WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE
- CHAOS OR COMMUNITY?

Annual Dr. King Celebration, Sun. Jan. 17 – details on page 4

Photo of a section of ‘Remember Them: Champions For Humanity Monument’ – downtown Oakland, California, by Sculptor Mario Chiodo. L to R: Rosa Parks, Ralph David Abernathy, Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King
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“History has shown that it is unwise
to tolerate the intolerant”
(and the intolerable). — Chris Hedges

SUBMITTING ARTICLES
Deadline: January 11, 2021
Email articles in MSWord to peacentr@sonic.net
Word limit up to 700 words – space is limited.
Shorter pieces under 400 words welcome about local activism and events. Authors are encouraged to delineate fact from opinion and wherever possible to substantiate their facts with references.
Poems are limited to 30 lines.

EDITING POLICY
The Editorial Collective selects articles that serve the movement for peace and justice in a positive way. Articles are edited for clarity, syntax, grammar, length and spelling. If needed, authors will be contacted to assist with editing.
Submissions must contain author’s name, address, phone number, word count and a brief – one or two sentence bio. Decisions about editing fall within these guidelines and are the final judgment of the Peace Press editorial collective.
Articles are the opinion of the author unless otherwise noted.

CALENDAR ITEMS
Events on topics of social justice, environmental, and related items to be placed in the PJC weekly email calendar, can be sent to peacentr@sonic.net
Include CALENDAR (in caps) on subject line.

DISPLAY SPONSORSHIP RATES & SPECS
Contact: rebelpfagin@gmail.com or call 707-841-6080
Classifieds: 50¢ per word, $5 minimum

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Weathering the Proverbial Storm

Shekeyna Black

We sincerely hope that you and your loved ones weathered the proverbial storm that is 2020! Sonoma County residents withstood another challenging wildfire “season” with thick smoke and unsafe air quality for weeks on end, not to mention sporadic power outages! One of our beloved Board members lost their home in the devastating wildfire. The USA has endured the most contentious Presidential Election in history. Police Brutality and White Supremacy are on the rise. Homelessness is at crisis level. And of course, the entire world has been adversely affected by the Pandemic. Let us remember the Children who are still in cages in detention camps on US soil.

The Peace & Justice Center, a community resource, has also been impacted fiscally, directly related to the mandatory COVID-19 regulations. Typically, this time of year, we enjoy three major fundraising events that help to economically sustain us. Unfortunately, because of Social Distancing restrictions, we were not able to host our Annual Awards Celebration, which brings in a substantial amount of money for the PJC via ticket sales and the fabulous Silent Auction.

Secondly, the PJC participates in the annual Winterblast, with its delightful SOFA Parade. We have been the nonprofit sponsor of this fun event for several years; which, brings in grant money in addition to the proceeds from beer and wine sales. Thirdly, Redwood Cafe in Cotati donates a portion of the ticket sales from their annual New Year’s Eve concert to the Peace & Justice Center. Sadly, the venue has not been allowed to have live music since March.

We are unable to continue offering meeting space for like-minded groups due to the Social Distancing orders, nor can we lend out books from our social justice library. Also, we are not open to the public and office hours remain suspended. We do; however, co-sponsor and participate in virtual events online in addition to the occasional ‘Socially Distanced Mandatory Masks’ marches and rallies regarding social justice issues. Additionally, we help get the word out about these vital activists’ events in our weekly e-newsletter.

We count on individual donors, like you, to contribute financially in order that we may continue with our work serving the community as we have done for the past 36 years.

The Sonoma County Peace Press; which, the PJC publishes six times per year, has not been available in print form since the beginning of the Pandemic. We continue to publish and archive the Peace Press online on our website at www.pjcsoco.org. Please, if you have not already done so, take a moment to fill out the survey online on our website as we will use this data to determine the future of the Peace Press.

Board Member, Audrianna Jones has implemented an ongoing “Donation Drive for the Houseless” where people can drop off their donated items at the PJC on Tuesdays from 3:00-5:00 pm only. The Peace & Justice Center of Sonoma County is a community asset that does not get any government funding. We ask that you please make a generous donation during our 2020 Fall Appeal drive. Thank you for your heartfelt support!

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WikiLeaks: Modern Day Gandhian Project of Peace

Nozomi Hayase

Almost a century ago, Mohandas Gandhi, a spiritual and political leader, led the movement for India’s independence from Britain. The significance of Gandhi’s work was that he showed the world how oppression can be overcome through the principle of nonviolence.

Gandhi characterized the revolutionary force inherent in his peaceful method with the term “satyagraha (from the Sanskrit for ‘truth-force’)” (as cited in Dear, 2002, p. 19). He noted satyagraha means “resisting untruth by truthful means” (p. 22) as well as “‘steadfast, nonviolent direct action for truth’ and ‘nonviolent civil disobedience’” (p. 83).

Now, in this digital age, the Gandhian tradition of peaceful resistance against injustice has been revived on the Internet. With the creation of WikiLeaks, Julian Assange made investigative journalism into a platform for the peaceful pursuit of truth. Assange firmly believed that, for justice to prevail, people ought to have an accurate knowledge about how the world works. He noted, “If we are to produce a civilized society, a more just society, it has to be based upon the truth.”

As part of this search for truth, Assange recognized that the mainstream media has become not a purveyor of truth, but of lies, actively promoting and defending the force that violates and destroys truth. Assange pointed out that “most wars started by democracies involve lying,” and noted that “the start of the Iraq war involved very serious lies that were repeated and amplified by some parts of the press.”

WikiLeaks as a modern day Gandhian project, with its method of transparency, steadily upheld a doctrine of satyagraha. The organization has shown how its unique model of “scientific journalism” – fueled by authenticated, pristine documents – can resist the perversion of truth by governments through truthful means. Media propaganda that works to distort truth through censorship, omission and manipulation of information can

Now, it is time for each of us to step in and carry on the Gandhian project of non-violent civil disobedience, to defend Julian Assange and end this war on journalism.

WikiLeaks...see page 10
Nursing Homes are COVID-19 Hot Spots

Martin J. Bennett

Nursing homes are ground zero in efforts to contain the spread of the deadly Covid-19 disease. Skilled nursing homes and residential care facilities account for 80 percent of virus-related fatalities in Sonoma County and 40 percent statewide. Twelve residents have perished due to COVID-related causes at Sonoma’s Broadway Villa facility – more than any other senior care facility in the county. Over 100 California care home staff have died after contracting the virus – although fortunately, none in Sonoma County.

Why are nursing homes such hotspots for Covid-19?

The nursing home industry is no longer composed of small nonprofit operators. According to a 2014 Sacramento Bee investigation, corporate chains that run dozens of facilities own ninety percent of California nursing homes. Twenty-five nursing home chains control half of California’s 120,000 licensed beds. The industry is dependent on taxpayer funding and receives $10 billion annually, mostly from federal Medicare and Medi-Cal.

As California’s three largest nursing home chains expanded, their combined net income soared from $10 million in 2005 to between $36 to $54 million in 2015. According to UCSF sociology and nursing professor Charlene Harrington, these corporate chains’ robust earnings are based on three factors: first, a complex ownership structure that enables chains to hide assets and shields owners from liability if patients are mistreated or abused; second, chronic understaffing that cuts labor costs while undermining the quality of care and increasing the likelihood of adverse events and patient harm (such as a fall or bed sores); third, poverty wages for nursing assistants, who are 40 percent of all nursing home workers.

The California Employment Development Department reports that in 2019 an entry-level Sonoma County nursing assistant’s average hourly wage was $16.33 hour, and annual earnings were $33,966. Nationally, nearly half of nursing aides live in working poor families, earning less than $50,400 a year.

Most nursing aides do not earn a living wage. According to the California Budget and Policy Project, a self-sufficiency wage for two Sonoma County parents, both working full-time, is $23 an hour to provide a family income of $81,353 that covers rent, food, transportation, childcare, and health insurance.

Ninety percent of nursing aides are women, mostly women of color, who are primary contributors to their family’s income – and one in three must rely on public subsidies such as Food Stamps or Medi-Cal to make ends meet.

Multiple causes, including low wages, have concentrated COVID-19 outbreaks in nursing homes. Most nursing home patients are over the age of 65 and have underlying conditions; nursing homes were slow to acquire the needed personal protective gear; two or more nursing home patients are often packed into most rooms, and patients who test positive are difficult to isolate.

In addition, understaffing limits the nursing aides’ time with each patient – typically no more than five minutes – so that they may overlook a patient’s symptoms or signs that a room is inadequately disinfected or they may neglect basic hygiene such as hand washing.

Low wages and understaffing contribute to an annual 60 percent turnover rate for nursing assistants that directly impacts patient care quality.

Also, low wages often make aides juggle multiple nursing home jobs, and if infected at one workplace but asymptomatic, they can transmit the disease to residents and workers at another.

In a new study, Georgetown University economist Krista Ruffini compared nursing homes in adjacent counties of different states with different minimum wage levels. In higher minimum wage counties, she found no significant job loss, fees for patients increased only slightly, employee turnover declined, worker training and skills increased, and the quality of care improved. She estimates that if every county increased its minimum wage by 10 percent, patient deaths would decline by 3 percent or about 15,000 a year.

Last year Santa Rosa and Petaluma each approved a $15 an hour citywide minimum wage law (by 2020 with an annual COLA) for all workers employed two hours a week within the city limits. The California minimum wage in 2020 was $14 an hour for large employers (with 26 or more employees) and $13 for small employers. Other North Bay cities such as Novato and Sonoma have legislated city-wide minimum wages set above the state’s. To mitigate the pandemic’s effects, all cities and counties in the region should approve a minimum wage higher than the state minimum. The County of Sonoma is expected to consider early next year a $15 minimum wage by March 1, 2021.

Moreover, Senate Republicans blocked the ‘Heroes Act’ passed by the House of Representatives in May. That legislation allocates $200 billion to fund an additional $13 an hour hazard pay for all essential frontline workers, including nursing aides. Joe Biden has won the Presidential election and the Democrats have retained control of the House. If the Democrats prevail in the Georgia run-off elections in January for the Senate, they should immediately pass the Heroes Act to provide hazard pay for all essential workers during the COVID-19 crisis. Democrats can also approve the ‘Raise the Wage Act’ passed by the House that would double the current $7.25 an hour federal minimum to $15 phased-in by 2024.

Martin J. Bennett is Instructor Emeritus of American History at Santa Rosa Junior College, a research and policy analyst for UNITE HERE Local 2850, and a member of North Bay Jobs with Justice.
New Executive Director to Build on the Legacy of North Bay Jobs with Justice

Bonnie Petty

North Bay Jobs with Justice (NBJwJ) is excited to announce that Max Bell Alper will take the reins as our new Executive Director, beginning January 4, 2021.

As 2020 comes to a close, Mara Ventura brings her four years of extraordinary leadership at NBJwJ to an end. First hired in December 2016 as Lead Organizer, Mara stepped into the role of Executive Director in the spring of 2018 and has truly brought NBJwJ to the next level of community organizing and worker advocacy.

Taking over from founder Marty Bennett, as our first full-time Executive Director, Mara oversaw the development and management of several successful NBJwJ programs. She established the DE COLORES program, which works to inform immigrant communities and employers about rights in the workplace by training workers to be leaders and trainers themselves. Partnering with Graton Day Labor Center and North Bay Organizing Project (NBOP), she helped establish UndocuFund, a financial resource for undocumented workers in times of natural disasters for whom traditional support programs are unavailable – a model that is being duplicated across the country. She also developed and led strike-readiness trainings for teachers and has led NBJwJ and other organizations in establishing the Alliance for a Just Recovery (AJR) and CoCo United in Crisis in response to the devastating needs of workers and the entire North Bay community suffering multiple crises.

Within NBJwJ, Mara’s special gift of partnering with diverse individuals and organizations has led to a deeper commitment to our work and a stronger coalition, both organizationally and financially. She leaves behind a vibrant organization deeply involved as an agent for change in Sonoma County and beyond.

While Mara is a hard act to follow, NBJwJ’s leadership is confident in Max’s ability to continue this important work and to lead us yet again, to a higher level of activism and advocacy. He has been an organizer and leader in the labor movement for nearly two decades and brings a passion for local economic, racial, and climate justice, a natural and sympathetic union: in their family, one grandmother went on strike as part of the Chicago Teachers Union, another grandmother was a public sector AFSCME member, a grandfather and many uncles were active in the Carpenters’ Union, and their great-grandfather drove a milk truck as a Teamster. Max’s own activism began with anti-racist student coalitions while an undergraduate at UC Santa Cruz, which led directly to their work organizing low-wage, immigrant cafeteria workers on campus. The workers’ struggle for dignity and respect was and continues to be personal for Max, remembering their mom as a cafeteria worker when they were growing up.

With the American Federation of State, County, Municipal Employees (AFSCME), Max spent years successfully organizing throughout California with contracted janitorial, groundkeeping, clerical, and food workers who had been excluded from collective bargaining agreements in the University of California system.

Throughout his career, Max has brought focus and passion to the training and leadership advancement of the most impacted communities – workers, people of color, immigrants, and young people.

For ten years with UNITE HERE, Max built teams of organizers and led campaigns with low-wage immigrant workers, including restaurant workers in Sonoma County, where Max was first introduced to the coalition work of NBJwJ. For the past five years, Max has developed and directed a strategic campaign plan in Silicon Valley that enabled more than 5,000 cafeteria workers on tech industry campuses to join the union and win contracts that include immigrant rights, housing and transportation, free health care and industry-leading wages.

Max lives in western Sonoma County with his partner and enjoys organic flower and fruit tree gardening, backpacking and volunteering on local land stewardship projects. While many challenges face us all in 2021, under Max’s leadership NBJwJ will continue to be a leading advocate in the North Bay for workers and the most at-risk members of our communities. Please join us in welcoming Max this January!

Harry Bridges Asserted: ‘The Union Makes Us Strong!’

Rebel Fagin

Through informed actions, Service Employees International United (SEIU) won major contract victories with the county. This effort was led by SEIU 1021 though other bargaining units were also active. 1021 is the largest of all of SEIU’s bargaining units. It covers workers in public service, public health care and nursing. Their four-year contract includes a Cost of Living Adjustment, COLA, for over 150 job classifications. This way their wages are adjusted to account for inflation. There were also increased health benefits, more sick leave (think COVID), retirement improvements an increase in pay and more.

SEIU 2015, in home support service providers will receive a $2 an hour raise in January bringing this front-line service industry to $15 an hour with additional increases planned for mid-summer and January 2022. In addition, they receive increased sick leave and work place protections (COVID). This is important as Newsom vetoed the Workers Protection Bill which would have protected these vital workers in other people’s homes.

All these public service employees are vital, front line workers during both fires and plague. They are getting the money and vital protections they deserve because they work together as a union. Like the old song says, “for the union makes us strong.”

While Mara Ventura [former ED] is a hard act to follow, NBJwJ’s leadership is confident in Max’s ability to continue this important work and to lead us yet again, to a higher level of activism and advocacy.
Divestment & Sanctions Movement – BDS 2020

Rebel Fagin

Censorship in the United States consists mostly of omissions. The Boycott Divestment & Sanctions Movement, BDS, suffers from this censorship. You never hear about BDS in the corporate media unless it’s being denounced as anti-Semitic, which it is not.

The international Boycott Divestment & Sanctions Movement is an example of nonviolent resistance and it is having major victories throughout the world. First however a little background. To boycott is to refuse to buy a good or service. It is an action we can all participate in. Divestment is to withdraw investment monies. Sanctions are when a major organization, like a country, refuses to do business with the offender. The three goals of the BDS Movement are the right of people to return to their birthplace, for Israel to end the occupation of the West Bank and full citizenship for all citizens living in Israel and not just 80% of them. Until these goals have been met, boycotts, divestments and sanctions will continue, even if Americans never hear of them.

We’ve had global successes these last few years and these are not all of them.

9/26/2019 - The Anglican Church of South Africa voted to support BDS.
8/19/2020 - The Global South called for sanctions against companies doing business in Israel as an act of solidarity with the Palestinians.

Apartheid Free Zones have begun popping up in Europe. People in these zones promote solidarity by not participating in apartheid regimes nor profiting from them. There are over 100 such zones in Europe.

Veolia has withdrawn from its segregated roads project in the occupied West Bank and sold its buses, all of which was worth at least $20 billion.

The Presbyterian Church USA and the United Methodist Church have divested from companies profiting from the occupation. The Dutch pension fund PGGM as well as the governments of Norway, Luxembourg and New Zealand have all divested from companies acting in violation of International law. European banks Nordea and Daske Banks have divested from companies profiting from the illegal occupation. Israel’s largest agricultural exporter, Carmel Agrexco, has entered into liquidation following a boycott led by Palestinian farmers who began selling their harvests through other companies. SodaStream has left the illegal settlements though the boycott against them continues due to their role in oppressing the people of the Negev Desert. Between 2013 - 2014 foreign investments in companies doing business in Israel dropped by 46%.

We’ve had successes and there’s more to do. As well as boycotting SodaStream, there is the ongoing boycott of Hewlett-Packard. H-P is instrumental in the surveillance infrastructure of the illegal occupied territories. There are other computer companies you can use that do not have the blood of occupation on their hands.

Puma sportswear sponsors football teams in the illegal settlements. They also have stores in the illegal settlements. More than 200 Palestinian sports clubs have called on Puma to end its sponsorships and stop supporting the illegal expansions of the settlements. Until then, to buy Puma sports gear is to say “I support apartheid”. There are other brands of sports attire out there that do not support apartheid.

Perhaps the most cynical and egregious offender in all these investments in apartheid is AIRBNB. You can use AIRBNB to vacation in a genuine former Palestinian home, securely located in the illegal settlements. Look, if you’re going to Palestine/Israel stay at the Banksy Hotel. Your stay will be much more interesting and you won’t have the stink of apartheid on you. You can learn more about AIRBNB by going to apartheidadventures.org and viewing Sleeping with Apartheid.

Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions, BDS, is doing well worldwide. Now if only we can pick it up here. Go to BDSmovement.net, CodePink.org, or FOSNA.org to learn more and take an action for justice. Remember, what you buy is who you are and who you are is what you buy. Sources: BDSmovement.net, ApartheidAdventures.com.
Sonoma County Climate Activist Network (SoCoCAN!) is pleased to host our 2021 Community Summit on Zoom, to be held on Sunday, January 10 from 2-5 PM. The Climate Summit is a call to action, a call to connect, a call to build on common ground – featuring educators, community members, experienced activists, youth activists, organizations and experts.

We are excited to share important work on indigenous practices, connecting with the land, on reducing our dependence on fossil fuels, on educating the public about the dangers of forest-based biomass, on the beauty and biodiversity of post-fire forests, on regenerative agriculture and regenerating soils, on promoting resilience in our communities living in fire-prone lands, on the Green New Deal, on climate justice, racial and social justice, and on climate policy at a regional scale.

Our speakers are Dr. Brenda Flyswithhawks (professor, Santa Rosa Junior College), Woody Hastings (Energy Program Manager, Climate Center), June Brashares (Founding member, Sonoma Clean Power), Christine Byrne (Sonoma Sunrise Movement; Sonoma Water) and Janina (Nina) Turner (2020 Sonoma County “Youth Inspiring Youth” Award winner), Elizabeth Kaiser (Singing Frogs Farm), Maya Khosla (2020 Sonoma County Co-Environmentalist of the Year; Sonoma County Poet Laureate Emerita), Cory O’Gorman (Ecologist and Traditional Ecological Knowledge systems practitioner), Teri Shore (Advocacy Director at Greenbelt Alliance), Fabiola Maya and Vincent Tavani (environmental educators), and Dave Warrender (Citizens’ Climate Lobby, Santa Rosa Chapter). Our January Summit will offer presentations with discussions that will give us a chance to discuss and collectively support the ongoing works! Several presenters will offer free, COVID-safe, outdoor workshops that will follow the Climate Summit.

Our purpose is to unite local groups and concerned citizens so that we can meet this new decade with a clear vision of actions that address the social, political and environmental challenges of our time. All are invited to attend.

We recognize that this is a critical moment to gather, to acknowledge the land, strengthen our community spirit and clarify our vision. Although the tasks before us are challenging, we are fortunate to live in a county that has been at the forefront of progressive and transformative change. SoCoCAN! has engaged in several successful campaigns including the All Electric Reach Codes in Santa Rosa and Windsor, ensuring that natural gas will no longer be allowed in new housing construction under three stories.

Sonoma County Board of Supervisors, Santa Rosa, Sebastopol, Petaluma, Windsor and Cloverdale have issued climate emergency declarations. Cities throughout the county have committed to Zero Waste Ordinances and the county is building a centralized state-of-the-art composting program.

Schools for Climate Action has established a movement which has now spread to 100 organizations in 13 states. The City of Santa Rosa has endorsed California’s Initiative for Public Banking, to fund projects such as affordable, energy-efficient housing. SoCoCAN! has supported the local movement to stop all new gas stations and campaigned in favor of Measure W (City of Sonoma) to renew the Urban Growth Boundary and preserve green space.

We experience success when we show up together. When we stand together with a clear message, we can win. One important challenge this year is to bring urgency and transformation to Sonoma County’s update of the General Plan, a roadmap for Sonoma County’s goals for the next decade.

We hope you are encouraged to put Sunday, January 10, 2021, 2:00-5:00 p.m., in your datebook. Please go to http://SonomaCountyCAN.org or call 707-595-0320 for more information. We are the decision makers and leaders of the local and global changes we must create. Starting right here, right now. Together.

The Sonoma County Climate Activist Network (SoCoCAN!) is 50+ local groups and over 100 individuals working to address and reverse climate change. We meet in months with 5 Mondays 7-9 PM. Currently, we meet on Zoom. The best way to get involved is to join our listserv. Let us know if you or your group would like to join the network. For more information go to http://SonomaCountyCAN.org or contact sonomacountytyncan@gmail.com.
Starving Out Corporate Greed in the Nonprofit Sector

Audrianna Jones

While we embrace a year that seems like a centrifuge of chaos, struggle, uncertainty, and death, it is important for us to find gratitude in our situations as well as our lives. A few weeks ago I attended a lovely ceremony local groups put together to mourn the deaths of people in and around the houseless community. There were four crowded tables full of picture frames displaying faces of lovely people who are no longer walking this earth. Somber observers passed and were surprised with grief after being inside for seven months dealing with demons we have never seen before; oblivious to the group of people that suffer from mental illnesses and addiction on top of sleeping outside. As all of these observations were turning into thoughts, one of the frames holding a picture of my coworker that passed from a heart attack at twenty-nine this September, caught my eye.

Justin Smith was a lovely gentleman who was doubted and experienced a rough childhood. He resided on the streets here and there, so he knew the people that came to eat at the community kitchen we worked at together. He grew immensely after being given the chance at a stable job and a roof over his head because he was so grateful for that opportunity. His diet was never anything he had much control over, growing up with limited options and government issued, usually processed food.

After I started cooking with him he became infatuated with quality food and the benefits of vegetables. I saw his passion for food and food selection blossoming and I miss him every day. I added his legacy into my mission of picture frames displaying faces of lovely community. There were four crowded tables full of people in and around the houseless community.

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The following items can be dropped off at the Peace & Justice Center every Tuesday, 3-5 PM.

Please store clean items in large plastic bags.

Please do not drop off items during non drop off hours.

- Sleeping Bags
- Blankets
- Jackets
- Socks
- Gloves

All items will be given to local nonprofits to distribute to the houseless. Members of the PJC Board will also be distributing items.

Peace & Justice Center
467 Sebastopol Ave, Santa Rosa
(off Santa Rosa Ave, south of Juilliard Park)

For questions please contact peacentr@sonic.net

Donation Drive for the Houseless

The following items can be dropped off at the Peace & Justice Center every Tuesday, 3-5 PM.

Please store clean items in large plastic bags.

Please do not drop off items during non drop off hours.
A Grateful Measure P Thank You!

Susan Lamont

Many of you have followed the progress of law enforcement oversight and Measure P in these pages over the years. We want to thank you and so many others.

There are so many people and groups who brought us to this overwhelming victory for Measure P (66% at this writing!). From those who birthed this movement in the 1990’s and brought the California Advisory Committee to the US Commission on Civil Rights to Sonoma County, to those who compiled the list of names of the dead, to the young people who led the first protests – facing down guns – against the killing of Andy Lopez, to those who went into the Supervisors Chamber to make sure they would “do something,” to those who were unmercifully harassed by law enforcement for their activism, to those who served on the CALLE Task Force, to those who attended more meetings than they ever dreamed possible, to the directors of IOLERO, to the members of the Community Advisory Council, to those who organized protests, street theater and discussions, to those who wrote letters and articles, recited poems and sang songs, to those who spoke out, to those who called in, to those who helped get rid of Sheriff Freitas, to those who worked and voted for a different kind of sheriff, to those who envisioned a ballot initiative to strengthen IOLERO, to those who collected petition signatures, to those who took to the streets after George Floyd was killed, to those who insisted that the supervisors put the Evelyn Cheatham Effective IOLERO Ordinance on the ballot, to the Sonoma County Supervisors for doing it, to those who worked on the campaign by walking, texting, calling, donating, fundraising, organizing, to those who endorsed, to those who voted YES! It took every one of those efforts and people to make today possible. Whether we had won or lost, it was a mighty and righteous effort. And despite having won, the work will continue because there is always more to do.

This list does not include the names of individuals involved. There are simply too many to mention. You know who you are.

To illustrate the breadth and depth of this movement, here are but a few of the groups that helped:

- PACH – Police Accountability and Community Helpline
- Andy’s Youth
- Justice Coalition for Andy Lopez
- Police Brutality Coalition
- North Bay Organizing Project
- SCCOOP – Sonoma County Community Oversight of Police
- Love and Light
- ACLU – American Civil Liberties Union of Sonoma County
- H-PEACE – Health Professionals for

Equality and Community Empowerment
Democratic Party of Sonoma County
Uplifting Black Leaders
Sonoma County Commission on Human Rights
Peace & Justice Center of Sonoma County
And a special shoutout to KBBF-fm radio for always making their airwaves available and to the Peace Press, the Sonoma County Gazette, The Bohemian and the Sonoma Valley Sun for publishing so much for us.

Groups and individuals work in so many different ways and that variety is important for a successful movement. Some worked behind the scenes and some out front and loud in the streets and everything in between. A multiplicity of tactics is important to appeal to the broadest range of people.

What is most important to understand is that the conversation doesn’t even take place without activism. IOLERO and Measure P don’t exist without activism. And, sadly, it does not seem to happen without great loss. We can say Jeremiah Chass or Andy Lopez or Trayvon Martin or Branch Wroth or George Floyd or Breonna Taylor, but we know it goes back much, much further to those who died and inspired the activists more than twenty years ago.

Please let this incredible variety of actions be proof that there is a place for everyone in the world of activism. There is no one way to do this. There is always a place for your way of being in this world.
Indivisible Sonoma County:

‘Vote Blue No Matter Who’ Is Not Enough

Tom Benthin, Advisory Council member

As I write this, Joe Biden is president-elect of the United States, the election having been called for him only on Saturday, days after the final result became obvious. Now, two days later, Trump is refusing to concede, instead spreading lies about alleged “fraud” and “illegal ballots”. He’s being joined by Congressional Republicans and supported by the actions of AG William Barr.

Indivisible Sonoma County was formed in early 2017 to oppose Trump and all that he stood for. At the time, it wasn’t clear whether the Republican Party would resist him, too, at least in part. As it turned out, they fell in line and embraced him wholly. Our mission expanded accordingly and over time became about protecting our democracy and its people, and making it more perfect. That means defeating the GOP not just as a political party, but as a poisonous anti-democratic force.

2021 seems a long time from now, given the risks that the GOP presents before Biden’s inauguration. Thinking beyond the inauguration seems even further. But let’s give it a try.

We’ll have several areas of focus over the next two months. We will be ready to protect the results of the election against any attempted coup. We already have members mobilized to help win both Senate run-offs in Georgia, which will, critically, decide the majority. And we’ll advocate for progressive voices and priorities in the incoming administration.

Indivisible was formed upon the idea that applying pressure to elected officials could provide a key force of resistance. Being in blue districts in a blue state, our efforts were directed at encouraging resistance by our members of Congress and at helping efforts in red districts and states to elect Democrats. In 2018, that effort was wildly successful. This year, the most critical objective – getting rid of Trump – was achieved, but we’ve failed so far to flip the Senate and will lose seats in the House.

Going forward, we’ll need to realize that “vote blue no matter who”, while accurate as far as it goes, isn’t enough. While we tend to think of influencing our representatives as separate from electoral work, in fact they’re intimately connected. Activists all over the country worked like crazy in 2018 to flip the House because we needed them to fight back for us. Instead, they passed “message” bills and largely avoided rigorous oversight of the most corrupt administration in American history. They placed their hopes, instead, on this past election, once again counting on our efforts. We had asked them to help save us. They, unfortunately, returned the favor.

The results avoided catastrophe, which is wonderful and not nearly enough. In order to win back enough power to protect our democracy, we need leaders who show courage, can communicate clearly and forcefully, will do the work necessary to produce results (this will almost certainly not involve the chimera of “bipartisan compromise”), recognize and elevate diverse voices across our caucus, and can run and win compelling campaigns. As Indivisible, we’ve worked on the outside, but we need to figure out how to influence the “inside” more, because the failures of the party were on clear display this past election. With the 2022 midterms next, Dems must get better.

We will be pushing for progressive solutions – on climate, economic justice, racial justice, healthcare, and so many other areas – but with a Republican Senate these will be hard to enact and with a stacked Supreme Court they will be in danger of being killed off. This means we will need to elevate those who are capable of fighting and winning and who will tackle the systemic forces that hand a white nationalist minority outsized power. What was true in 2017 will still be true in 2021: we will have our work cut out for us.

Defeating Trump – who at this point is still set to wreak havoc at least until the inauguration – won’t be nearly enough to save our democracy. We must continue our work with energy and purpose but also with the willingness to demand more and better from Democrats. This is a fight we cannot lose.
When Sonoma County Bounces Back Again

When in Sonoma County
Nature lovers stroll again
among the redwoods
or along the water line,
there where the ocean sprays
may nurture heart and soul again.
Let us go dancing
in the moonlight, you and I.

In Santa Rosa we shall go
to Luther Burbank’s Home,
delight in his gardens where
the roses bloom in style;
to Charlie Brown’s old stomping grounds
to skate on Snoopy’s Ice
where love is a Warm Puppy
and the people make you smile.

When in Sonoma County
people are made whole again,
it’s Russian River flowing
as do beer and wine,
and with Life’s punches
we can learn to rock and roll again.
Let us go dancing
in that fountain of delight,
when Sonoma County
bounces back again,
when Sonoma County
bounces back again.

Granny Vee

“Nothing to see here, move on”

White cop draws his gun on two brown kids
“Down on your knees”
“What’a I do?”
“Shut up and put your hands on your head”
I watch from the parking lot at the PJC and think
I see you white man
I see your gun
I see your willingness to shoot, to kill.
A few blocks away in Courthouse Square
A man is on his knees in a planter box
Bowing like a man in prayer
He raises his head, his face streaked with dirt and tears
A few blocks away someone screams
A few blocks away there is lonely pain
A few blocks away, a few blocks away.
What color is the sun today?
Can I breathe today?
Gotta keep away, gotta keep away
From the potential plague spreaders on the street.
White cop draws gun on brown boy
Beggar’s eat dirt and cry
Screams go unanswered
Nothing to worry about
Nothing is wrong
All this, is quite normal.

Rebel Fagin

Vote With Your Wallet

Support Black, Native, People of Color and POC-Immigrant, Owned Restaurants and Businesses in Sonoma County (some Napa and Bay Area included)

Click on link to discover a list of businesses compiled by members of Racial Justice Allies

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1hMZosjGfnYADWrrz5yYzUNmDjn9jdKZqVzv2bMGhsEU/edit#gid=0
“My country is shattered; we see one Syrian boy, in Dutch countryside—being sensitively taught refugee children a documentary—in the moments after sleep no more. or I certainly would find the evening before, of what we heard I tried not to think as I awakened in the night, joyce higgins The Morning After… Processing Grief

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WikiLeaks... from page 1

be countered by full archives of original source material.

Gandhi reminded us that “realizing Truth means realizing that all human beings are one” (as cited in Dear, 2002, p. 84). For him, justice meant restoring this truth. Calling a person who is dedicated to truth a satyagrahi (p. 89), Gandhi noted how “the sword of the satyagrahi is love and the unshakable firmness that comes from it” (p. 93).

WikiLeaks is driven by a similar force of love. What keeps their scientific journalism going is its sources - conscience of ordinary people, their concerns for fellow human beings that make them act courageously in the face of injustice and oppression. On April 5, 2010, with the publication of the Collateral Murder video, the sword of satyagrahi once again struck a chord on the Internet. Former US military intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning, through her whistle-blowing, courageously engaged in an act of civil disobedience. In uncensored images of modern war that depicted a US Army helicopter gunship killing innocent civilians including two Reuters journalists in a suburb of Iraq, American people were able to see the real face of those who are made into enemies.

Julian Assange, through his work with WikiLeaks, reminded us that the free press can be a powerful vehicle for peace-making. In its 13 years of existence, WikiLeaks has published more than 10 million documents with a pristine record of accuracy, shedding light on the corruption and human rights abuses of powerful institutions and governments. Their publication of the Afghan War Diary exposed around 20,000 civilian deaths by assassination, massacre and night raids. The release of Iraq War Logs revealed the existence of an estimated 15,000 civilian casualties that were previously not known.

For this great work for peace, like Gandhi, Assange has become a world-renowned political prisoner. He has been held inside London’s maximum-security prison, alongside murderers and terrorists, facing the risk of extradition to the US, where if convicted, he could be sentenced for life.

The prosecution of Assange is a direct attack on the First Amendment at the heart of democracy. It threatens peace everywhere around the world. Now, it is time for each of us to step in and carry on the Gandhian project of non-violent civil disobedience, to defend Julian Assange and end this war on journalism.

Reference:

Author’s Note: WikiLeaks has launched the official campaign page, “Don’t Extradite Assange.” You can get information on how you can help stop the extradition. Also, watch the film “The War on Journalism: The Case of Julian Assange” to be informed about his case. Please consider donating to the WikiLeaks official Defense Fund.

Noozomi Hayase, Ph.D., is an essayist and author of WikiLeaks, the Global Fourth Estate: History Is Happening.
Sonoma County Social Justice Groups

350 Sonoma County – Engaging our community in the work of 350.org to solve the climate crisis. 350sonomacounty.org

ACLU Sonoma Co. – working to preserve individual working rights and liberties. Meets each second Monday. Contact patriciamorandir@sbcglobal.net, or davhen@sonic.net.

Allies Safety Network – compiling a phone chain/helpline to build a safety network for those at risk of harassment to provide a supportive presence in situations of hateful threats. Join the Network Call List: 583-9168

Alternatives to Violence – Presents experiential workshops in personal growth in the community and prisons. 545-1798

Comite VIDA – Defends the human and civil rights of immigrants. 523-1740, circe@yahoo.com;

Daily Acts – Offers sustainable solutions rooted in the power of inspired daily actions. 789-9664, dailyacts.org

Fukushima Response – works to inform about the Fukushima melt down, monitor the consequences, advocate for the shut down of Diablo Canyon.

Green Party of Sonoma County – sonomagreens.org

Green Sangha – Spiritually engaged environmental action. info@greensangha.org

HPEACE – Health Professionals for Equality and Community Empowerment. hpeacesonoma county.wordpress.com

Healdsburg Peace Project – Peace and social justice action group, Healdsburg. 431-1129, healdsburgpeaceproject.org

Hate Free Petaluma Progressive organization. www.facebook.com/hatefreepetaluma/

Homeless Action – Advocating for people without shelter. 795-2890

Indivisible Groups – All the groups are on Facebook.

Indivisible Sonoma County: indivisiblesoco.com

Indivisuble Petaluma: indivisiblepetaluma@gmail.com, or follow on Twitter at @IndivisibleLuma

Indisivisible Sebastopol: indivisible.wsc@gmail.com

Indivisible Healdsburg

Indivisible Windsor

LezResist was formed to be a visible and unified Lesbian presence in support of each other, and to stand in solidarity with the many communities, causes, and policies under attack by the current U.S. administration. Info @ at LezResist@gmail.com.

Listening for a Change – Programs support listening and oral history to create a caring community. 578-5420, listeningforchange.org

MIA de Sonoma – Student group that focuses on issues affecting the Chicano/Latino community. info@mechadesonoma.org

Metta Center for Nonviolence – Works to promote nonviolence worldwide and to build a nonviolent culture. 774-6299

MOVES-Minimizing Occurrences of Violence in Everyday Society – Strives nonviolence as the answer to society’s violence. 524-1900

NAACP - National Association for the Advancement of Colored People – Seeks to eliminate racial hatred, racial profiling and discrimination. 332-1573

National Women’s History Project – coordinates observerances of Women’s History month around the country. 636-2888, nwhp@aol.com

North Bay Jobs with Justice – organized for better conditions and a living wage for workers. Email: northbayjobswj@hotmail.com, Website: northbayjobsjustice.org. Facebook, North Bay Jobs With Justice: Ph: 346-1187

North Bay Organizing Project – a regional faith and values based peoples’ organization. 319-2818

North Coast Coalition for Palestine – Brings greater awareness to the plight of the Palestinian people and works to end US military support for Israel. 575-8902. www.nccpal.org or find us on Facebook.

NOW of Sonoma County – local chapter of the National Organization for Women. 545-5036

All PHONE AREA CODES ARE (707) UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE

Occupy Sonoma County – Embraces the egalitarian, deep democracy principles of the Occupy Movement with a regional strategy for effectively organizing county-wide social justice campaigns that are globally relevant. 877-6650, OccupySonomaCounty.org

Organizing for Action: Progressive organizing project. Contact Linda Hemenway: whatisworking@gmail.com or 707-843-6110 and Facebook

Peace Alliance – Mission is to campaign for a cabinet-level US Department of Peace. 838-8647, maggik3@sonic.net, thepeacealliance.org

Peace Roots Alliance – We seek to create a peaceful, just and sustainable world for future generations. 765-0196, Linda@peaceroots.org

Petaluma Blacks for Community Development – facebook.com/pb4cd

Petaluma Progressives – Grassroots, political education and action group. Producers of the Progressive Festival. 763-8134, info@progressivefestival.org

Praxis Peace Institute – Peace Education organization, 939-2973, praxispce.org

Progressive Sonoma – Peaceful Resistance Network. An umbrella association to network Sonoma’s local progressive action groups. peacefulresistance9.wixsite.com/progressivesonoma. Facebook at Peaceful Resistance Sonoma

Project Censored/Media Freedom Foundation – Publishes the top 25 most censored news stories each year. 874-2695, Peter@projectcensored.org, Mickey@projectcensored.org. projectcensored.org.

Racial Justice Allies – Developing anti-racist practices among white social justice activists. 795-2890 racialjusticeallies@gmail.com

Sonoma County Chapter of Physicians for a National Health Program (PNHP). In support of single payer health insurance. 763-1925, sgndol@juno.com, www.pnhpa.com.

Sonoma County Climate Activist Network (SoCo CAN) Groups and individuals working address and reverse climate change. Meet in months with a 5th Monday, 7-9 PM at the PJC. Info: 595-0320 or SonomaCounty-CAN@gmail.com (email preferred).

Sonoma County Coastal Hills: gardens@mcn.org

Sonoma County Nonviolence Training Collective offers free trainings in methods and principles for progressive social change and peace. sonomacounty.org.

Sonoma County Resistance via change.org


Sonoma Valley Peace & Justice – Peace and social justice group for Sonoma Valley. audreyv@sbcglobal.net.

Sonoma County Black Forum: Our mission is to lead, serve, and thrive, by promoting positive community and youth engagement events. Monthly meetings. sonomacounty.blackforum@gmail.com

SURJ (Showing Up For Racial Justice, Sonoma County) – facebook.com/SURJSonomaCounty

United Farm Workers – 1700 Corby Ave., Santa Rosa 528-3039

United Nations Association – Builds public understanding and support for the United Nations. Facebook

Veterans for Peace – Organization of vets working together for peace and justice through nonviolence. 536-6002

Women in Black – Women who stand in silent vigil to protest war and human rights abuses.

Women’s Justice Center – Advocacy for victims of rape, domestic violence, and child abuse, particularly in the Latina community. 575-3130, justicewomen.com

Please email zenekar@comcast.net for additions or changes to this list.
No meetings will be held at the Peace & Justice Center until further notice.

To receive the PJC weekly email calendar, call 575-8902

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