them money can be fined, are spreading across the country. So are bans on providing free meals for homeless people in parks. In San Francisco, a hotly debated new measure would make it illegal for people to sit down on city sidewalks, and the McDonald's on Haight Street, which has a relatively high concentration of homeless people, is the only franchise in the city that has stopped offering its popular Dollar Menu. These are only the latest developments in a city where the mayor sailed into office on a platform known as Care Not Cash that severely limits cash assistance to the homeless.

Safer, cleaner...

All these laws and ordinances (and many more like them) are presented to the public as serving the greater good, making cities more livable, improving public safety; in a nutshell, increasing quality of life across the board. Residents' quality of life is enhanced because they live in safer, cleaner cities. Businesses are able to attract more customers. Cities themselves are able to attract more tourists. All in all, Quality of Life ordinances seem to work for everyone. Quality of Life is, of course, a well-chosen phrase. It has a nice ring to it; it sounds upbeat and profound at the same time. Who could possibly oppose such a thing? One group might be those who care about social justice and our collective responsibility towards the economically marginalized—the exact people who are, more

often than not, on the receiving end of Quality of Life initiatives.

Clearly, quality of life refers to some lives—the lives that are worthy of legal and public protection. Other lives, on the other hand, do not seem to fall into this category. As in most instances, these ordinances have proven to be detrimental to the health, opportunities, and daily lives of people experiencing homelessness and those of lower socioeconomic status. In fact, it appears as if Quality of Life is a zero-sum game: I can only increase mine if I decrease yours. For a growing segment of our country, these initiatives simply institutionalize the inequalities of life.

At first glance, these ordinances and policies might seem like a rather extreme form of NIMBYism. City residents, who may not have a problem with the poor or poverty per se, are offered a way of not having to think about them, see them, or interact with them. In the larger scheme of things, however, what the Quality of Life movement really represents is a modern take on old-fashioned segregation. The resulting laws and regulations serve as judgments about who can and who cannot occupy public spaces, about who is free to go where and do what.

Reminiscent of urban policies from a dark era of American history, they share many similarities with their Jim Crow forefathers. But where Jim Crow laws were explicitly based on race, their contemporary counterparts are ostensibly free from racial bias. Instead, they focus more prominently on socioeconomic markers by targeting the homeless, the hungry, and the poor.

...and racial

In practice, of course, race and socioeconomic status cannot be separated from one another, and many of the Quality of Life ordinances affect people of color disproportionately. The Safer Cities Initiatives in Los Angeles is a case in point. In its three years of existence, this Quality of Life initiative has led to 27,000 arrests in a 50-square block area known as Skid Row, which abuts

a fashionable area the city is trying to redevelop. Skid Row is home to about 14,000 residents: of whom 75 percent are African American, 95 percent are extremely low income, and roughly one-third are homeless.

The initiative has already cost taxpayers \$118 million in arrests alone, not to mention the human impacts. Los Angeles spends \$6 million a year on the initiative's additional 50 police officers, which is about the same amount it spends on homeless services citywide. Over a 14-month period, it's estimated that about \$5 million was spent to enforce jaywalking in the area. Things have gotten so bad that Los Angeles Community Action Network had to submit a Color of Law complaint for the Department of Justice to investigate Los Angeles Police Department's abuses.

Either way, the principle remains the same: while we as a nation may hold it as self-evident that all are created equal, in today's cities, some people are more equal than others. In the Land of the Free, there are city residents who are seeing their freedoms curtailed by a growing system of measures that essentially defines them as second-class citizens. This process of stratification is based, as it has been in the past, on valuing the rights and privileges of some while denying or stripping away the rights of others.

Undoubtedly, a Quality of Life initiative has either already come or is on its way to a city near you. Public discussions on these initiatives are typically held in a vacuum with little perspective, historical or otherwise. The resulting legislation tends to ignore its implications on deeply held values such as freedom, opportunity, fairness, and equality. These political developments ignore the bigger picture—that this quest for safer and cleaner cities has been harmful to the lives of many Americans and a violation of fundamental democratic principles.



This article is a collaboration between researcher Casey Gallagher and Western Regional Advocacy Project.

Source: Huffington Post 10/7/10 http://www.huffingtonpost.com/paul-boden/the-quality-of-whose-life_b_749280.html

Rich versus the rest of us

Jim Hightower

Apparently, you and I owe an apology to the extravagantly-rich in our society. They're reported to be in a deep pout and a political funk because We the People have hurt their feelings.

This stems from the public's simmering anger over the fact that the Wall Street barons who crashed our economy are back to paying themselves multimillion-dollar bonuses, while the corporate CEOs who keep downsizing and offshoring our middle class opportunities are grabbing bigger paychecks than ever for themselves. The wealthy are upset by our anger and feel picked on by us riff-raff—they don't like being blamed for our economic distress (even though they are to blame), and they certainly don't like the rising populist fervor for more economic fairness in our country. So they're mad at us for being mad at them, claiming that they are victims of our "wealth envy."

I'm sure you feel as badly as I do about this, so you'll be glad to know that those living in luxury seem to have found a way to soothe their bad mood: they've gone shopping! Yes, while workaday Americans are scrambling just to cover the rent and buy groceries, the well-heeled are reported to be splurging again, indulging their consumer whims with such pricey pretties as exotic automobiles.

One analyst of trends in the luxury car market concedes that sales of Bentleys, Lamborghinis, Maseratis, and other ultra-priced autos had been down the past couple of years. He explained that, "It didn't feel right buying a \$300,000 Rolls-Royce when people were being foreclosed out of their homes." But this year, the elites are saying, "To hell with what the public thinks, I'm gonna get me a new Ferrari 458 Italia, the people be damned!"

How nice for them. But I don't think their conspicuous consumption is going to make anyone feel better about their greed—nor will it quell the public's rising populist fervor.

Source: Jim Hightower 10/8/10 www.jimhightower.com/node/7265

Biocentrism & Deep Ecology

Judi Bari

submitted by Vinh Pham

Deep ecology, or biocentrism, is the belief that nature does not exist to serve humans. Rather, humans are part of nature, one species among many. All species have a right to exist for their own sake, regardless of their usefulness to humans. And biodiversity is a value in itself, essential for the flourishing of both human and nonhuman life.

These principles, I believe, are not just another political theory. Biocentrism is a law of nature, that exists independently of whether humans recognize it or not. It doesn't matter whether we view the world in a human-centered way. Nature still operates in a biocentric way. And the failure of modern society to acknowledge this—as we attempt to subordinate all of nature to human use—has led to the brink of collapse of the earth's life support systems.

Biocentrism is not a new theory, and it wasn't invented by Dave Foreman or Arnie Naas. It is ancient native wisdom, expressed in such sayings as "The earth does not belong to us. We belong to the earth." But in the context of today's industrial society, biocentrism is profoundly revolutionary, challenging the system to its core.

Biocentrism contradicts capitalism

The capitalist system is in direct conflict with the natural laws of biocentrism. Capitalism, first of all, is based on the principle of private property—of certain humans owning the earth for the purpose of exploiting it for profit. At an earlier stage, capitalists even believed they could own other humans. But just as slavery has been discredited in the mores of today's dominant world view, so do the principles of biocentrism discredit the concept that humans can own the earth.

Even beyond private property, though, capitalism conflicts with biocentrism around the very concept of profit. Profit consists of taking out more than you put in. This is certainly contrary to the fertility cycles of nature, which

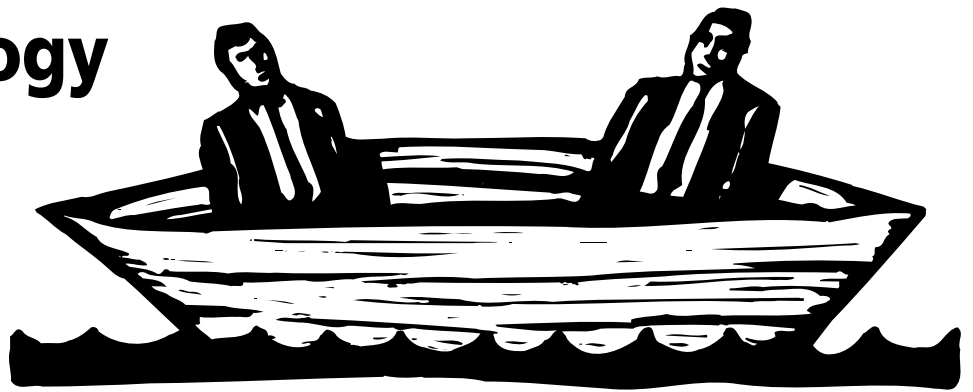
depend on a balance of give and take. But more important is the question of where this profit is taken from.

According to Marxist theory, profit is stolen from the workers when the capitalists pay them less than the value of what they produce. The portion of the value of the product that the capitalist keeps, rather than pays to the workers, is called surplus value. The amount of surplus value that the capitalist can keep varies with the level of organization of the workers, and with their level of privilege within the world labor pool. But the working class can never be paid the full value of their labor under capitalism, because the capitalist class exists by extracting surplus value from the products of their labor.

Although I basically agree with this analysis, I think there is one big thing missing. I believe that part of the value of a product comes not just from the labor put into it, but also from the natural resources used to make the product. And I believe that surplus value (i.e., profit) is not just stolen from the workers, but also from the earth itself. A clearcut is the perfect example of a part of the earth from which surplus value has been extracted. If human production and consumption is done within the natural limits of the earth's fertility, then the supply is indeed endless. But this cannot happen under capitalism, because the capitalist class exists by extracting profit not only from the workers, but also from the earth.

Biocentrism contradicts communism

As you can probably tell, my background in revolutionary theory comes from Marxism, which I consider to be a brilliant critique of capitalism. But as to what should be implemented in capitalism's place, I don't think Marxism has shown us the answer. One of the reasons for this, I believe, is that communism, socialism, and all other left ideologies that I know of speak only about redistributing the spoils of raping the earth more evenly among classes of humans.



They do not even address the relationship of the society to the earth. Rather, they assume that it will stay the same as it is under capitalism—that of a gluttonous consumer. And that the purpose of the revolution is to find a more efficient and egalitarian way to produce and distribute consumer goods.

This total disregard of nature as a life force, rather than just a source of raw materials, allowed Marxist states to rush to industrialize without even the most meager environmental safeguards. This has resulted in such noted disasters as the meltdown of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, the oil spill in the Arctic Ocean, and the ongoing liquidation of the fragile forests of Siberia. It has left parts of Russia and Eastern Europe with such a toxic legacy that vast areas are now uninhabitable. Marx stated that the primary contradiction in industrial society is the contradiction between capital and labor. I believe these disasters show that there is an equally important contradiction between industrial society and the earth.

Modern industrial society robs us of community with each other and community with the earth. This creates a great longing inside us, which we are taught to fill with consumer goods. But consumer goods, beyond those needed for basic comfort and survival, are not really what we crave. So our appetite is insatiable, and we turn to more and more efficient and dehumanizing methods of production to make more and more goods that do not satisfy us. If workers really had control of the factories (and I say this as a former factory worker), they would start by smashing the machines and finding a more humane way to decide what we need and how to produce it. So to the credo "production for use, not for profit,"

ecological socialism would add, "production for need, not for greed."

Biocentrism contradicts patriarchy

Patriarchy is the oldest and, I think, deepest form of oppression on Earth.

So I would like to address eco-feminism, and its relevance to biocentrism or deep ecology. Eco-feminism is a holistic view of the earth that is totally consistent with the idea that humans are not separate from nature. I would describe eco-feminism in two separate terms. The first is that there is a parallel between the way this society treats women and the way that it treats the earth. And this is shown in expressions like "virgin redwoods" and "rape of the earth", for example.

The second thing, which I think is even more important, is the reason for the destruction of nature by this society. Obviously part of the reason is capitalism. But beyond that, destruction of nature in this society stems from the suppression of the feminine.

Let me clarify that I believe men and women have both masculine and feminine traits. I'm not saying "all men are bad—all women are good." I define "masculine traits" as conquering and dominance, and "feminine traits" as nurturing and life-giving. And I think that the masculine traits of conquering and dominance are valued no matter who exhibits them. As a macho woman, I can tell you, I've gotten all kinds of strokes in my lifetime because I can get out there head to head and be just as aggressive as any man. Conversely, the feminine traits of nurturing and life-giving are devalued and suppressed in this society, whether a man or a woman exhibits them. The devaluing and suppression of feminine traits is a

major reason for the destruction of the earth.

The relationship between the suppression of feminine values, and the destruction of the earth is actually much clearer in third world nations than it is in this society. Where colonial powers take over, when nature is to be destroyed by imperialistic corporations coming into third world countries, one of the ways that the colonial powers take over is by forcibly removing the women from their traditional roles as the keepers of the forest and the farmlands. The women's methods of interacting with the fertility cycles of the earth, is replaced by men and machines. Rather than nurturing the fertility of the earth, these machines rip off the fertility of the earth. For this reason, many of the third world environmental movements are actually women's movements; the Chipko in India, and the tree-planters in Kenya, Brazil, to mention two. In each of these situations, the way that the feminine is suppressed is very parallel to the way that nature is suppressed.

It's less obvious, I think, in this society, but it's still here. Anyone who has ever dealt with the Forest Service, California Department of Forestry, the Endangered Species Act, or anything like that knows that science is used as the authority for the kind of relentless assault on nature in this society. And science is presented to us as neutral, as an objective path to knowledge, as something that's value-free.

But science is not value-free. The scientific methods (there's not just one method, despite what we were taught in science class) of western science are not value-free at all. In fact science was openly described by its founders as a masculine system that presupposes

(continued next page)

Biocentrism and Deep Ecology *(continued from previous page)*

the separation of people from nature and presupposes our dominance over nature. I want to give you some quotes to let you know why this is so, going back to the origin of the scientific method in the 1600's and the Renaissance period. First of all, the initiation of the scientific method, the elevation of this as absolute truth and the only path to truth, began in 1664. For example, there was something that was called the "Royal Society" and it was composed of scientific men who were developing these theories. They described their goal as, and this is a quote, "to raise a masculine philosophy, whereby the mind of men may be enabled with the knowledge of solid truths." So the idea is that this masculine philosophy will provide us with truth, as opposed to the more "superstitious" feminine kind of knowledge.

What did the more feminine methods of knowledge that were being suppressed at the time involve? The "feminine" methods were based on observation and interaction with the earth in order to increase the fertility cycles in a way that's beneficial to all. For example, we learn that if we bury a fish with the corn, the corn grows better—those kind of things. The women's knowledge of the earth was passed down generation to generation—and was dismissed as mere superstition by the rising scientists with their reductionist methods.

However, reductionist science has indeed had a lot of success. It's created nuclear bombs, plastic shrink-wrap, Twinkies, Highway 101, all kinds of wonders of the earth! But it has not led us to a true understanding of nature or the earth, because nature's parts are not separate, they are interdependent. You can't look at one part without looking at the rest, it is all inextricably interconnected. The way that reductionist science has looked at the world has brought us antibiotics that create super bacteria, and flood control methods that create huger floods than ever existed before and fertilizers that leave us with barren soil. These are all examples of the defects of a reductionist kind of science.

Contrary to this masculine system of separation and dominance, eco-feminism seeks a science of

nature. And this science of nature is a holistic and interdependent one, where you look at the whole thing and the way that everything interacts, not just the way that it can be when you separate it. And also it presupposes that humans are part of nature, and that our fates are inseparable; that we have to live within the earth's fertility cycles and we can enhance those fertility cycles by our informed interaction.

In India, where Chipko began, the women were the keepers of the forest and the keepers of agriculture, as well. So when the women brought the cows up to the trees (probably savannas rather than forests), the cows fertilized the trees, and nibbled at the limbs and branches, helping to trim them so they would produce more nuts or fruit. This kind of interaction enhanced the fertility cycle of nature. So rather than trying to conquer it, or subvert it, or disrupt it, the feminine method is based on interacting and enhancing the fertility cycle. And this is exactly what is supplanted when the colonial powers come in.

The holistic and interdependent eco-feminist view in which humans are inseparable from nature is not any different than deep ecology or biocentrism. This is simply another way of saying the same thing. And so, to embrace biocentrism or deep ecology, is to challenge the masculine system of knowledge that underlies the destruction of the earth, and that underlies the justification for the way our society is structured.

Eco-feminism, however, does not seek to dominate men as women have been dominated under patriarchy. Instead, it seeks to find a balance. We need both the masculine and the feminine forces. It's not that we need to get rid of the masculine force. Both of them exist in the world but must exist in balance. We need the conquering and the dominance as well as we need the nurturing. Eco-feminism seeks to find that balance.

Because this society is hugely out of balance, we need a huge rise of the feminine. We need a rise of individual women, and also a rise of feminist ideology among both women and men. Fortunately, I have seen quite a few changes in that direction. I think I'm more

impressed with the teenage boys than I am with the teenage girls. It's really neat to see them being able to hug each other and want to grow gardens and things like that. That wouldn't have happened in my generation.

Without this balance between the masculine and the feminine, I don't believe we can make the changes that we need to come back into balance with the earth. For those reasons, I think that deep ecology/biocentrism contradicts patriarchy, and to embrace deep ecology/biocentrism is to challenge the core belief of this masculine, scientific system.

What this means for a movement

A revolutionary ecology movement must also organize among poor and working people. With the exception of the toxics movement and the native land rights movement, most U.S.

environmentalists are white and privileged. This group is too invested in the system to pose it much of a threat. A revolutionary ideology in the hands of privileged people can indeed bring about some disruption and change in the system. But a revolutionary ideology in the hands of working people can bring that system to a halt. For it is the working people who have their hands on the machinery. And only by stopping the machinery of destruction can we ever hope to stop this madness.

How can it be that we have neighborhood movements focused on the disposal of toxic wastes, for example, but we don't have a worker's movement to stop the production of toxics? It is only when the factory workers refuse to make the stuff and it is only when the loggers refuse to cut the ancient trees, that we can ever hope for real and lasting change. This system

cannot be stopped by force. It is violent and ruthless beyond the capacity of any people's resistance movement. The only way I can even imagine stopping it is through massive non-cooperation.

So let's keep blocking those bulldozers and hugging those trees. And let's focus our campaigns on the global corporations that are really at fault. But we have to begin placing our actions in a larger context—the context of revolutionary ecology.

Judi Bari was a renowned environmental, labor and social justice leader. She organized nonviolent protests against destructive corporate logging of the redwood forests. She died of breast cancer on March 2, 1997. Due to space limitation, Connections has greatly edited Judi's essay. Readers are encouraged to read it in full at: <http://www.judibari.org/revolutionary-ecology.html>

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Fox News: they promote, you decide

Five potential Republican presidential candidates that serve as Fox News contributors or hosts have made at least 269 appearances on the cable channel—compared to a total of six appearances on all other major news channels combined.



Fox News contributor Sarah Palin appeared on the September 15 edition of The O'Reilly Factor and advised Christine O'Donnell, the Republican U.S. Senate candidate in Delaware, to "speak to the American people. Speak through Fox News and let the Independents who are tuning in to you, let them know what it is that she stands for, the principles behind her positions." [The O'Reilly Factor, 9/15/10 </mmtv/201009150072>]

Media Matters for America searched the Nexis database through September 18 for network and cable television appearances in 2010 by five potential 2012 Republican presidential candidates who currently have relationships with Fox News. The five potential candidates—John Bolton, Newt Gingrich, Mike Huckabee, Sarah Palin, and Rick Santorum—have appeared 269 times on Fox News and a total of six times on CNN, MSNBC, ABC, NBC, and CBS combined:

Mike Huckabee, the former Governor of Arkansas and 2008 GOP presidential candidate who hosts his own Fox News show, appeared on Fox News 96 times through September 18. Fox News contributor Rick Santorum, a one-time Republican Senator from Pennsylvania appeared 52 times, and former Republican House Speaker Newt Gingrich has appeared 48 times on Fox News so far this year. Sarah Palin, the party's vice presidential nominee in 2008, appeared 37 times, while Bush's U.N. ambassador John Bolton appeared 36 times. Gingrich is the only one of the Fox News candidates to have appeared on any other major news channel in 2010—having shown up on CNN once, on ABC News twice and on NBC News three times.

A September 27 Politico article highlighted the conflict Fox News

faces in its contractual relationship with so many possible GOP contenders: While they won't talk about it on the record—no one wants to offend a news outlet with a potentially outside role in determining the next GOP nominee—officials with some of the other campaigns in waiting are plainly annoyed at the advantage they see the four potential GOP candidates have with Fox.

Jim Dyke, a veteran GOP strategist who isn't affiliated with any 2012 candidate, predicted that the issue would gain steam after the midterms, when the so-called invisible primary begins in earnest. "As it becomes clear somebody is looking at running, Fox gets into a bit of a box because doesn't it become an in-kind contribution if they're being paid?" Dyke asked.

Media Matters for America has extensively documented Fox News' role in opposing Democratic policies, promoting and fundraising for GOP candidates, raising millions of dollars for Republican candidates and causes in the 2010 election cycle and donating \$1 million to elect Republican gubernatorial candidates.

Media Matters' search was limited to transcripts available in the Nexis database, so it covers all CNN shows; most evening shows on FNC and MSNBC; and morning shows, evening news, and Sunday shows on the broadcast networks. Since Huckabee hosts his own weekly Fox News show that does not have transcripts in Nexis, Media Matters added 37 appearances to Huckabee's Fox News total to account for his weekly program. Media Matters counted pre-taped interviews as appearances, but not brief statements by the potential candidates that aired as part of news packages.

Source: Media Matters For America release 9/27/10 www.MediaMatters.org

American Psyche

It's a certain kind selfishness that clouds a person's mind unseeing eyes unable to contemplate a world outside its bubble.

It's a certain kind of greed that causes people to walk chins out bellowing "Get your own! This. is. MINE."

Driving shiny vehicles bound up in bank credit speeding to houses of worship to hear the good word.

Future citizens be damned my children are the bravest the brightest the best and yet

It's a certain kind of idiocracy blinded by half-truths the facts falling to the wayside with tabloid sensations leaving crowds gasping at each new low.

A "campaign commercial" spinning vaguely with each new crisis responsibility never taken or owned.

But what can be done? For I am just one whispering in the digital underground.

—Renee Mimms

Shameless
Self-
Promotion

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great work!
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Here's what's the matter with Kansas

Kevin Drum

Why has income inequality grown so explosively over the past 30 years? Why do so many working and middle class voters cast their ballots for a party that's so obviously a captive of corporations and the rich? Why is there no longer any real sustained effort to improve the lot of the middle class?

There's no shortage of answers. There's the "What's the Matter With Kansas" theory. There's the demise of labor unions. There's the well-worn story of the rise of conservative think tanks. There's the impact of globalization on unskilled and semi-skilled labor. There's the growing returns to education in a world that grows more complex every year.

But these are all limited and therefore unsatisfactory explanations, and no one has yet put them all together into a single organic whole that feels genuinely complete and compelling. Until now. The book that finally does it is called Winner-Take-All Politics, by Jacob Hacker and Paul Pierson, and it puts together all of these

pieces with a clarity of explanation that's breathtaking. I hesitate to summarize their argument for fear of ruining it, but here's the nickel version:

1. In the 60s, at the same time that labor unions begin to decline, liberal money and energy starts to flow strongly toward "postmaterialist" issues: civil rights, feminism, environmentalism, gay rights, etc. These are the famous "interest groups" that take over the Democratic Party during the subsequent decades.

2. At about the same time, business interests take stock of the country's anti-corporate mood and begin to pool their resources to push for generic pro-business policies in a way they never had before. Conservative think tanks start to press a business-friendly agenda and organizations like the Chamber of Commerce start to fundraise on an unprecedented scale. This level of persistent, organizational energy is something new.

3. Unions, already in decline, are the particular focus of business

With conservative money and energy focused mostly on the interests of corporations and the rich--and with no one really fighting back--the country moves steadily rightward on economic issues.

animus. As they decline, they leave a vacuum. There's no other nationwide organization dedicated to persistently fighting for middle class economic issues and no other nationwide organization that's able to routinely mobilize working class voters to support or oppose specific federal policies. (In both items #2 and #3, note the focus on/persistent organizational pressure/. This is key.)

4. With unions in decline and political campaigns becoming ever more expensive, Democrats eventually decide they need to become more business friendly as well. This is a vicious circle: the more unions decline, the more that Democrats turn to corporate funding to survive. There is, in the end, simply no one left who's fighting for middle class economic issues in a sustained and organized way. Conversely, there are lots of extremely well-funded and determined organizations fighting for the interests of corporations and the rich.

The result is exactly what you'd expect. With liberal money and energy focused mostly on non-economic concerns, the country moves steadily leftward on social issues. With conservative money and energy focused mostly on the interests of corporations and the rich—and with

no one really fighting back—the country moves steadily rightward on economic issues. Thomas Frank's famous working-class Kansans who vote against their own economic interests are easily explained. It's not just that conservatives appeal to them on social grounds, it's that there's no one left to really make the economic case to them in the first place. And even if anyone did, they have little reason to believe that Democrats would actually follow through in concrete ways. So why not vote on abortion and gay rights instead?

I'm not doing Pierson and Hacker justice here. In fact, I'm not really even trying to. What I am doing is telling you to buy a copy of their book and read it. Seriously. Just get a copy and read at least Parts I and II. No book is perfect, and I feel a little silly gushing too much, but this is the most complete and sustained explanation I've ever read of why, over the past 30 years, America has gone the direction it has even while most other countries haven't.

And although Hacker and Pierson's sympathies are obvious, this isn't a polemic. It's an explanation. For me, it was a 300-page "Aha!" moment.

Source: Mother Jones 9/10/10 <http://motherjones.com>

Who Will Save Us?

"Who will save us?" the child cries to his mother, checking the cabinets once more, the crumbs as far away as ghosts.

"Who will save us?" the soldier whispers, the enemy so near and so far, trigger finger itching for a hit.

"Who will save us?" the teacher groans, her paycheck shrunk yet again, her students burdened by one more standardized test.

"Who will save us?" the elderly couple moans, as the anchor gives the economic report, the sinister being hidden by sunny ignorance.

"Who will save us?" the young man mumbles, standing on a bridge, his life erased by one small action.

"I will save you." the food bank worker says, passing out food to quiet thanks and tears.

"I will save you." the political leaders cry, reaching across the aisle to end all war.

"I will save you." the parents, administrators, and legislature shout, with more funding, cooperation and listening.

"I will save you." the president says, with the stroke of a pen, creating a new workforce with care and consideration.

"I will save you." a passerby whispers, an arm around the silent young man, walking away slowly to a nearby park bench.


Hand in hand across the land, reach beyond you, and take the stranger by the hand.

—Renee Mimms

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.





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BROKER



The T is Not Silent

Changing gender impacts friends, family

Elena Kelly

Think about your father. Go ahead and put this paper down for a minute and try to recall the best memory you have of being with your father. Unless he was a total SOB, and even then, you probably have at least one good memory.

Now imagine that he is about to die. You are going to lose him forever, the one and only dad you will ever have. At that point a magic genie shows up and offers you a deal. He still has to die, but you can have him come back. You can have a few more years with him. There is only one catch – he will come back to life as a woman. Would you be willing to have your father in your life and be able to interact with him, laugh with him, and continue to create lifelong memories with him, even if he was a woman?

My daughter told me that was exactly how she and her sister felt when I transitioned two years ago. Their dad died metaphorically, but he lives on in the body of a woman. She and her sister chose to accept me as I am and we have had many wonderful times together because of it. They still call me “Dad” and I love that they are able to see their father in the woman I have become. I am truly blessed to have their love and sweet presence in my life.

There were some who were not able to make that change. Where I work there are 650 employees and all but one of them has completely accepted my transition. Men hold the door for me, and call me ma’am. Everyone uses “she” and “her” to refer to me. I am accepted for the woman I always knew myself to be. But there is one person (there’s always one, isn’t there?) that cannot accept me. Her religion teaches her to shun those she perceives as living in open sin. There are very few religions that teach that doctrine today, but it was common in this country in the Puritan era. She has not spoken one word to me in over two years.

In the last 20 or so years there

has been a new term that has evolved to describe a similar phenomenon that is most common among females. It is “relational aggression.” There have been a good number of articles and even some books that describe this behavior. It occurs when one of the girls in a group does something that transgresses the group’s norms. It can manifest as turning her friends against her, refusing to allow her to participate in the group, and numerous other non-violent behaviors.

Before I transitioned I imagined all the worst. I expected I would lose my job. Until a few years ago I could have but I live in California. In most of the country I could be fired for it. I imagined that I would lose all of my friends. In fact I haven’t heard from several of them since I transitioned, but I have made so many more new friends that I don’t really miss them. Many have told me that they weren’t really my friends anyway, but that doesn’t mean that I don’t miss them.

I worried that I would lose my wife and never find real love again. I was half right. My wife stood by me through most of my transition, but the time came that she had to go her own way. It was a terrible sadness to us both, but in the year since she left, I did indeed find love, and I am so fortunate to now have a loving and kind woman in my life.

I worried that I would be beaten, raped and left for dead in a ditch. I did experience a rape and it was devastating to me and I am haunted by the memory of it to this day. But I am alive and filled with joy at each new day I can live the truth of who I am. I have often said that if I had been killed after just one day of living as a woman, it would have been worth it to transition. Now I have had almost 800 days, and each day I wake up and my heart is filled with joy to know that it’s not a dream and I get to live another day as the real me.

But my biggest concern when I was grappling with the decision to

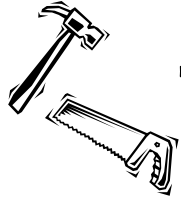
transition from male to female was that I would lose my family. And even though my daughters have supported me in my transition, their brothers could not. They see me as disgusting, a disgrace to the family, and unworthy of their love. I know I wasn’t a perfect father to them, especially because I was so conflicted over my gender identity, and I made a lot of mistakes. But I have never stopped loving them and I never will.

In fact, I am proud of them. I raised all my children to live their own truth, and to stand up for what they believe in. My daughters believe in me and my sons do not. I am equally proud of them all. I believe that time heals all wounds and one day I will be able to hug my sons and tell them in person how much I love them.

My own father is in an Assisted Living facility in Colorado. Last May I visited him. Prior to that visit he told me he never wanted to see me as a woman and that I was not to talk about it. This last trip, as we were sitting together in his room, I told him I needed to talk with him. He sat up straight, looked me square in the eye, and said, “You can talk to me about anything you want.” I told him I wanted to talk about the thing that upset him, and he said it was okay, so I did.

Within 20 minutes he said, “You will always be my son, but now I understand why you have to live the rest of your life as a woman. I am so glad we had this talk!” I was in tears. It was one of the most beautiful moments of my life. No longer does he shun me. No more will I be held at a distance from the love of my dad. And the day is coming when my sons will no longer be at a distance from theirs.

Elena Kelly is an activist minister for the Central Valley LGBT community and Director of the Stockton Transgender Alliance. She can be reached at elena.kelly@comcast.net.



Sawznhammers

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

Peace on the Breeze?

John Morearty

In the deep foundations of the War System, there's been an earth tremor. Is the wind shifting, the ice breaking up?

I just read the following piece about a trial in Las Vegas, of 14 brave souls who illegally entered an Air Force base to protest drone warfare. The judge refused to treat it as a simple case of trespassing; instead, he listened to long expert testimony about international law and the over-riding necessity of civil disobedience opposing crimes against humanity.

He will announce his decision in Las Vegas on January 27. My wife Ria deGroot and I are considering going there in support. We know personally defendants Fr. John Dear and Fr. Louis Vitale; we've sat in our kitchen and sipped Irish whisky with Kathy Kelly. Would anyone like to visit the desert in January? Call us at 209-464-3326 or 462-3340.

Drone Warfare on Trial

Robert C. Koehler,
slightly abridged by JM

Drone warfare—assassination by unmanned aircraft—is arguably one of the most hellish spawns of the modern military-industrial era, and its use is becoming routine in the Af-Pak war, yet (what else is new?) there's no debate about it at the level of national policy, just a shrug and a void. We live in a spectator democracy.

Like the students who sat in at segregated lunch counters nearly half a century ago, we have to find a way to interrupt the false consensus of military-industrial America. Doing so takes persistence and courage—and sometimes a breakthrough occurs.

I bring you the Creech Air Force Base 14: Father John Dear, Dennis DuVall, Renee Espeland, Judy Homanich, Kathy Kelly, Father Steve Kelly, Mariah Klusmire, Brad Lyttle, Libby Pappalardo, Sister Megan Rice, Brian Terrell, Eve Tetaz, Father Louis Vitale and Father Jerry Zawada.

A year and a half ago, they were part of a 10-day vigil outside the base in Indian Springs, Nev. (about 35 miles from Las Vegas), protesting the Predator and Reaper drone flights over Afghanistan and Pakistan that are remotely piloted from the base. At the end of the vigil, these 14 activists entered the base illegally, carrying a letter. According to Kathy Kelly of the Chicago-based Voices for Creative Nonviolence, "we wanted to circulate among the base personnel, describing our opposition to a massive targeted assassination program." They were arrested and charged with trespassing.

What happened at their trial in Las Vegas may turn the incident into more than simply a symbolic protest. What was supposed to be a cut-and-dried trespassing trial—a crime's a crime, the law's the law—ended up being something far larger than that.

One of the signs that protestors outside the courthouse were carrying bore the words: "Put Drone Warfare on Trial." And that may be what happened.

In any case, Judge William Jansen, despite his stern lecture at the outset that the issue before the court was trespassing and nothing else, listened to the testimony of the three witnesses that the defendants called to the stand—and something shifted, a door opened, the scope of the trial widened. The question of who we are as a nation had its day in court. One of many, I can only hope.

In a trial about the misdemeanor offense of trespassing, the defendants called as witnesses: Ramsey Clark, former U.S. attorney general under Lyndon Johnson; retired Army Col. Ann Wright, who resigned from the State Department in protest of the 2003 invasion of Iraq; and Bill Quigley, legal director for the Center for Constitutional Rights.

They were allowed to be questioned. They were allowed to speak. According to Kathy Kelly, whom I talked to recently, as well as various accounts of the trial, including an essay by Father Dear <[peace/peace-movement-victory-court>, the witnesses talked about the historical and legal precedents for trespassing in service to a higher law, including what is known as the "necessity defense": If someone is trapped in a burning house, for example, you have the right to break the law against trespassing in order to effect a rescue.](http://ncronline.org/blogs/road-</p></div>
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Quigley, wrote Dear, "cited the history of protesters who broke petty laws, from our nation's founders to the suffragists to the civil rights activists who illegally sat in at lunch counters. In the long run, we honor them for obeying a higher law, for helping to bring us toward justice, he said. Unfortunately, there is a gap between 'the law' and 'justice,' and so, he explained, the struggle today is to narrow that gap."

The witnesses made a number of points that put the defendants' trespassing in a larger context, including the fact that U.S. drone strikes kill civilians indiscriminately and in large numbers (there's a 10-to-1 civilian-to-insurgent kill ratio); that intentional, targeted killing is a war crime; and that, according to Nuremberg principles, every citizen has a duty to disobey laws or orders that perpetuate crimes against humanity.

After the defense rested, the judge made the astounding observation that there was more at stake here than the usual meaning of trespassing. He announced that he needed some time to study the testimony and set a new court date—Jan. 27, 2011—at which he would render his verdict. And that's where it stands.

Time will tell whether a door has really opened here, and whether the Nuremberg principles have truly become relevant in American life and jurisprudence again. But what if they have? What if the moral force of peace has found its voice in a nation long thought to have given up on such matters and gone shopping permanently?

Contact Robert Koehler at koehlercw@gmail.com or visit his website at commonwonders.com.

Published on September 30, 2010 at <http://www.commondreams.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/world/latest/>

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

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

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

We're on the web too!

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

<http://www.pjnsjc.org>



Emergency Food Bank

Holiday volunteers: Call (209) 464-7369

During the months of October–December, the Emergency Food Bank of Stockton/San Joaquin County sees its largest amount of donations and events to help keep the supply of food up to the demands of the community. There are several opportunities this Fall/Winter season where you as a volunteer are needed. Please consider helping the food bank in a way that best suits your needs and desires. Thank you for your interest in helping us meet our mission.

1. Food Drives benefit both our daily pantry here on-site and our holiday needs. If you are interested in helping in this way, please contact Yvonne Derby.
2. Daily, we are in constant need of warehouse volunteers from 7:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Mon–Fri. This includes drivers, fork lift operators, pantry workers and many other assignments as needed. Contact Michelle DeWald, Administrator, to sign up.
3. EVENTS: We are ‘Event-full’ for the next few months. Please see the list below and see what you might do to help us run this holiday season as smoothly as possible:

- RTD in partnering with Food 4 Less is having its annual “Stuff the Bus” event the weekend of November 12th–14th. This requires the EFB and partners in the community to be available to hand out flyers asking the community to “stuff the bus”. An RTD bus will be filled with food to help us keep our food bank full during the holidays. Here is the need: Friday November 12th, we need volunteers to commit to 3–4 hour shifts 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Saturday November 13th, 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., and Sunday, November 14th, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Please contact Yvonne Derby, Food Development Manager to help out.
- Safeway Stores, in partnering with Kiwanis Clubs of the Bay Area and San Joaquin County, are having a weeklong event November 15th through November 20th. During this week, shoppers are given an opportunity to purchase either a gift certificate for us to purchase turkeys and hams for the holidays, or they have another option to buy a pre-packaged bag of groceries to donate to our food bank. Please pop by your local Safeway during that week if you can help make a donation. On Saturday, November 20th from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., they are asking folks to volunteer their time in conjunction with the Kiwanis Club, and hand out flyers that day, asking shoppers to purchase turkeys and hams. These items will then be delivered to our site in Stockton on the evening of Saturday, November 20th. Please contact Yvonne Derby, Food Development Manger to help with this much needed new event this year.
- EFB’s Big Box Giveaway will take place this year Monday, November 22nd. We need approximately 60 – 70 volunteers from 6:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. to sufficiently serve the estimated two thousand (2,000) families expected to show up for their holiday box this year. Please contact Federico Navarro, Nutrition Manager, to volunteer for this event.
- Run And Walk Against Hunger Thanksgiving Day Event is our largest fundraiser and event of the year. We anticipate over 3,000 participants this year. Volunteers and participant walkers and runners are also needed for this day. Please contact Jennifer Murphy, Events/Development Manager to volunteer for this event. We utilized approximately 120 volunteers between 5:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon to make this event successful.
- Monday, December 20th. We are just crazy enough to do the Big Box Giveaway again. Please contact Federico Navarro if you are interested in volunteering for this event 6:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

Sonora Opera Hall, Nov 11

Clan Dyken embarks on 2010 Beauty Way Tour

Celebrating 20 years of supporting the Dineh (Navajo) resistors at Big Mountain, Clan Dyken—playing their self-styled brand of “world rebel music” from California’s Calaveras County—is pleased to announce the 2010 fall concert series to benefit the 20th Annual Thanksgiving Support Run to the Big Mountain region of the Navajo Nation.

Taking its name from a traditional prayer and lifestyle, the Beauty Way Tour raises funds and awareness for the traditional Dineh-Navajo elders and families who have faced forced relocation from their ancestral homes since the passage of the Navajo-Hopi Land Settlement Act of 1974. For the last 20 years, the band and volunteers from around the world have actively assisted by bringing food, supplies, firewood and labor to remote areas of the high desert plateau northeast of Flagstaff, Arizona. Additionally, the concerts help recruit new volunteers to make the journey.

The Beauty Way Tour will stop in Sonora at The Opera Hall on Washington Street on Thursday November 11. Also on the bill are Sol Bridge from Placerville and

Jens Jarvie of Arnold.

Big Mountain, a sacred mountain in Northern Arizona, is inhabited by the Dineh (Navajo) and the Hopi peoples. Occupied side by side for years, much of this region was granted to the Hopi tribe by the U.S. Government in the Navajo-Hopi Land Settlement Act of 1974. This act, influenced by the Peabody Coal Company, who needed an entity to pay mining royalties to, called for the relocation of approximately 10,000 Dineh from all Northern Arizona lands destined to be mined or affected by coal mining. Many people relocated. Some remained on what is now called, “Hopi Partition Lands.” Then, in the year 2000, after a long legal battle and faced with eminent and forced relocation, some Dineh signed an “Accommodation Agreement.” This agreement allowed the Dineh to live, with a number of conditions, on Hopi Partition Lands.

For more information, contact Mark Dyken 209-736-6736 or mark@clandyken.com. Also, check out the following websites, www.clandyken.com, www.blackmesais.org, www.voicesofthepeople.org

Anti-racism film series

Sat, Nov 6—Wilderness Journey: The Struggle for Black Empowerment and Racial Justice within the Unitarian Universalist Association, 1967-1970.

This film includes interviews with many Unitarian Universalist leaders who lived through complex and difficult times for the UUA.

Mon, Nov 29—Building the Beloved Community

Based on a 2009 conference on Beloved Community in Denver. The film features Unitarian Universalist voices plus speakers from Class Action, a national non-profit organization that inspires action to end classism; and Dr. Vincent Harding, scholar-activist and founder of the Veterans of Hope Project at Iliff School of Theology.

For more information, contact The Rev. Laura Horton-Ludwig, Minister, First Unitarian Universalist Church of Stockton (Sat-Wed): 209-466-7743

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October 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 Oct 31

Stockton Art League's 56th Juried Exhibition at the Haggin Museum, 1201 N Pershing Ave, Stockton. Wed-Sun 1:30-5 pm. 1st and 3rd Thurs 1:30-9pm. \$5 adult 18 & older, student/senior/youth age 10-17 \$2.50. Under 10/first Saturday free. 940-6316 info@hagginmuseum.org

Oct 5-29

Karen Olsen presents lush hand-colored photos. M-F 10-5. Tidewater Gallery, 223 E. Weber Ave, Stockton. 463-4033

Oct 7-Nov 4

2D-3D Color & Design Exhibition, 36 artists display painting, sculpture, beadwork, ceramics, fiber arts and collage. Tu 11am-4pm, W-Th 11am-6:30pm, F 11am-1pm. Reception: 10/7, 5-7 pm. SJ Delta College, LH Horton Jr Gallery, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Free. 954-5507.

Thu, Oct 14

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

Oct 21-24

SJ Delta College presents "Macbeth" Thu-Sat 8 pm, Sun 2 pm. Studio Theatre, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. Adult \$12, student/senior \$10. 954-5110.

Fri, Oct 22

The Circle of Our Caring and Father Greg Boyle, 11:30 am-1:30 pm luncheon \$25; reception 4-6 pm. Friends Outside 955-0701 (page 18).

Sat, Oct 23

89.5 Valley Community Radio networking meeting, 9-11 am, Noah's Bagels, Lincoln Center North, Pacific Ave, Stockton. 467-4455.

Mon, Oct 25

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

Thu, Oct 28

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

Pacific Arts Woodwind Quintet, 7:30 pm. Faye Spanos Concert Hall, UOP, \$8 general, \$5 seniors, students free

Mon, Nov 1

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

Tue, Nov 2

Election Day

Nov 2-Dec 3

Steve Pereira presents Beyond the Obvious. Reception Nov 19, 5-8 pm. M-F 10-5. Tidewater Gallery, 223 E. Weber Ave, Stockton. 463-4033

Thu, Nov 4

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

Sat, Nov 6

University Symphony Orchestra concert, Beethoven, Gershwin. 7:30 pm. Faye Spanos Concert Hall, UOP, \$8 general, \$5 seniors, students free.

Thur, Nov 11

Stockton Symphony Classics Concert: Magnificent Mozart with 4 vocal soloists and the Stockton Chorale quartet. 8 pm. Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$22-\$55. Student \$10. 951-0196.

Nov 12-14; 17-20

Godspell—a Musical, 8 pm (Sun 2 pm) Pacific Theatre Arts, Long Theatre, UOP, Stockton.

Wed-Sun

Nov 19-Dec 12

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

Fri, Nov 19

SJ Delta College Vocal Jazz concert, 7:30 pm. Tillie Lweis Theatre, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. General \$8, student/senior \$5. 954-5110.

Pacific Jazz Ensemble, 7:30 pm. Faye Spanos Concert Hall, UOP, \$8 general, \$5 seniors, students free

Sun, Nov 21

Symphonic Wind Ensemble & University Concert Band, 2:30 pm. Faye Spanos Concert Hall, UOP, \$8 general, \$5 seniors, students free

Mon, Nov 22

SJ Delta College Jazz Band concert, 7:30 pm. Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. General \$8, student/senior \$5. 954-5110.

Thur, Nov 25

6th annual Run and Walk Against Hunger benefitting the Emergency Food Bank. Ports Ballpark, 404 W Fremont St, Stockton. \$10-\$20 entry fee. 464-7369.

Tue, Dec 7

SJ Delta College Holiday Band concert, 7:30 pm. Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. General \$8, student/senior \$5. 954-5110.

Wed, Dec 8

SJ Delta College Christmas Choir concert, 7:30 pm. Atherton Auditorium, SJ Delta College, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. General \$8, student/senior \$5. 954-5110.

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,

A day to remember all those who have lost their lives for their gender identity and to celebrate those people and organizations supporting the transgender community

Stockton Transgender Day of Remembrance

Sunday, November 21, 2010
7:00 pm

In Memory of Roy Antonio Jones, III
Sponsored by:
Stockton Transgender Alliance,
Many Central Valley Organizations
& Individuals

Location:
Stribley Community Center Gymnasium
1760 E. Sonora Street
Stockton, CA 95205

Keynote Speaker:
Rev. Vicky Kolakowski, Esq.

Ms. Kolakowski is an attorney, an administrative law judge, and an ordained minister in the Metropolitan Community Church. She is a 2010 candidate for Superior Court Judge in Alameda County.

For directions or for more information, please contact Elena Kelly at (209) 649-0396, or elena.kelly@comcast.net

Stockton. 7 pm program with social time following. All welcome.

Second Tuesdays

89.5 Valley Community Radio meeting, 7-9 pm, Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 467-4455.

Second Thursdays

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

Third Saturdays

89.5 Valley Community Radio meeting, 9-11 am, various Stockton coffee shops, see p 18. 467-4455.

Fourth Saturdays

Greater Lodi Area Democrats (GLAD) breakfast meeting, 8:30 am, Dee Dee's Family Dining, 1170 S. Cherokee Ln, Lodi. (No meetings in Nov. and Dec.) 368-6493 or 712-8866.

Mondays

Jazz night at the Blackwater, 912 N Yosemite St, Stockton.

Thursdays

Stand up and speak out! Demonstrate for peace. Plenty of happy honks! Pacific Avenue north of Delta

stoplight, every Thursday 5-6 PM. Signs provided, or bring your own. Free parking at Sherwood Mall. Info John 464-3326 or Ria 462-3340.

Fridays

Downtown Stockton Certified Farmers' Market, DeCarli Square, Stockton. 11 am-3 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

Volunteers needed to distribute Connections to well-established routes. About two hours per month. Easy and fun! Call Dean or Marcia Savage, 209-339-1599.



Talking It Through

EDUCATION • ENVIRONMENT • POLITICS • CULTURE

Peace & Justice Network sponsors two half-hour shows:

"Let's Talk" hosted by Margee Ensign features speakers at University of the Pacific and elsewhere documentaries of important community meetings and events. Mondays 6 pm

"Talking It Through" hosted by Sammy Nunez features live discussions of important community issues, especially with young people. Mondays at 6:30 pm.

Both shows are produced by Peace and Justice volunteer Vince Kotecki on SJTV: Stockton, Lodi and Manteca cable channel 26.

For up to the minute listings of current shows, see our website: www.pjnsjc.org, click on Talking It Through.

Alternative radio: is this your big chance?

Many dozens of enthusiastic and talented volunteers have already come to Stockton "RadioHead" meetings since this summer, when we received our federal FM license.

Now, the Peace and Justice Network is looking for one clear-eyed person, or maybe a tight little team, to take charge of building our new non-profit community radio station, KYNJ-FM. The job is unpaid, it will demand at least five or ten hours a week for two years or more, and it's a fascinating opportunity to build a powerful instrument of grassroots communication for San Joaquin county, linked to a budding North/Central California independent radio network.

The work means coordinating the many volunteers who have already come forward. It means reaching out to hundreds more individuals and community groups. It means building teams in three major areas: technical, programming and fundraising. It means raising at least \$45,000, just to get us on the air by early 2013, at the latest.

The result will be a progressive community radio station open to our very diverse community-with local music, public affairs, dialogue, call-in shows, documentaries, live coverage of events, and whatever else we can dream up and support. The urgent times are ripe for this station, and we've already seen a rush of enthusiasm.

Are you the person to pull this magnificent project together? Maybe with one or two hard-working colleagues? You'll have lots of support from Connections newspaper, from the Peace and Justice Network, and from regional experts, but you've got to be The Center.

Call Christie Kelley, chair of the Peace and Justice Network, at 943-0539. Or come to one of our next "RadioHead" meetings: always the second Tuesday evening of the month at the Peace & Justice Center and the third Saturday morning of the month at various Stockton coffee shops (see page 19 for locations). Is Valley Peoples' Radio calling you? Check us out.

Library privatization petition

Say No! to privatizing the Stockton/San Joaquin library

The San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors is in the process of deciding whether to outsource all library management and operations to a private company. The privatization of the Stockton-San Joaquin County Public Library is wrong for our community. Ceding operational control of the library to a for-profit vendor would:

- Undermine the fundamental purpose of a library, which is to serve as a knowledge resource for all community members
- Shift library priorities to serving the bottom line of a private company rather than providing valuable services to the public
- Likely lower the quality of library staff
- Offer no guarantee to provide sufficient library services at a lower cost to the county
- Send taxpayer dollars into the private coffers of a for-profit company

- Eliminate local control over resources, materials, and events that should be tailored to serve community needs

We urge you to be vocal about your opposition to library privatization. The Board is likely to act quickly on this issue, and we need to let them know as soon as possible that privatizing the public library is unacceptable to our community.

- Contact your Supervisor by mail, email, or phone to express your concerns;
- Attending meetings of the Board and speaking out against the proposal during the public comment period before the meeting;
- Write a letter to the editor of your local daily and/or weekly paper

Sylvia Kothe, Chair, Concerned Citizens Coalition of Stockton
Vince Perrin, President, Friends of the Stockton Library

ACTIONS:

- 1) Sign petition at <http://www.ccos.org/petition.html>
- 2) Citizens from Supervisorial Districts can attend and present public statements at the Board of Supervisors meetings on Tuesday mornings at 9 a.m.. If you are interested in attending and/or speaking, please contact Tara Gallegos, 209-552-6629 or taragallegos@att.net or leave a message on her Facebook or email ccos.citizen@gmail.com.
- 3) The Stockton City Council has scheduled a library study session October 26 at 5:30 pm. We are aiming for a large turnout of badge-wearing supporters. We will be presenting our non-binding petitions that evening opposing the library privatization agenda item.

Source: CCCoS.org release 10/15/10

connections

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

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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.

Tell Congress: don't cut social security

Social Security is once again under attack, just as it was under George Bush in 2005. Alan Simpson (R-WY), the Republican co-chair of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform, gave away the game in a nasty, sexist letter to the Older Women's League when he called it "a milk cow with 310 million tits." Simpson and other commission members want to cut benefits, raise the retirement age, and push working Americans into private accounts that could become worthless in a Wall Street second.

Social Security is funded

entirely by working Americans and their employers. It takes no money from the Treasury and has no impact on the national debt. By 2023, Social Security will have a \$4.3 trillion surplus; it can pay 100% of benefits until 2037 and 75% of all benefits thereafter. All projected shortfalls can be readily fixed without cuts.

For 75 years, Social Security has been a promise to the American people that if they work hard and pay their fair share, they will have a financially secure retirement. Social Security benefits are often the only source of income helping families maintain a decent standard of living. Social

Security's benefits are modest, averaging less than \$13,000 a year, but they are vital to the vast majority of Americans who receive them.

In 2008, Wall Street greed destroyed trillions in private retirement savings, making Social Security even more essential for retirees. Diverting any Social Security funds to Wall Street would inevitably lead to disaster.

ACTION: Tell your Representatives: Don't Cut Social Security

Source: Democrats.com Activist Alert, <http://www.democrats.com/dont-cut-social-security> 9/10/10