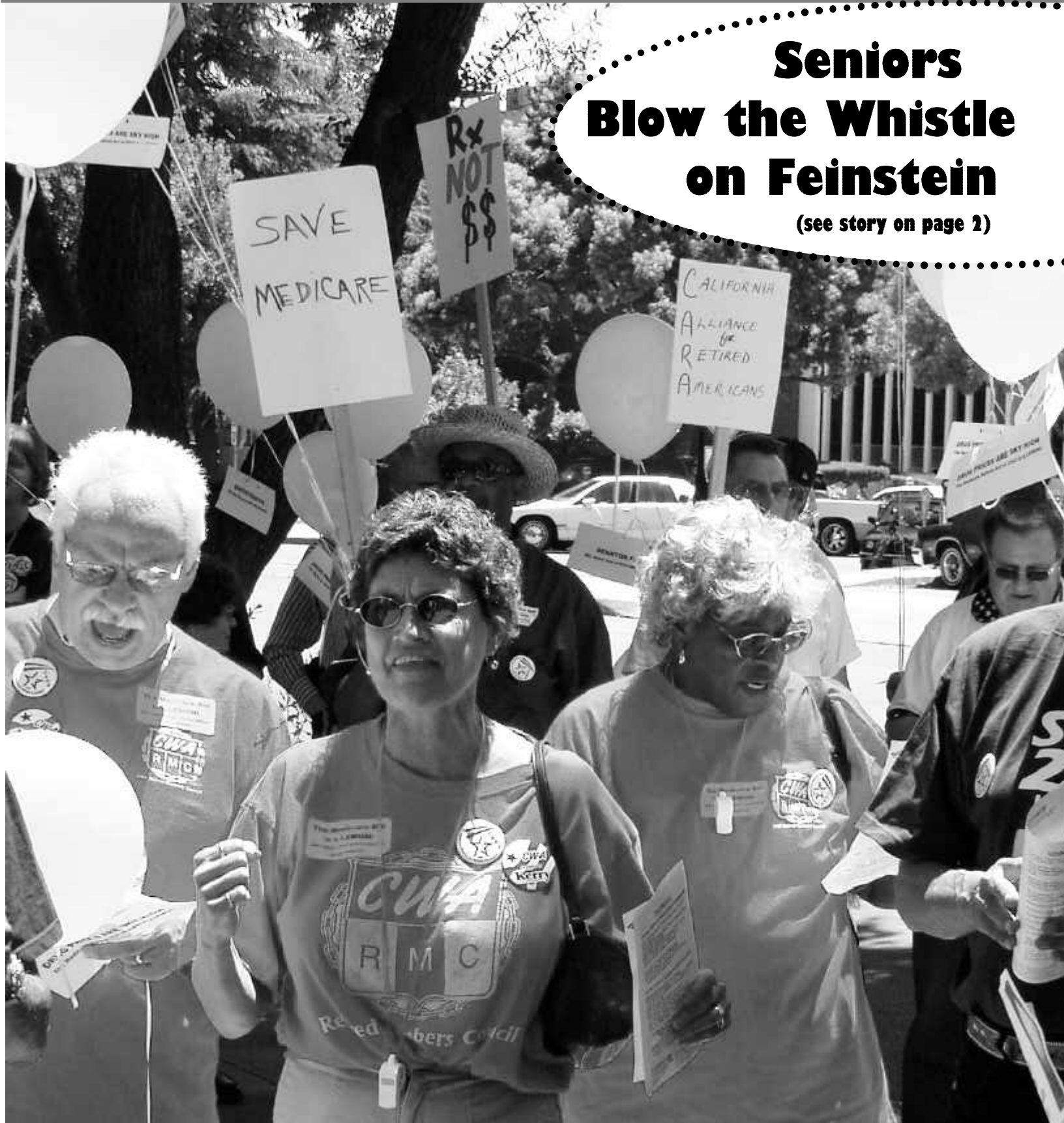


COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

AUGUST
2004

Seniors Blow the Whistle on Feinstein

(see story on page 2)



Seniors Blow the Whistle on Feinstein

By Mike Rhodes

In a loud and colorful rally in downtown Fresno on July 13, 2004, more than one hundred seniors, consumers, and workers blew the whistle on Senator Dianne Feinstein. Saying that they are "mad as hell" about Feinstein's support for the Medicare Reform Act of 2003, representatives from the group delivered thousands of postcards to her office.

Nan Brasmer, President of the California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA), said that "Report after report confirms the same findings, yet nothing has been done to rein in the high prices that are spiraling out of control." Brasmer added, "The Medicare law is fundamentally flawed. Seniors need real relief from the soaring costs of prescription drugs—not this phony lemon of a bill that Senator Feinstein supported."

Now that the first phase of this bill is under way—the drug discount card program—activists at the rally say that it is even clearer that this bill is bad medicine and must be amended or repealed. They say that between the time the Medicare law was enacted in December 2003 until the drug discount cards were unveiled in June 2004, prices for the top 200 drugs most used by seniors climbed 3.4%, outpacing a 1.2% inflation rate, according to a study by AARP.

Organizers of the rally included the California Alliance for Retired Americans, the California School Employees Association, the California Labor Federation (AFL-CIO), Communication Workers of America, and many Fresno-based community and religious organizations.

For more information contact Jodi Reid (CARA) at (415) 550-0828 or Gene Roza (CARA/CWA) at (559) 570-6041.

The *Community Alliance* is an independent voice for workers and progressive groups in the Central San Joaquin Valley. The goal of this monthly magazine is to build a powerful progressive movement that will support social, environmental, & economic justice; immigrant rights; and a living wage for all working people. We seek to expose social and political injustices and to link the diverse network of activists working in our community.

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Page 1 and 6 by Mike Rhodes

From the Editor

Mike Rhodes

Welcome to the August issue of the Community Alliance magazine, which you may have noticed, is a bit different than usual. The magazine itself is just eight pages with a twenty page special insert. The special format for the August issue is being done to accommodate summer vacation schedules for the magazine staff.

The insert comes to us from the Central California Institute and is a think piece about what the Central Valley might look like in an environmentally sane and sustainable world. What would this community look like if the environmental justice movement were successful, there was adequate public transportation, clean air, and our natural rivers brought back to life? I think it is important for us to have a vision of what this future might look like. I am grateful to Phil Erro for the hard work he put into writing this visionary booklet and hope that you will enjoy reading it as much as I have.

The Community Alliance magazine will return to our usual format in September.



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Mike Dages Guts the Human Relations Commission, Claims He Is Doing Us a Favor

By Mike Rhodes
July 12, 2004

Fresno mayor Alan Autry vetoed the funding for the Fresno Human Relations Commission (HRC), sending it back to the City Council for reconsideration. Council members had voted to fully fund the commission by a 4-3 vote in June. Five votes are needed to override the mayor's veto.

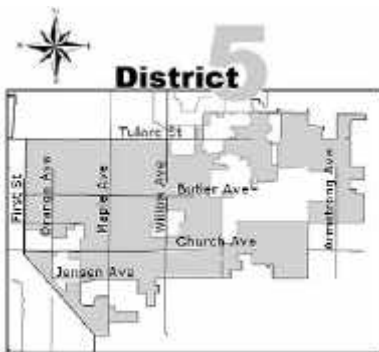
With the fate of the HRC on the line, supporters of the commission counted the votes. With conservative council members Brian Calhoun and Jerry Duncan solidly opposed to the HRC, and Tom Boyajian, Cynthia Sterling, Brad Castillo, and Henry Perea in support, there was only one person to lobby: Mike Dages.

With pressure mounting, Dages sent out an e-mail saying that by supporting the mayor's veto he was really saving the HRC. His argument was that the mayor wanted to cut all funding for the agency but that he persuaded him to "not defund the commission but to leave enough money to sponsor Caesar [sic] Chavez Day and the Martin Luther King festivities."

Dages would have us believe that by reducing the HRC budget by \$158,000 he is doing us a favor. The reality is that the \$35,000 left in the HRC budget will

leave no money for staff, will cripple its work in the community in support of cultural diversity, and eliminate the mediation this commission did between the community and government agencies. The HRC will no longer exist.

What might continue, in 2005, is funding for some of the events honoring MLK and Cesar Chavez. While it is important to honor the lives of Martin Luther King and Cesar Chavez, city



Fresno City Council member Mike Dages guts the Human Relations Commission and claims he is doing us a favor.



control over the events does not make everyone happy. The funding has been an endless source of feuding between various factions within the Latino community, and several of the MLK events are turned into a soap box by the mayor and other elected officials to explain to us the true meaning of the occasion. To have Republican mayor Autry, or an aide from Republican Rep. George Radanovich's office, pontificate about how hard they worked and struggled for civil rights and social justice might be more than even Gandhi could endure.

But, why would Mike Dages side with the conservative faction of the City Council on the fate of the HRC? The word at City Hall is that Dages made the deal to kill the HRC in exchange for his appointment as president of the next council. With Republican council member-elect Larry Westerlund replacing Castillo in 2005, Dages has effectively positioned himself as the crucial vote for the next two years. With the strong-mayor form of local government, Dages seems to be strategically aligning himself with the mayor and forming a conservative block on the city council.

This may serve his short-term interests, but voters in the poor, working-class, and predominately Latino District 5 might be less than excited with their representative aligning himself with a hard right, conservative, North Fresno faction at city hall. Most political analysts believe he only registered as a Democrat (shortly before his race for the District 5 seat) so he could get organized labor's support and so he could appeal to the constituents of that district. If Dages is looking to run for re-election in 2006, this alignment with the right might come back to haunt him. But, if his real strategy is to run for mayor, then he is betting his move to the right will be an advantage. After all, the last two mayors in Fresno were Republicans.

If the City Council does bring the mayor's veto of the HRC funding up for a vote, an announcement will be made to members of the Community Alliance Peace and Social Justice listserv. Public support of the HRC could make a critical difference in getting full funding restored. If you would like to join the (free) listserv, send an e-mail saying you want to subscribe to AllianceEditor@Comcast.net.

The Human Relations Commission will hold its next meeting on Thursday, August 12, at Room 2165N of City Hall. Any person who wants to place an issue before the Commission should first contact the HRC staff at 621-7770.

See an earlier story on the HRC here: <<http://sfbay.indymedia.org/news/2004/06/1685746.php>>.

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- 08/15 • "Living Dangerously in a Post-Honor World" by Mushtaq Hussein
- 08/22 • "Love in Song" by Don Gaede
- 08/29 • "Compassionate Communication" by Pat Reeves

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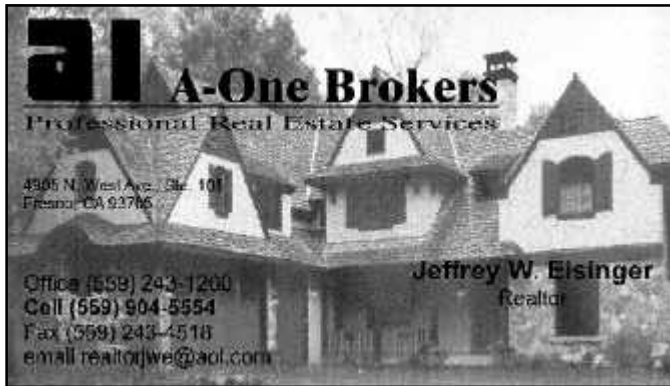
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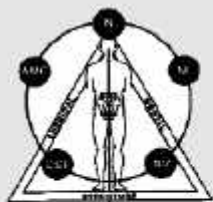
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Sunday, August 1 • 11 AM

The United Farm Workers union is organizing a march in Fresno to protest immigration raids and intimidation and boost public support for the AgJobs bill allowing undocumented field laborers to earn permanent legal status. Several similar UFW-led marches and rallies have taken place this month in the Salinas and Central Valleys and in Ventura County. The march will start at the Sal Mosqueda Center at 4670 E. Butler.

Sunday, August 1 • 7 PM

Master guitarist John Renbourn, a byword in the British folk-rock world since the late 1960s, comes to Fresno with his unique sound and the rich repertoire that is the fruit of four decades of musical experimentation. Visit the artist's web site: <www.john-renbourn.com>. Fresno Art Museum's Bonner Auditorium, 2233 N First Street.

Tuesday, August 3 • 7 PM

FresCAMP (Fresno Coalition Against the Misuse of Pesticide) meets at the Barn at Margaret Hudson's house, 4230 N Arthur. For more information email FresCAMP@yahoo.com or call (559) 227-6134.

Wednesday, August 4 • 7 PM

Candidates Night at the Fresno County Democratic Central Committee, at the State Building (between City Hall and the Main Library), downtown Fresno. All Democrats may attend.

Wednesday, August 4 • 7:30 PM

"Outfoxed: Rupert Murdoch's War on Journalism," a documentary (77 minutes) depicting Fox News and its promotion of the Bush/Cheney agenda, will be shown Wednesday, August 4th, at 7:30 PM, at the Fresno Center For Nonviolence, 1584 N. Van Ness, south of McKinley. Discussion will follow. The event is free, and the public is invited. For information, call Janet at 226-1960 or Gerry at 227-2133.

Friday, August 6 • 1-3 PM

CHAANGE Maker's meeting will be at 1584 N Van Ness Avenue, just south of Fresno City College. They will be organizing a media campaign for HIV/AIDS awareness for the City of Fresno and planning which government officials need to be targeted, in order to get our message heard. For more information, comments, or suggestions, please call (559) 268-1969 or e-mail gary.dennis@chaange.org.

Friday, August 6 • 6:30-8:30 PM

See the documentary *Peace, Propaganda, and the Promised Land*. This video exposes how the foreign policy interests of American political elites—working in combination with Israeli public relations strategies—exercise a powerful influence over news reporting about the Middle East conflict. It examines factors that have distorted US media coverage and American public opinion. Light potluck at 6:30. Program begins at 7 PM. This event is sponsored by the Reedley Peace Center and will be held at the Fellowship Hall of First Mennonite Church, on L Street between 12th and 13th Streets in Reedley. Admission is free. Contact Don Friesen by e-mail at dfriesen@telis.org.

Friday August 6 • 7:30 pm

Waddama Revival Show w/ Richfield at Arte Americas, La Pena, 1630 Van Ness Ave Downtown Fresno. For more information call 559 266-2623 or visit www.arteamericas.org

Saturday, August 7 • 10 AM

"Culinary Recipes & Remedies"—Garden walk meeting the plants; demonstrations and lecture on using herb plants for beauty, health, and flavor. Garden Theater, Tour & Tastings at the Squaw Valley Herb Gardens, \$10 per person. Advance Reservations: Rosemary (800) 579-8043. This event will be repeated on Sunday, August 8, at 2 PM. <www.SquawValleyHerbGardens.com>

Saturday, August 7 • 2 PM

The Central Valley Progressive PAC will meet at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N. Van Ness, south of McKinley. For more information call (559) 978-4502 or email info@cvppac.org. Also see: <http://www.cvppac.org/>

Sunday, August 8 • 8 AM-8 PM

Peace Fresno is organizing a bus trip to the "Hands Around the Nuclear Weapons Lab" demonstration in Livermore. "Books not Bombs" rally and march to the Livermore Nuclear Weapons Lab. Peace Fresno has chartered an air-conditioned bus, which will leave at 8 AM from CSUF (parking lot to be confirmed) and return at approximately 8 PM. The event is at 1 PM at the Jackson Elementary School at 554 Jackson Avenue in Livermore. The cost is \$20 per person. To register, please e-mail president@peacefresno.org or call 487-2515. For more information, go to <www.peacefresno.org>.

Monday, August 9 • 5:30 PM

The Living Wage Committee will meet at the SEIU 250 office, 1279 N. Wishon. Community Alliance for a Fair Economy (C.A.F.E.) is taking the lead in this effort. We are in the research and planning stages of development. Further information contact Frances Sivak, 559-222-5240, fsivak@msn.com

Monday, August 9 • 6 PM

The Fresno County Democratic Chicano / Latino Caucus presents speaker Theresa DeAnda, chairperson for Californians for Pesticide Reform. The meeting will take place at Bobby Salazar's 2839 N. Blackstone. Call Jose Luis Barraza for information at 248-9088.

Wednesday, August 11 • 1 PM

Silent Movie and Piano Concert to benefit the Oakhurst Democratic Club. Tickets are now on sale for the film classic *Metropolis*, accompanied by an original score by well-known pianist Keith Taylor. Tickets are ready to fly out the door! Step right up and place your order! Place: Firehouse Blues at the Chukchansi Casino in Coarsegold. Tickets: \$10 with a Player's Card, \$12 without a card. (Player's Cards are free at the casino.)

Friday, August 13 • 5 PM and 8 PM

Fresno Filmworks presents Julie Bertuccelli's *Since Otar Left* at the Tower Theatre. Hailed by critics for its superb performances and poignant themes, this French-Belgian co-production tells the story of three generations of women from the Republic of Georgia coping with tragedy and loss. Tickets can be purchased at the Tower Theatre Box Office, 815 E Olive Ave; The Movies, 1435 N Van Ness Ave; the Fig Garden Bookstore in Fig Garden Village, and at the door. Tickets are \$9; \$7 for students and seniors. For more information call the FFW info line, 221-0755, or go to <www.fresnofilmworks.org>.

Saturday, August 14 • 2 PM

Community Alliance magazine meeting at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N Van Ness (southeast corner of McKinley and Van Ness). This meeting is open to everyone who works on and supports the magazine.

Saturday, August 14 • 7-10 PM

Peace and Dignity Journey fund raiser at Arte Americas Plaza, 1630 Van Ness in downtown Fresno. Music by The Raisin Babies. Donation \$15 - Children 7 - 12 \$5 and children under 7 are free. Silent auction and raffle. Information or tickets call 559 940-2350.

Sunday, August 15

Deadline for articles and calendar items to the September, 2004 *Community Alliance* magazine. Send information to AllianceEditor@Comcast.net

Wednesday, August 18 • 7 PM

Discussion: "Whites Looking at White Privilege"—Ninth in a series of discussions in which whites will be challenged to examine the benefits received from centuries of racism. The meeting will take place at the Fresno Center for Nonviolence, 1584 N Van Ness (across from Fresno City College, SE corner Van Ness & McKinley, entrance on Van Ness). Contact Richard Stone to enroll: 266-2559.

Saturday, August 21 • 7:30 PM

The Unitarian Universalist Church of Fresno presents folklorist, singer, and multi-instrumentalist Evo Bluestein in concert. Evo brings to his music a rich legacy of American folk tradition, brilliant interpretation, and original composition. Considered one of this country's most accomplished Appalachian-style autoharpists, his repertoire also includes songs derived from bluegrass, Cajun, zydeco, blues, and other styles. Tickets are \$10 per person, and are available at The Movies, Patrick's Music, and National Hardware. Proceeds benefit the church's Building Fund, and childcare is available. The church is located at 4144 N Millbrook, just south of Ashlan. Call 244-0562 for more information.

Tuesday, August 24 • 12:30 PM

A reception honoring U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer at The Tower at the Convention Center Court, 855 M Street, Fresno. Co-Hosts \$250, Supporters \$100, Friends \$50. RSVP to Jim Kennedy at (323) 904-4968 or JimK@boxer2004.org

Friday, August 27 • 7:30 PM

Fundraiser for KFCF 88.1 FM. Paul Kamm & Eleanore MacDonald. Exquisite harmony, compelling songwriting, deceptively simple arrangements and intricate guitar. "Sure and graceful voices but, oh, when they meld it's one of those majestic, sinfully rich pleasures—like a musical S'more . . ." —*DirtyLinen* magazine. Place: The Wolk Folk Garden, 6661 N Forkner. Tickets: \$20. Info: 855-4511 or 233-2221. <www.kammmac.com>

Saturday, August 28

Raza Against War, is organizing a major mobilization to take place on Saturday, August 28, 2004. We are calling on people throughout the community who share our desire for peace to support us. We are reaching out to the Mexicano-Latino and African-American community in particular, for we have sacrificed generations of our youth in wars of conquest, yet faced racism and injustice at home. We are planning the "Marcha por la Paz y por los Ninos" to take place on this date due to its historical significance, when thousands of our people protested the Vietnam War. For information, call 908-6701 or e-mail enmascarao@yahoo.com

Saturday, August 28 • 6-8 PM

The Fresno County Green Party will hold a house party at the home of Jeff Eisinger and Marge Soltero, 5661 N Prospect in Fresno. This is a fundraiser for the Larry Mullen for Congress campaign. For more information, see <www.crockford.org/mullen/>.

Saturday, August 28 & Sunday, August 29

The United Farm Workers of America will hold their 17th Constitutional Convention in Fresno.



Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

WILPF Fresno, P.O. Box 5114, Fresno, CA 93755

Vickie M. Fouts, Newsletter Editor, contact at 559.658.8260 or email at socialjustice@sti.net

WILPF DATES:

Wednesday, August 4, Noon: Women in Black, Fresno County Courthouse breezeway

Saturday, August 14, 9:30 AM–4 PM: Annual WILPF Retreat & Potluck. See below.

Wednesday, August 25, 3:30 PM: WILPF Stir It Up

Hiroshima/Nagasaki Days: This year we invite WILPF members to join in *Hands around the Lab!* On **Sunday, August 8, 2004**, Peace Fresno plans on chartering a bus to Livermore for the large protest at Lawrence Livermore Nuclear Weapons Lab. The bus cost is \$20 per person. Call them for more information at (559) 487-2515.

By-Laws Committee: On July 12, seven WILPF members met to begin the scheduled revision process of our by-laws. Further meetings will be taking place to complete suggestions for updating the by-laws. The committee will also be recommending that WILPF adopt "policies and operating procedures" that will serve as guidelines for making decisions. The by-law committee is using the consensus decision-making process. The goal is to have the draft of the by-laws and "policies and procedures" ready for discussion and action at our annual retreat. **Thanks** to Marilyn Shelton for chairing this committee.

Board Election Update: The by-laws committee is recommending we change our elected officers to include only president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. The other members of the board will include committee chairs. The current slate presented by the nomination committee includes: President: Vickie Fouts, Secretary: Ruth Obel-Jorgensen, Treasurer: Eva Hudson, Membership Chair: Mary Perich, Newsletter: Vickie Fouts, Legislative: Natasha Fouts and Joyce Huggins, Telephone Tree: Elizabeth West. Board members-at-large are Joan Poss, Janet Slagter, Camille Russell, and Jean Kennedy. We still have openings for vice president, literature, program, and historian chairs. Please consider volunteering for one of these openings in order to make Fresno WILPF as successful as it can be.

Annual Retreat: All WILPF members are invited and encouraged to attend our yearly retreat and potluck to review the past year and to plan the next year. The retreat will be held August 14 at the home of Ingrid Carmean, 9:30 AM to 4 PM. Help Fresno WILPF be a successful peace and social justice organization by joining us and sharing your ideas. We can't do it without you.

Camp Harmony 2004 Report: Fresno WILPF's Peace Camp was very successful and peaceful this year. Camp was held at O'Neill Park at CSUF, June 14–18. We had 29 campers, 11 youth volunteers/leaders, 15 adult volunteers at camp, and 3 teachers! Camp was attended by children aged 6–12. The campers represented many cultures and ethnic groups—including Russian immigrants, Muslims, Brazilian citizens, Hispanics, African Americans, Filipinos, and European Americans—and included children from PAL (Police Activities League) and Project ACCESS (for homeless). The theme for this year's camp was "Living in Harmony with Friends and Foes"; the curriculum focus was on bullying

and bully prevention. On the last day of camp, the children and youth volunteers put garlands of peace cranes on the statues in the CSUF Peace Garden, and hung strings of cranes close to where the Jane Addams statue will be placed. Lunches were provided by Food Not Bombs on four days and by Brahma Kumaris on one day. Thank you to all the volunteers who helped in any way—with time, donations, contacts, or support.

Blue Triangle Network Retreat: Vickie Fouts and Ruth Obel-Jorgensen attended the Blue Triangle Network (BTN) Retreat in Burlingame, California, July 1–4, representing Fresno WILPF, Fresno Center for Nonviolence, and Campus Peace & Civil Liberties Coalition. The BTN puts on the National Day of Solidarity with Muslim, Arab and South Asian Immigrants on February 20. Vickie has organized a candlelight vigil for this event the past three years.

At the retreat up to 16 people from across the United States met to plan their next steps to stop the repression and attacks on Muslim, Arab and South Asian immigrants since 9/11. Vickie was selected as one of the dozen steering committee members and one of the three executive committee members of the national BTN. Other members of the committees represented Refuse & Resist, Not in Our Name, American Muslim Voice, and La Resistencia, among others. Ruth is on the task force to set up speakers to talk at western US college campuses. Vickie is on the task force regarding interfaith outreach. Both are on the task force for a Statement of Conscience, much like the Not in Our Name Statement. Isn't it wonderful that two of our members are now part of a national group? Vickie and Ruth are working on starting up a BTN chapter in Fresno and have an e-mail address at fresnobluetriangle@yahoo.com. Stay tuned for details. Until then check out the BTN at www.bluetriangle.org.

WILPF International Congress: Ellie Bluestein and Lynn Jacobsson are attending the WILPF International Congress in Kungälv, Sweden, August 2–8. We are looking forward to a report back from them at the retreat and maybe a special program.

Argentina & Guatemala Program: On June 20 WILPFer Jan Slagter shared with about 20 people a slide show and commentary on her recent trips to Argentina and Guatemala, mainly around women and social justice issues. The presentation was very powerful and you could tell how passionate Jan is on the subject. Her excitement was contagious and brought about great discussions at the end of the program.

This page is paid for by WILPF, who has complete editorial control of the content.

WILPF intern Ruth Obel-Jorgensen receiving the Fresno Center for Nonviolence Youth Way of Peace Award on July 18th. Her co-winner and fellow intern, Catherine Caroupa, was in South Africa and unable to attend.



CAN WE TALK? The issues around Israel/Palestine generate extraordinary heat and animosity, even among progressives. As a Jew, I often find myself in the midst of painful conflicts with relatives as well as other activists. Thus I welcomed the opportunity to bring two Israeli Refuseniks to Fresno last month, to speak along with an American conscientious objector about “the right to refuse.” The Israelis were both 10-year veterans of service in Israel’s armed forces. After that length of time, their experiences serving in the occupied territories became too problematic for their personal consciences, and left them convinced that current Israeli policies threaten the integrity of their country rather than providing protection.

I have made several contracts with representatives of the organized Jewish community trying to organize a discussion (private or public) in response to the testimony of the Refuseniks. But so far there has been no response. If anyone reading this is in a position to help bring about—or would like to participate in—a respectful, face-to-face dialogue (perhaps an all-Jewish one) among people concerned both about the safety of Jews and the basic human rights of Palestinians, please contact me (Richard Stone) at the Center or at 266-2559.

ANNIVERSARY THANKS: Our 12th anniversary celebration took place right after press time, so we are not able to acknowledge our Way of Peace awardees till next month. Still, we do want to give special thanks to the proprietors of “Hudson Acres” for allowing us to use their facilities, and to the three artists who donated work to our Fine Arts raffle: Margaret Hudson, Polly Victor, and Enrique Lopez, whose Art Box gallery will be opening soon.

WHITE PRIVILEGE/RACISM: The American way of life unfortunately rests on a history of genocide, slavery, and the exploitation of resources. As an important

part of our peace agenda, we continually seek ways to educate ourselves and others about the legacy of privilege and discrimination we Euro-Americans inherit, and what it means to change the effects of the past in the present. We currently are sponsoring the White Privilege Group on the third Wednesday each month (7 PM at the Center): in the next months we will be inviting people of color from various backgrounds to discuss with us their experiences and perceptions of American “whiteness.” Our August guest will be Vida Samiian, born in Iran, now acting dean of the School of Humanities at CSUF. New members are welcome, preferably with a call in advance.

The White Privilege Group will also play an important role in coordinating The Pairs Project, where people on different sides of critical divisions (race, gender, age, disability, etc.) will be matched and given an opportunity to become sincerely acquainted. We are looking for applicants, and also for invitations to groups where we can “recruit” applicants such as at service clubs, professional groups, and church groups. If you have ideas, please let us know—call or e-mail the Center.

We also actively encourage everyone affiliated with the Center to attend meetings and functions of other ethnic and social constituencies. Vickie Fouts, the Center’s Program Director and President of WILPF, has been very active in making cross-cultural connections, and has a lot of ideas and information for anyone interested in broadening horizons and building bridges.

Fresno Center for Nonviolence
1584 N Van Ness • Fresno, CA 93728
Ph. (559) 237-3223 • fcnv1@juno.com
<http://www.fresnoalliance.com/centerfornonviolence>

THE WELCH REPORT

July 12, 2004
Jack H. Welch, M.D.



WE HAVE FOUND THE WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION (WMD)—they are at the Lawrence Livermore Lab (in San Francisco Bay area). Lawrence Livermore Lab is the facility where the Bush Administration’s nuclear weapons policy is being carried out, including our government’s dangerous plans to develop new, earth-penetrating nuclear WMD for use in the “war on terror.”

THE PLAN TO RAMP UP NUCLEAR WEAPONS ACTIVITIES

The Dept. of Energy (DOE) has released its draft Environmental Impact Statement on Livermore Lab’s planned operations for the next ten years for the public’s input before their moving forward.

(1) The plan will more than double the limit for plutonium at Livermore Lab from 1,540 pounds to 3,300 pounds. This much plutonium can make more than 300 nuclear bombs. One microscopic particle of plutonium, if inhaled, can cause lung cancer or other diseases.

(2) This project was canceled in the past, because it was dangerous and considered unnecessary: It is a scheme to heat and vaporize plutonium, then shoot multiple laser beams through the vapor to separate out plutonium isotopes. To do this, Livermore Lab plans a threefold increase in the amount of plutonium that can be used in a single room. This separation process is a health risk and a nuclear proliferation nightmare.

(3) Further, the ten-year plan makes Livermore Lab the place to test new manufacturing technologies for producing plutonium pits for nuclear weapons. A pit is the softball-sized piece of plutonium that sits inside a modern nuclear weapon and triggers its thermonuclear explosion. The pit program will enable the production of 150–450 (or more) bomb cores annually (with a maximum production capability approximating the combined nuclear arsenals of France and China each year).

(4) This plan will add plutonium and highly enriched uranium to experiments in the national ignition facility megalaser when it is completed at Livermore Lab, increasing usefulness of the NIF for nuclear weapons development but also making it more hazardous.

(5) The plan calls for Livermore Lab to develop means to enhance the nation’s readiness to conduct full-scale underground nuclear tests—a very dangerous step back to the days of unrestrained nuclear testing.

(6) Further, the plan calls for locating an advanced bio-warfare agent facility with nuclear weapons activities in a classified area at Livermore Lab. The lab proposes genetic modification and spraying with live anthrax, plague, and other deadly pathogens, which could weaken the international biological weapons treaty, and which poses a risk to workers, the public, and the environment. (Source: Tri-Valley CAREs, 2582 Old First St., Livermore, CA 94551 (925) 443-7148)

Public hearings were held in California and in Washington, DC in late April 2004 on the above planning operations. They were attended by an estimated 1000 persons, who protested the planned development of new nuclear weapons and the pollution that accompanies them.

MISSILE SHIELD WON’T WORK

“The multi-billion-dollar US ballistic missile shield due to start operating by September 30 appears incapable of shooting down any incoming warheads, an independent scientists’ group has said. . . . Union of Concerned Scientists [of which the writer is a supporter] found no basis for believing the system will have any capability to defend against a real attack. . . .

“Sen. Carl Levin of the Senate Armed Services Committee concurred with the report’s findings. The Bush Administration should stop buying missile defense interceptors until they are proven to work through ‘combat-realistic’ operational tests, Levin said.” (Source: San Joaquin Co.’s “Connections,” July 2004)

Queer Eye . . .

By Dan Waterhouse

Our Televangelist Mayor

Fresno's "full-time" mayor has a part-time job, parading himself on television for Jerry Falwell.

Mayor Alan Autry recently hosted an hour-long episode of Falwell's *Praise the Lord*. He had appeared on the show as a guest, as the mayor of Fresno, about a year ago.

In an interview with Channel 30 anchor Liz Harrison, Autry explained that as a child he and his family rarely went to church because they were constantly moving, but they always had a picture of Jesus on the wall and a Bible on a shelf.

After his pro football career with the Green Bay Packers ended and he wound up in Hollywood, he told Harrison that he started drinking heavily and he "found" God again after his then-wife left him.

Many in Fresno's gay community believe Autry is hostile toward them because of his fundamentalist beliefs. He has refused to assist organizers of the Pride Parade and Festival in cutting through city red tape.

He made what became a controversial appearance at the Central California Alliance's speaker dinner in April of 2003. At the dinner, Autry gave his "Vision for the City" speech, and then made the mistake of opening the floor to questions from the audience. Instead of questions about crime and graffiti, he got questions about domestic partner benefits for City employees and other issues.

In response to the question about domestic partner benefits, Autry bluntly said he was opposed. He said these benefits are limited to "married" employees and he does not approve of same-sex marriage or domestic partnerships.

Autry also refused an invitation to attend that year's Pride Parade.

Autry's CCA appearance created a backlash by US Senator (and early CCA supporter) Barbara Boxer. Coincidentally, the local Democrats were hosting Boxer at a large dinner event in the same hotel that evening. She had planned to make a surprise appearance at the CCA dinner right after she finished her speech at the Democratic Party event. However, when she found out Autry was the keynote speaker at the CCA dinner, she cancelled her visit.



CCA representative A. J. Kruth lambasted Boxer in a letter printed in *NewsLink*. Kruth also defended the organization's decision to invite Autry, saying that "many of the gay/lesbian groups in this area must work with the City and a dialogue with those in power is essential."

Many took Kruth's comments to mean that the glbt community has to kiss Autry's arse to get things done with the City. Given the experiences of the Pride organizers, arse-smacking hasn't benefitted the larger community one iota.

Autry has appointed another fundamentalist Christian to the second-most-powerful job in City government. Police chief Jerry Dyer is another "bad boy" who found God and "cleaned up his act." Dyer had a sexual affair with a 16-year-old girl when he was in his mid-20s, during his "bad boy" days.

Posters on the Free Republic website have claimed Autry is one of theirs. Autry refuses to discuss any connections he might have with Free Republic.

Autry has been at odds with some of the fundamentalist community, however. He actively worked to scuttle a drug/alcohol rehabilitation facility that Cornerstone Church was trying to open in the old Vagabond Inn on Broadway downtown, and he has made no secret of wanting the Rescue Mission out of downtown. Autry was accused of "harassing" fundamentalist Christians by his positions on the Cornerstone project and the Mission.

Originally part of the Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker empire, *Praise the Lord* was taken over by Falwell in the mid-1980s. The show has become a major vehicle for Falwell to parade his views on gays, abortion, Islam, women, and politics.

Dan Waterhouse is a columnist for NewsLink, Central California's only print glbt news source. Waterhouse also writes for QueerFresno, a local webzine. Dan's main focus is the Waterhouse Report, which is far-ranging, and occasionally provocative and highly opinionated. He served as the public relations coordinator and photographer for this year's Pride Parade and Festival.



The Central California Alliance "is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting positive change, equal rights, social and networking opportunities for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people through programs of community service and philanthropy." CCA has a website, <www.ccafresno.org>, and can be reached at (559) 265-7117.

NewsLink is Central California's only glbt newspaper. A project of Fresno's nonprofit Community Link, *NewsLink* can be viewed at <www.communitylinkfresno.org>. The paper can also be found at locations around Fresno, including Borders, Irene's Cafe, the Revue, and The Movies in Van Ness Village.

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