

SONOMA COUNTY

# peace press

Publication of the Peace & Justice Center of Sonoma County  
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**Peace, Justice and Pride Energy Year-Round**

Publication of the Peace & Justice Center of Sonoma County,  
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Deadline to submit articles for the Aug/Sept 2023, is July 20.

Email articles with title on the document, in MSWord to [zenekar2@gmail.com](mailto:zenekar2@gmail.com)  
(put PEACE PRESS in all caps on subject line)

Word limit up to 900 words (negotiable).

Shorter pieces welcome about local actions and events.

**Authors are encouraged to delineate fact from opinion and wherever possible to substantiate their facts with references. Include ways readers can engage with the movement for peace and social justice.**

We welcome poems but limited to approx. 30 lines.

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**Articles are the opinion of the author unless otherwise noted.**

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Office hours: 1-4 PM, M-F. Best to call ahead to ensure volunteers are available when you visit. To receive the PJC weekly Social Justice e-newsletter, go to: [PJCsoco.org](http://PJCsoco.org)

# Lots Going On at the PJC

by *The PJC Board of Directors*

Hello friends. First off, we want to share part of a letter we received from a fifth-grader named Nora.

“I am a fifth grade student named Nora and I have an interest in law and I would love to work in your facility as a jurist in the future. I believe that law is needed in the world and I want to help Sonoma County be more lawful and fair.”

This is why we do this. We want to pass on the desire for a “more fair” world. A world where justice is served and peace is the air we breathe. We believe in generativity and passing it on.

That said let’s look at some of the events that have happened since we spoke last.

On May 6, Board member, Madonna Feather Cruz used the Center as the assemblage and launching point for the highly successful march and rally designed to draw attention to the plight of missing and murdered indigenous women; a plague of violence that is largely ignored. [Redemption House of the Bay Area](#), that organized the march and rally, made sure it would be ignored no more.

On the evening of the same day, Advisory Board member Larry Harper employed the Center to help the Women’s Circle for Peace present a talk by nuclear weapons expert Greg Mello on the ever-

present dangers of nuclear war and global annihilation. See article on page 9 of this issue, by Greg and Trish Mello about their work with the Los Alamos Study Group.

As you can see, members of the Peace & Justice Center, like you, are utilizing the Center to further the cause of peace through justice. You can too. Contact us for details.

Coming up Thursday, June 22, we have a presentation by the Health Care for All Working Group that you won’t want to miss. Also, George Romandy is planning on bringing back Thursday movie nights with topical films and discussion. There’ll be more events as the month unfolds. Go to [pjcsoco.org](http://pjcsoco.org) to learn about everything that is happening at your Peace & Justice Center. At this site you can read the *Peace Press* with articles pertinent to a wide variety of issues. You can also see the weekly e-blast which tells of upcoming events in and around the Peace & Justice Center. There are also videos from our YouTube station. Go to our website to learn about all this and see where you can lend a hand.

We do what we do so we can pass it on to future generations so they can pursue a more just and peaceful world in the ways they see fit to do so. Until then we do what we do for all the Nora’s out there and for you too. ✨

## LGBTQ Pride Energy Year-Round

by *Heather Bailie*

Riot. Revolution. Parade. Possibilities. In Sonoma County, Pride is part of a vibrant history of resistance, activism, and a movement to uplift members of the LGBTQ+ community.

After LGBT activists had experienced multiple rejections, May 19, 1992 marked the official day the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors voted to recognize Pride. Thirty-one years later, Sonoma County is now a popular destination for LGBTQ+ visitors and allies.

The rainbows and glitter are eye-catching, but the month long celebration is actually a call for greater visibility, unity and equality. Pride is a protest and a fight for LGBTQ+ rights, as well as the rights of all marginalized communities. Since 1970, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, and those who embody other identities on the spectrum, have marched every June to celebrate Pride.

The LGBTQ+ community marches to commemorate the uprising at the Stonewall Inn on June 28, 1969. These riots played an important role in liberating the LGBTQ+ community, and were led by trans women of color, Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera, who are often overlooked in this history.

Much like these activists and local advocates, LGBTQ Connection exists to ensure that the most marginalized LGBTQ+ people in Sonoma County are not ignored. At LGBTQ Connection, supporting the LGBTQ+ community is more than just a once-per-year activity. It is what drives our work every day. After all the rainbow flags are put away, the community often turns to us for ongoing support.

Since 2011, LGBTQ Connection, a program of On The Move, has been one of the scant few programs addressing the critical needs of LGBTQ+ youth and elders in Napa and Sonoma coun-

ties. Through a youth-led approach to community organizing, in which young people find support and acceptance with other peers, LGBTQ Connection fosters a healthy, diverse and inclusive community, driven by emerging young leaders.

LGBTQ+ youth experiences, ideas and leadership drive the work these young people do from their office inside the VOICES Youth Center on Mendocino Avenue in Santa Rosa. There, LGBTQ+ individuals, and their families, receive acceptance and affirmation

*The rainbows and glitter are eye-catching, but the month long celebration is actually a call for greater visibility, unity and equality.*

through one-on-one counseling, advocacy, socials, support groups, awareness-raising events and LGBTQ best practices training.

This year, LGBTQ Connection recognizes that the community’s strength is more important than ever in this current socio-political moment. Powerful people are bullying LGBTQ+ kids and threatening LGBTQ+ rights. With the proliferation of anti-transgender legislation, increasing violence and harassment, fear of the Supreme Court dismantling hard-fought legal protections, and conflicts over drag shows and queer art forms, the work of local LGBTQ organizations is so important right now. And, they could use your help.

Just like the LGBTQ Connection staff, and people who work at LGBTQ centers across the Nation, there are many things we all can do to support the LGBTQ+ community.

*LGBTQ Pride Energy Year-Round...see page 4*

# Sonoma County Tenants Win Historic Victory



After a hard-fought two-and-a-half-year campaign by North Bay Organizing Project's housing arm, the Sonoma County Tenants Union, in partnership with Legal Aid – which was strengthened by the steadfast support of North Bay Jobs with Justice; the North Bay Labor Council; NAACP-Santa Rosa, Sonoma County Branch; and other allied organizations – Petaluma City Council finally passed a permanent tenant protection ordinance! (PHOTO: LINA BLANCO)

by Diana Kingsbury

Over two-and-a-half years ago, the North Bay Organizing Project's housing arm, the Sonoma County Tenants Union, in partnership with Legal Aid of Sonoma County, spearheaded a campaign for a tenants protection ordinance in Petaluma called "Just Cause." The decision to launch this campaign was made in light of the increased number of evictions due to the pandemic, the fear tenants expressed to us of being evicted, and the loopholes of the statewide Tenant Protection Act (TPA).

After a hard fought campaign by the Sonoma County Tenants Union and legal aid – which was strengthened by the steadfast support of North Bay Jobs with Justice, the North Bay Labor Council, NAACP-Santa Rosa, Sonoma County Branch and other allied organizations – Petaluma City Council finally adopted a permanent tenant protection ordinance on Monday, May 15.

This victory is bittersweet because the city council both expanded coverage beyond what the TPA offers and weakened protections the prior city council had passed for no-fault evictions last year. It was a 4-2 vote with Mayor Kevin McDonnell recusing himself as a landlord and council members Mike Healy and Karen Nau voting no. Council members Dennis Pocekay, Brian Barnacle, Janice Cader-Thompson, and John Shribbs voted yes.

## What's in the policy? What does the ordinance do?

The ordinance is weaker than the prior interim ordinance in multiple ways. It removed all the protections for no-fault evictions

– withdrawal from the rental market (Ellis Act), owner/owner's family member move-in, and substantial remodel/rehab – and only gave the tenant a right to re-rent the unit at the original price if it is placed back on the rental market within six months.

We foresee many landlords simply complying and re-renting after six months at higher prices, or making renovations take seven months, so that they can re-rent at market rate to a new tenant. One justification for this was to increase relocation payments from one month of rent under the TPA to 2.5 months rent or \$9,000, whichever is lower.

This modest increase in the cost of evicting a tenant due to no fault of that tenant or their family, is hardly going to discourage bad faith evictions in

order to gain a market rate rent increase from a new tenant.

The city council also removed the prior bans on evictions of educators and households with school-aged children, during the school year. Given the overwhelming evidence that demonstrates the devastating impacts of moves during the school year, especially forced moves such as evictions, on children, we were very disappointed to see this change. Furthermore, city staff claimed that they removed these protections due to a lack of public outcry. We believe this is a cop-out. Several teachers, principals, and parents of school-aged children in Petaluma, as well as young people, have expressed their strong support for these protections throughout this long campaign.

We urged the city council to make amendments in the future to put these protections back in place.

The ways in which this ordinance is stronger than the prior ordinance are powerful:

- Protections apply at day one of tenancy.
- Many types of housing are covered by the ordinance that are not covered under the TPA:
- Government and non-profit subsidized housing
- New construction
- All building types, including single-family homes
- Relocation assistance for no-fault evictions is 2.5x months worth of rent up to \$9,000.

See full summary of the ordinance [here](#). 🐦

*Sonoma County Tenants Win Historic Victory...see page 3*

# Independent Office of Law Enforcement Review and Outreach (IOLERO) and Police Unions Clarify Investigative Powers

Sonoma County, and two labor groups representing county law enforcement employees, have finalized an agreement that will strengthen law enforcement oversight in the county.

Based on the agreement, the Sonoma County Independent Office of Law Enforcement Review and Outreach (“IOLERO”) no longer has to wait until the sheriff’s office has concluded its investigation of a deputy-involved death, in order to begin its own inquiry.

The agreement between IOLERO, the Sonoma County Deputy Sheriffs’ Association and Sonoma County Law Enforcement Association, permits IOLERO to conduct investigations concurrently with the sheriff’s office. Previously, the agency was required to delay the start of an investigation until the sheriff’s office completed its own investigation.

“Investigating critical incidents concurrently with the sheriff’s office will ensure that IOLERO investigations are truly independent,” said John Alden, director of IOLERO. “These types of independent investigations are what the community is seeking. We appreciate the cooperation of our partners in labor.”

SCLEA President Damian Evans said, “This agreement strikes the right balance between increased transparency, cooperation with all stakeholders and the due process rights of sheriff’s office employees.”

DSA President Cody Ebert said: “We are always pleased to partner with the county to strengthen the community’s trust in law enforcement. Together, we achieved stronger oversight while ensuring

our members are treated fairly.”

IOLERO and sheriff’s office investigations will occur simultaneously in incidents resulting in the death of a person in custody of sheriff’s office personnel, or in the death of an individual due to the actions of sheriff’s office personnel. IOLERO’s independent investigation will not interfere with the sheriff’s office investigation or any criminal investigation into the matter. The release of the IOLERO and sheriff’s office investigation reports will be coordinated between the agencies. 🍀

## Public Pressure with Meas. P Pays Off

by Susan Lamont

Thank you to all those who worked on Measure P and those who voted for it. And, thank you to IOLERO Director John Alden for his work on making this happen. Because the public spoke so clearly in support of Measure P, he was in a better position to work on cooperation from the unions than IOLERO’s first Director, Jerry Threet, would have been. Since the creation of the Office, made possible by considerable activist pressure, there has been resistance to the recommendations coming from it. But with passage of Measure P, the broader community of Sonoma County spoke loudly and clearly. This kind of public pressure makes a difference.

Join the Community Advisory Council (CAC) 🍀

## Sonoma County Tenants Win Historic Victory... from page 2

### Impacts of the policy on our community and our organizing:

- This policy will likely prevent landlords from trying to evict people unjustly in the first place. This has a currently unknowable, probably profound, and far-reaching impact – more stable communities, less homelessness, healthier, less traumatized children growing into healthy adults, thriving academic and professional careers, happier, less chronically stressed families, greater racial equity, greater safety for women, children, and other potential victims of domestic violence, empowered tenants more ready to speak up to improve housing conditions, more ethically aligned landlords, better climate impact due to shorter commutes and greater ability to invest in community climate resilience.
- We will track the success of this ordinance, though a rental registry is needed to fully track.
- We can build on the momentum of this win both in Petaluma and across the county. Other localities across the state can learn from our example.
- Every Petaluma tenant (estimated 20,000-plus people) should receive a written notice about this ordinance and their rights, whether they have them or not. The tenants union can refer to this notice of rights in every conversation we have at the door, and tenants can have clarity on what those rights are.
- Along the way, we got the City of Petaluma to provide childcare,

in-person Spanish translation, and accommodation for persons with children – in that they are called to give their public comment first so that they can depart afterward if needed.

- Along the way, we recruited, trained, mentored, and provided public speaking and other opportunities to many leaders.

### What is next?

- Spread the word about this important victory. Reach out to your friends, family, neighbors, and coworkers, and let them know about this win.
- NBOP has our annual grassroots fundraiser, [Cultura y Cambio](#), on Saturday, June 10, 4-9 pm, at Penngrove Park (in Penngrove). It’s going to be a great community event with music, food, and cultural performances. [Buy tickets here.](#)
- Join us in winning our next policy campaign. We are planning to put a measure on the ballot in the November 2024 election, somewhere in Sonoma County. Help us democratically decide what issue to focus on and where in Sonoma County to put this measure on the ballot. Contact Diana Kingsbury at (707) 324-9791 (please leave a message and/or send a text if no answer) and/or email [dkingsbury@northbayop.org](mailto:dkingsbury@northbayop.org) to learn more and get involved.

*Diana Kingsbury is Housing and Deep Democracy Organizer, Sonoma County Tenants Union, North Bay Organizing Project. Cell: 707-324-9791 (please text/leave a voicemail if no answer)*

# How LGBTQ Pride Has Evolved

by Lois Pearlman

To paraphrase that dreadful old Virginia Slims commercial, the LGBTQ community in Sonoma County has “come a long way baby,” since our early days of struggling for inclusion and visibility.

In fact, many of the current LGBTQ leaders among us were just babies in the 1980s when it began in earnest, or not yet born at all. As 35-year-old Spencer Blank, main organizer for the LGBTQ Pride events in Windsor this June, said, “We are standing on the shoulders of the past generation of leaders.”

So what does Spencer mean by that, and whose shoulders are they, anyway? And, wow, not only is a big splashy Pride parade and extravaganza happening this year in Santa Rosa’s Courthouse Square, but there is a full week of events in Windsor and then another celebration in Petaluma for October’s Coming Out Day.

It all began, as most progressive things do, with a bunch of people protesting against injustice. In 1978 Californians were faced with the Briggs Initiative, which would have destroyed the careers of gay and lesbian teachers by making it illegal for them to work at their jobs. Gays and lesbians across the state, including in Sonoma County, banded together to successfully fight it. This was, at least in Sonoma County, the first time these two groups of people had joined forces. Before then, and even after the political fight was over, there had been separate gay male and separate lesbian groups, even bars established for gay male clientele or lesbians – but not both.

Then came the LaRouche Initiative, Proposition 64, in 1986, during the height of the HIV/AIDS pandemic that was ravishing primarily the gay male community. Once again lesbians and gay men came together, to again defeat an initiative that would have forced people with HIV/AIDS to register with the state, and maybe even be segregated from the rest of society.

But this time, something different happened after it was all over. Many of the people in Sonoma County who had been involved in the No on 64 battle decided it was time to be proactive rather than reactive. We organized a group called Forward Together, with a mission of encouraging gays and lesbians to be open and proud about our lives and to be treated as respected members of our community.

Soon this group decided it was time to ask the county for the same recognition it gave to things like National Pickle Week, and a handful of us approached our most left-leaning supervisors – Ernie Carpenter and Helen Rudee – to put a Gay Pride Week on the agenda. They weren’t very enthusiastic about the idea, and refused

to place it on their agenda. But Ernie voted for it every time after the Commission on the Status of Women did the job for us.

Ultimately it took six years to get the four votes needed to approve the measure and make it official. However, that first year, following the supervisors’ rejection, we held a Gay Pride Picnic at Spring Lake. There were gays and lesbians from around the county, our straight-but-not-narrow allies, children and dogs, a potluck meal and hamburgers and hot dogs barbecued by a gay veterans’ group, Veterans Care.

Even before the supervisors passed the resolution, the Lesbian Voters Action Caucus organized a Pride march through downtown Santa Rosa in 1991, on the sidewalk and without a permit or police protection. Over the years, the Lesbian and Gay Pride events – yes we didn’t start calling ourselves GLBTQ, etc. until some years later – took place in various locations and included food vendors, information booths, music, speeches, grand marshals and an unofficial wedding ceremony for all.

Fast forward to 2023. Sonoma County is now largely a welcoming place for GLBTQ people. I can walk down the street or sit in restaurants and bars holding my girlfriend’s hand and nobody looks askance. At least not that I notice. Chambers of commerce promote LGBTQ tourism and even host travel writers for the Pride events. There is an assortment of social groups, service organizations – primarily for GLBTQ youth and the local libraries offer things like gay book clubs for teens and adults, story time with the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence in drag and other GLBTQ-oriented programming. And, of course Pride events around the county, businesses, libraries, private homes sporting rainbow flags, and welcoming and affirming signage everywhere you look.

Still, it is important to remember, as Stuart Wilkinson, a librarian and main organizer of GLBT doings at the libraries said, “We live in a bubble.” Elsewhere in our vast country politicians are attacking the rights and very lives of GLBTQ people, to gain political advantage. You know, like Hitler used the Jews. So enjoy the Pride events, with their party-like atmosphere, but keep in mind that famous saying, “Freedom is a constant struggle” – which is the name of Angela Davis’ newest book. And, yes, “Come out, come out wherever you are,” and whoever you are. Bring your children and grandchildren to Pride events and, of course, Drag Story Time. It will enrich yours and their lives immeasurably because we are all in this together. 🌈

*Lois Pearlman is a theater artist, journalist and co-founder of North Coast Coalition for Palestine.*

## LGBTQ Pride Energy Year-Round... from page 1

“The end of June doesn’t mean the end of Pride. We can carry on the revolutionary struggles of Compton Cafeteria, Black Cat Tavern, Annual Reminder, and Stonewall Inn every day and all year long,” said Solicia Aguilar, LGBTQ Connection director.

From the team at LGBTQ Connection here are some recommendations for community action, and ways to champion LGBTQ+ causes all year long:

1. Invest – Some of the vital work LGBTQ Connection does is provide safe, affirming spaces for LGBTQ+ youth through socials and support groups and spaces for queer and trans people of color. Such spaces provide participants with safe, fun, healthy outlets to explore the complex feelings and emotions that arise within our

community. As Angel Ortiz, youth development advocate, explained, “Donations are always needed to support our work. You can donate, and set up recurring donations, to ensure sustainable financial support for our programs all year long.”

2. Create safe and inclusive spaces – “Rainbow symbols, stickers, flags and signage are a good start. And creating inclusive, affirming and healthy spaces for LGBTQ+ people requires intentionality and commitment to action.” said Jenesis Diwa, youth development advocate with LGBTQ Connection. In addition to using inclusive imagery, creating safe and inclusive spaces also looks like making sure employees and staff are trained in LGBTQ+ best practices, knowing

*LGBTQ Pride Energy Year-Round...see page 5*

# Juneteenth is Black Independence Day

by Nancy Rogers

Juneteenth is the official name of the federal holiday Juneteenth National Independence Day, also called Emancipation Day, Freedom Day, Jubilee Day, Black Independence Day, and Juneteenth Independence Day. This holiday commemorates the end of slavery in the United States, observed annually on June 19.

In 1863, during the American Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which declared more than three million slaves living in the Confederate states to be free. More than two years would pass, however, before the news reached African Americans living in Texas. It was not until Union soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas, on June 19, 1865, that the state's residents finally learned that slavery had been abolished. The former slaves immediately began to celebrate with prayer, feasting, song, and dance.

The following year, on June 19, the first official Juneteenth celebrations took place in Texas. Within a few years, African Americans in other states were celebrating the day as well, making it an annual tradition.

The Santa Rosa local festival was started in 1970 by Santa Rosa Junior College students, and they named it the Martin Luther King Spring Festival. The Festival took on a new meaning with the recognition of Dr. King's birthday as a federal holiday, designated on the third Monday in January.

On June 17, 2023, we will celebrate 53 years of the MLK/Juneteenth Festival in Santa Rosa. We will have live entertainment, food, kid's activities, vendors and a lot more.

Juneteenth is important because we need to remember what we went through, and that we were able to get out of the bondage of slavery as a nation. It's an important reminder and it's important that we understand what it took. Juneteenth is a time to recognize that we need to be registered to vote. We need to know what's going on in our own cities. We need to take control of our civic duty.

It is saddening to know that many students throughout the country are not learning this history. They don't learn about Juneteenth in their classrooms, because in places like Texas, – where Juneteenth

was born – you see the strongest resistance to this progressive curriculum. Juneteenth facilitates the transmission of our history and our culture. It is here so that we can teach people who don't always have access to this knowledge in their homes and in their schools. 🙌

*Nancy Rogers is chairperson of the MLK/Juneteenth Festival Committee, president of North Bay Black Chamber of Commerce and Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow Foundation.*

**The 53rd Annual Sonoma County**  
**JUNETEENTH/MLK**  
**COMMUNITY FESTIVAL**  
**CELEBRATION**

**June 17, 2023**  
**10am - 6pm**

- Live Entertainment
- Food
- Basketball Games
- Arts & Crafts
- Dominoes
- Kids Activities
- Health & Fitness
- Spoken Word
- Zumba

**MARTIN LUTHER KING PARK**  
1671 HENDLEY STREET  
SANTA ROSA, CA. 95404

**DE LA THE FELA**

**NEW WORLD BALLET**

**PRAYER CHAPEL**

**"The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education."**  
**"We may have all come on different ships, but we're in the same boat now."**  
-Martin Luther King Jr.

**\*\*Please join the Juneteenth Festival March from Julliard Park to MLK Park!**

## LGBTQ Pride Energy Year-Round... from page 4

where to refer LGBTQ+ individuals for additional support, and not tolerating any forms of hate speech, homophobia or transphobia.

3. Commit to staying informed – “There is so much information and so many buzzwords, vocabulary and definitions, circling around the media that it can be hard to dissect what it all means,” said Coach Bailie, director of training and technical assistance. “As language evolves, so does our understanding and awareness. So a good practice is to stay connected to credible sources of information and education. The team at LGBTQ Connection offers many trainings for schools, businesses, organizations and the greater community.”

4. Patronize LGBTQ+ businesses, organizations and events – “Flex your support by throwing your money into LGBTQ+ owned businesses, organizations and events. The people behind these efforts often don't have the financial backing or opportunities that others benefit from,” explained Jose Luis Rodriguez, a youth development advocate. If you are in the position to do so, consider co-sponsoring or hosting community events with LGBTQ+ organizations or recognize LGBTQ+ holidays, including National Coming Out Day and Transgender Day of Remembrance, or attend events in

support of the LGBTQ+ community.

5. Stand up and speak out – Allies are a mighty and necessary force for any social justice movement because they often occupy spaces where marginalized individuals can't. And, because allies are often not a part of the marginalized group, they have a keen understanding of the myths, stereotypes, misunderstandings and fears that get in the way of acceptance. The more allies learn about LGBTQ+ issues, and the more allies stand up and speak out, the more opportunities there are for changing hearts and minds about LGBTQ+ people. That is powerful.

LGBTQ Connection, alongside other local activists, allies and community members who want a more inclusive and equitable Sonoma County for everyone, show us that it takes more than rainbows and Pride flags to make change. It takes a commitment from everyone to act. Pride energy can be felt all year long when people choose to support the LGBTQ+ community through continual, intentional action that is practiced every day. 🙌

*Heather Bailie is Director of Training and Technical Assistance at LGBTQ Connection. Contact: [bailie@lgbtqconnection.org](mailto:bailie@lgbtqconnection.org)*

# What is the MMIW Movement?

Across the United States and Canada Native women and girls are being taken or murdered at an unrelenting rate. MMIW – Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women is a movement that advocates for the end of violence against Native women. It also seeks to draw attention to the high rates of disappearances and murders of Native people, particularly women and girls.

Native Americans today face big challenges. By nearly every measure – social, cultural, economic, and physical – Native American communities and Native American families are struggling. There’s a lot to be positive and hopeful about for Native Americans today. But it’s also important to recognize just how big are the challenges Natives are facing. They include loss of culture and identity, lack of education, widespread health and mental health issues, generational, collective trauma, little representation or recognition.

National Week of Action for MMIW (May 1 to 7) was to call the nation and the world to action in honor of missing and murdered Indigenous women.

May 6, 2023, Madonna Feather-Cruz, [Peace and Justice Center of Sonoma County](#) and [Redemption House of the Bay Area](#) board member, along with Lisa Diaz-McQuade Redemption House of the Bay Area founder, came together to organize a silent march from the Peace and Justice Center to Santa Rosa City Hall, then on to the downtown square. Redemption House of the Bay Area sponsored art supplies to make MMIW signs, and refreshments, for all of the attendees.

For more information about MMIW, contact MaDonna Feather-Cruz. Email: [madonnafeather@yahoo.com](mailto:madonnafeather@yahoo.com), 707-681-4799. 📧



Preparing materials at the Peace & Justice Center to inform the public about the urgency to end of violence against Native women.



Marching through the streets of Santa Rosa, calling attention to the stolen lives of Natives.

PHOTOS BY REYNALDA CRUZ



# Cal. Seniors Demand Single-Payer Healthcare

by Bonnie Petty

This year, the California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA) celebrates its twentieth year educating and advocating on behalf of California seniors. With over a million senior members, and dozens of affiliate organizations from across the State, CARA has become a powerhouse, and a respected voice in Sacramento on issues related to seniors and those with disabilities. Working closely with state legislators, CARA has supported, opposed or sponsored many bills on an array of issues, but the continuing meltdown of our healthcare system has pushed this issue to the top of CARA's list of priorities.

While the protection and expansion of Social Security and Medicare programs have always been a primary focus of CARA's work on the federal level, California's flirtations with a single payer system have led to an all-out effort by CARA.

In 2020, Governor Newsom convened his Healthy California for All Commission for the purpose of examining the multitude of issues and challenges involved in moving to a single-payer system in California. Over the two years of the commission's existence CARA mobilized members across the state to participate in the meetings and advocate with members of the commission.

CARA members in the North Bay began meeting with Assemblyman Jim Wood, a member of the commission and chair of the Assembly Health Committee. Wood, a dentist from Healdsburg, was clearly a skeptic about single-payer from the beginning. But, as the research presented to the commission kept showing that the current system was fatally flawed and that real, viable solutions were out there, Wood slowly came to change his stance on the issue. During a Zoom meeting with CARA members in 2022, Wood stated that, while he still has deep concerns, it was clear that a single-payer system was the only way out of the mess. But Wood's "support" for single-payer can be shaky and CARA will continue to engage Wood and other legislators on the issue. It has been encouraging to see Wood permit health care bills to come to his committee rather than allowing the bills to die without a hearing, as has happened in the past.

Last November's election brought a number of new legislators to Sacramento and CARA will be working to educate those new members and advocate for single-payer efforts. In April, CARA held a statewide Lobby Day, wherein Zoom meetings were held with over 100 of the 120 California senators and assembly members. CARA members pushed legislators on a handful of key bills that were moving forward, most importantly on two bills: [AJR4](#) (Schiavo) and [SB770](#) (Weiner).

[SB770](#) establishes concrete steps, and a definitive timeline, toward creating a guaranteed, equitable healthcare system through a unified public financing system. It would require the California Secretary of State to submit recommendations for elements to be included in a formal waiver application by June 1, 2024. This waiver, which California needs to obtain from the federal government, is the first step in establishing single-payer healthcare. At press time, this bill had passed the California Senate's health committee and the appropriations committee, and next goes to the full senate for passage. It needs to pass the senate by June 2 in order for it to move to the Assembly for consideration.

[AJR4](#) – Medicare Protection Act of 2023, calls on the Biden Ad-

ministration to abolish the ACO-REACH program. This is a joint resolution of both legislative houses, declaring that the State of California seeks an end to this program. ACO-REACH was a program started under the Trump administration that allowed various entities, including hedge funds, to administer the healthcare of traditional Medicare recipients. It is a blatant attempt to privatize Medicare.

Unfortunately, the Biden administration, with a couple of minor tweaks and a new name, has left the program in place. With pressure from many organizations, including CARA, the administration has pulled back on the program, cutting off any expansion, but it remains in place. CARA and others continue asking Biden to end the program immediately, which he could do with the stroke of pen through an executive order. Passage of [AJR4](#) would put California on record, calling on Biden to end the ACO-REACH program.

CARA will continue to work on the many bills that affect seniors, including climate change, housing, transportation, hate crimes, in-home support services and, of course, Social Security and Medicare, but establishing a single-payer healthcare system is going to be front and center until it is realized in California. CARA members

*Sonoma County's CAT is holding a Birthday Bash on July 19, co-hosted by the Healthcare for All Working Group of Sonoma County, at the Unitarian Congregation in Santa Rosa.*

will continue to fight at all levels, from the national to the local, through lobbying efforts, through informative forums and through direct action such as the March 17 rally at Congressman Kevin McCarthy's office. Over 700 seniors rode buses from as far away as Humboldt County to McCarthy's Bakersfield office, demanding that he and Congress keep their hands off Medicare. McCarthy and his staff, who are apparently terrified of older folks, called on police, FBI and the Secret Service to remove the "unruly" demonstrators, refusing to address the silver-haired crowd.

Local chapters of CARA (called CATs – CARA Action Teams) meet monthly in both Marin and Sonoma counties, and CATs across the state are each planning twentieth anniversary events throughout the year.

Sonoma County's CAT is holding a Birthday Bash on July 19, co-hosted by the [Healthcare for All Working Group](#) of Sonoma County, at the Unitarian Church in Santa Rosa. We will be showing the movie "American Hospitals: Healing a Broken System" which looks at how hospitals have changed from focusing on patient care to making profits for shareholders. Following the movie there will be a panel discussion with members of CARA and the healthcare working group. This free event will include door prizes and birthday cake to celebrate CARA's 20 years, the fiftieth birthday of Medicare and the eighty eighth birthday of Social Security. Everyone is welcome.

To see the videos of CARA's forums and the Bakersfield rally, or for more information, visit the website at [CaliforniaAlliance.org](#). For local CARA information contact Bonnie Petty, Sonoma CAT convener, at [BonnieLPetty@gmail.com](mailto:BonnieLPetty@gmail.com). 📧

# 'Save Our Sequoias' – Beneficial Act or Business Pact?

by Maya Khosla and Alison Sheehey

On May 10, 2023, the US House Committee on Natural Resources held a legislative hearing to discuss the “Save Our Sequoias” Act (“SOS,” H.R. 2989). It is co-sponsored by the wood pellet company Enviva and reintroduced by over 50 republicans and democrats two weeks earlier on Arbor Day.

“SOS” is also strongly supported by other businesses in the logging industry including Drax, Sierra Pacific Industries, and the American Loggers Council. They are apparently eager to “save” the giants (*Sequoia giganteum*), by removing big trees and associated woody materials that are integral to the groves and surrounding forests in public lands – including national parks and national forests.

Images of the giant sequoias on fire have recently drawn public attention and concern for their survival in the age of climate change. The KNP Complex Fires burned through groves of giant sequoias in 2021. The Washburn Fire burned close to Yosemite’s treasured Mariposa Grove in 2022.

One controversial idea behind “SOS” is that swaths of giant sequoias are succumbing to drought and fire. Proponents claim that the giant trees can be “saved” by commercial logging (“thinning”) and post-fire clear-cutting to promote “resilience.” But EarthJustice

massive tree removal efforts if the Act passed.

Most businesses supporting “SOS” rely on government subsidies for biomass energy, a form of electrical power generated by grinding up wood and burning it at the stacks. Burning woody biomass yields less energy than burning an equal amount of coal, the energy industry’s fossil fuel equivalent. Emissions from the smokestacks towering over woody biomass energy facilities include carbon dioxide and toxic chemicals such as dioxin, which is known to cause cancer.

Although forest-based biomass energy is not renewable, power generated by the facilities is sold as “clean renewable energy,” since the trees could theoretically make a comeback (within decades to centuries). Yet many forests that have been depleted for energy production at the stacks are not growing back. Meanwhile, the wood extraction industries are taking vital subsidies away from real renewables like wind and solar energy.

The West, with its strong history of forests that regenerate after wildfire, presents a unique picture to the public. Visuals of recent wildfires destroying homes have promoted strong fears, which have ironically ushered in an industry narrative about removing “dead and dying trees.” Unseen by the public eye, commercial operations like “fuels reduction” projects remove mature trees, open up forests, dry soils, and often leave only the smallest trees in place – which leave the forests more vulnerable. Empirical data has shown that many of these “thinned” forests burn with high fire severity during wildfires.

In largely unexplored areas, groves of giant sequoia have survived the recent wildfires. They continue to support high biodiversity – the way they have for eons. The snags – standing dead trees – are homes for multiple wildlife species including rare Pacific fishers, spotted owls and northern goshawks. Within the perimeter of the 2021 KNP Complex Fire, which burned Sequoia National Forest and National Park, scores of sequoias with browned needles and fire scars extending up their trunks are alive. They have new green growth serving as silent testimonies to post-fire persistence. The forest floors are alive with young giant sequoias sprouting in the ash beds, and multiple fire followers.

The public needs to pay close attention to H.R. 2989 and any related bills that will destroy sequoias and associated forest ecosystems and exacerbate climate change impacts in the process. This is a good time to be out in the field, documenting the flush of life after wildfire. Time to say “No” to industry plans that use misleading titles to hide their motives. Time to save the sequoias, and our planet, with real science that sets itself apart from the science promoted by extraction interests. Time to set aside commercial extraction practices that masquerade as saviors of our forests.

Hyperlinks included:

[Letter from Earth Justice and over 80 other organizations objecting to SOS.](#) | [Open Letter to President Biden and Members of Congress from Scientists.](#) | [Forest Bioenergy Briefing Book PDF.](#)

[Fire Ecology of Spotted Owls.](#)

Setting the Stage: [The Truth about Carbon, Wildfire, and Biodiversity](#) 📖

Maya Khosla is a biologist and writer. She was appointed as Sonoma County Poet Laureate for a 2-year term (2018-2020).

Alison Sheehey is the Ecosystems Director for Sequoia ForestKeeper® a nonprofit group based in Kernville, California.

*Although forest-based biomass energy is not renewable, power generated by the facilities is sold as “clean renewable energy,” since the trees could theoretically make a comeback (within decades to centuries).*

and over 80 other groups, including the Sierra Club have critiqued these ideas, pointing out that “this legislation would weaken existing environmental law in order to expedite potentially harmful logging projects that undermine the ecological integrity of sequoia groves, and will do nothing to protect these trees.”

In a recent letter to Congress, over 200 scientists urged leaders to oppose commercial logging projects that are being conducted on public lands under euphemisms like “thinning.” This routinely implements the removal of the largest trees and has been shown to increase carbon emissions and also increase fire risk.

Sequoias are known to be veritable kings of post-fire survival. In his testimony presented to the hearing on May 10, 2023, Bryant Baker, Director of Conservation and Research at Los Padres ForestWatch, indicated that GIS data clearly shows most of the sequoia groves have burned in recent years and are in fact showing strong signs of the very resilience “SOS” claims they lack. Fire-charred trees are leafing out and hundreds of giant sequoia seedlings are vigorously growing in the shadow of their parent trees and snags – in areas that burned intensely.

Biomass energy companies have been depleting forests, and continue to look for new sources of wood to burn at the stacks. Close inspection of “SOS” reveals that plans to “save” the giant sequoias and associated forests would in fact result in the implementation of



# Forests, Fires and Biomass

## Sonoma County Climate Activist Network (SoCoCAN!)

A huge climate/environmental justice issue is looming over Sonoma County and the rest of California. A hungry monster is currently chomping up our trees and forests and burning them for power generation, converting them into fuel pellets for shipping overseas to European and Asian markets for burning, or turning them into biofuels for aviation. Exported fuel pellets are also burned for energy generation. Biomass energy (“bioenergy”) is being called “renewable energy.” It is taking away critical funds for real renewables like solar and wind energy.

Biofuels and biomass energy are not clean, not carbon neutral, and not sustainable. In fact, they are highly polluting, emitting tons of carbon dioxide, carcinogens and toxins which are damaging to human health and the environment – and impact low income communities the most. Biomass energy facilities process and burn mature trees and wood – carbon that is being sequestered and stored in forests that take decades to centuries to grow.

This form of energy is not renewable because trees that have taken decades to grow are being cut down and replaced by seedlings. Soil is destroyed and carbon stored in the soil is lost during the logging process. The top climate and fire scientists are saying that harvesting mature trees to supposedly save them from fire increases carbon emissions rather than preventing them. In many locations, seedlings do not survive when they are replanted in severely damaged soils.

Biomass energy is not carbon neutral because the largest, ma-

ture trees sequester and store the most carbon. Cutting them down releases carbon into the atmosphere and prevents future carbon storage and sequestration. Billions of dollars of federal, state and county money, including our tax dollars, are going into the clearing of forests and to heavily subsidizing the creation of the biomass industry. It is an expensive source of non-renewable energy, and our climate is directly impacted. There are plans to capture the carbon dioxide and pump it underground, but that is a false climate solution.

DRAX is a huge company in the UK. The wood has mostly been coming from the US. It is rapidly becoming a more local issue too. Greenpeace has released a short video on Youtube about this environmental racism called *Drax accused of driving environmental racism after more pollution claims against its US pellet mills*.

An August 2020 article in *Mendocino Voice* presents reactions of Calpella residents to a forest products pellet plant in Mendocino: *Calpella area residents protest Mendocino Forest Products pellet plant*. Fuel pellet plants are also being planned in Lassen and Tuolumne Counties which rely on exporting wood from California forests to be burned for energy in Asia.

“Forests regulate temperature, create oxygen, create soil, purify air and water, provide wildlife habitat, protect watersheds, and store and sequester carbon. Our well-being depends on these forests,” says Maya Khosla, forest biologist and SoCoCAN! activist.

SoCoCAN! has newly released our Biomass Basics Resource Sheet. For more information contact Sonoma County Climate Activist Network (SoCoCAN!) at [SonomaCountyCAN.org](https://SonomaCountyCAN.org) or email us at [SonomaCountyCAN@gmail.com](mailto:SonomaCountyCAN@gmail.com).

The Sonoma County Climate Activist Network (SoCoCAN!) is a strong and active network of 50+ local climate activist groups, over 200 individuals, and hundreds of local group members working together to address and reverse climate change. 🌱

## Help Avoid Climate Catastrophe – Join a Rapid Response Team

by Jane Bender

The Climate Center, established 20 years ago in Sonoma County, believes in thriving, healthy communities. We envision a future where everyone in California enjoys equal access to climate solutions, from clean air to renewable energy, healthy food and more. California has the tools and know-how to make the vision a reality – if our elected leaders act with the urgency the climate crisis demands.

To that end, The Climate Center has launched a state-wide program, Climate-Safe California. It demands California adopt policies by 2025 to accelerate equitable climate action, putting us on track to remove more climate pollution than we emit, while securing resilient communities for all by 2030. Our goal is to make California the first state in the nation to become carbon negative.

### Our policy platform is built on four pillars:

- Leave fossil fuel in the ground! Stop drilling now. Electrify everything with clean-source electricity.
- Capture CO<sub>2</sub> in the soil! Restore crucial habitat, plant trees and regenerate soil to capture carbon.

- Provide environmental justice for all! Prioritize low-income communities and programs for changing jobs.
- Fund climate solutions! Support public and private investment for these big changes.

Our lawmakers must step up to the job of establishing laws to make this policy platform a reality. And all of us must demand they act.

We can avoid climate catastrophe but time is short. Here’s a way avert disaster.

Join a Rapid Response Team to email our lawmakers. Each week you will receive information on three bills, pre-written messages that you can cut and paste into an email, and the names of the California legislators in your district who need to receive your messages. Just 15 minutes of your time each week will help.

Contact: Jane Bender, [benderjane613@gmail.com](mailto:benderjane613@gmail.com), phone 707-291-5988 or Paula Fogarty, [info@speakeasies.biz](mailto:info@speakeasies.biz), phone 707-494-9495

Visit The Climate Center website: [theclimatecenter.org](https://theclimatecenter.org) 🌱

# Celebrating 10 Years of Jobs with Justice Advocacy in the North Bay

This year marks the 10th anniversary of North Bay Jobs with Justice (NBjwJ) – a decade of building power and winning economic, racial, and climate justice with workers in the North Bay.

In this past year, with the community's support, NBjwJ had historic, groundbreaking victories in its campaigns with workers on the frontlines of the worsening impacts of climate change:

- We won the first of its kind disaster insurance fund to support immigrant workers when they are unable to work because of the impacts of climate change.
- We won language justice in the county's Evacuation Zone Ag Access program so that indigenous workers can request and receive trainings in their native languages.
- We held the first ever Spanish language prescribed fire training with 25 farmworkers
- We won hazard pay for farmworkers at two companies. And workers are now expanding the fight to the whole industry and continuing to grow and strengthen the coalition.
- We walked the picket line with county workers, healthcare workers, teachers, and hotel workers.
- We marched for immigrant rights and joined a powerful regional campaign for immigration reform.
- We educated on the importance of single payer healthcare for all.
- We supported the fight for renters' rights in Marin and Sonoma counties. 🌱

There will be a celebration of these successes on Sunday July 30, with a community picnic and

awards ceremony, featuring multiple food vendors, live music, a jump house, and games for kids. The community is invited to this family event. [More information and tickets here.](#)

Please contact [max@northbayjwj.com](mailto:max@northbayjwj.com) with any questions. 🌱



## We Call for Sanity, Not Nuclear Production

by *Trish Williams-Mello and Greg Mello*

Further development and manufacturing of nuclear weapons by the United States undermines the ethical basis of our society, breaks treaties our nation has signed, wastes our nation's wealth, and permanently contaminates our environment – while undermining true US national security.

New Mexico's two nuclear weapons labs lead the world in spending for weapons of mass destruction. But as the labs have grown, New Mexico's relative economic standing has declined, and now trails almost all other states. It is consistently ranked at or near the bottom of all states in overall "child well-being."

We cannot build our society, nurture our children, inspire our youth, or improve our communities by investing in nightmares.

At Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), plutonium warhead core ("pit") production is slated to begin in 2023 and ramp up through the mid-2020s, long before any "need" related to maintain current US nuclear weapons at current deployment levels. LANL's pit production program is required only for producing new war-

heads as soon as possible, not for maintaining any old ones.

We call upon our elected officials to:

- Oppose plutonium warhead core ("pit") production at LANL first and foremost, but also elsewhere.
- Oppose the design, testing, and production of new and "upgraded" nuclear weapons.
- Prioritize removal and disposal of approximately 16,120\* drums of legacy plutonium waste from LANL over production of additional nuclear waste from nuclear weapons.
- Choose human security, community resilience, and environmental protection over nuclear weapons production and our bloated military, which (until the special covid relief acts of 2021 and 2022) consumed two-thirds of federal discretionary spending. We can no longer delay. We must use every opportunity, at every level of government, to prioritize human needs, invest in our communities, and build a more just and sustainable society.

\*As of July 22, 2022. 🌱

*Trish Williams-Mello and Greg Mello are founding members of [Los Alamos Study Group](#).*

# The Minimum Wage is Not a Living Wage!

by Martin J. Bennett

In January California raised its minimum wage to \$15.50 per hour. In addition, four cities in the North Bay have set a higher minimum wage that applies to all workers employed within the city boundaries. For example, Santa Rosa and Petaluma employers must pay their workers \$17.06 an hour. In the City of Sonoma, large employers must pay \$17 an hour and small \$16 an hour.

Forty-one California cities and counties have established minimum wages higher than the state. Mountain View's is the highest, which is currently \$18.15 an hour. Although the US Congress has not raised the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour since 2009, 30 states have set their minimum above the federal minimum.

Moreover, according to the National Employment Law Project,

*A living wage is a self-sufficiency wage, or the minimum amount a worker must earn to cover the basic costs of raising a family where they live – including food, transportation, childcare, housing, health insurance, and miscellaneous expenses – without relying on any government assistance.*

12 states and 56 cities and counties have mandated phased-in \$15 minimum wage floors. Last year Hawaii became the first state to approve an \$18 an hour minimum phased in by 2028.

Nevertheless, the minimum wage is still not a living wage. A minimum wage is the lowest an employer legally must pay its workers. A living wage is a self-sufficiency wage, or the minimum amount a worker must earn to cover the basic costs of raising a family where they live – including food, transportation, childcare, housing, health insurance, and miscellaneous expenses – without relying on any government assistance.

The federal minimum does not address the varying cost of living from one state or region to the next, and it is not annually increased for inflation. Only when pressured by the grassroots nationwide "Fight for \$15" movement have high-cost states and local jurisdictions legislated higher minimum wage rates, including automatic annual cost of living adjustments.

## What is a Living Wage for Sonoma County?

Researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology have developed a living wage calculator for every county in America. A self-sufficiency wage is calculated based on family type and each county's actual cost of living. A self-sufficiency budget is one in which a family is not reliant on government assistance, and one basic need, such as food, is not sacrificed to pay for another, such as housing.

To make ends meet in Sonoma County in 2023, according to the MIT calculator, two parents with two children, employed 40 hours a week year-round, must each earn nearly \$31 an hour, or an annual family income of \$126,946 before taxes. Two-thirds of the county's low-income families earn less than \$55,500 annually, with at least one member reporting income from work.

## Consider the following typical monthly 2023 expenses:

\$2,092-plus for fair-market rent, including utilities, as estimated by the US Department of Urban Development for a two-bedroom apartment.

\$1,150-plus for food for meals prepared at home, according to the US Department of Agriculture nutritionally adequate low-cost food plan.

\$784-plus for medical insurance, including copays, deductibles and premiums, supplies and medications, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics consumer expenditure survey.

\$1,172-plus for transportation, including gas, insurance and maintenance for a used car, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Most Sonoma County workers drive to work alone and do not use public transit.

\$2,121-plus for child care – an amount derived from state and county data for the lowest cost options for in-home licensed day care. This cost estimate assumes that a nine-year-old child requires afterschool care and a four-year-old needs full-time care.

\$865-plus in miscellaneous costs for housekeeping, phone, clothing, personal care and internet services, also based on Bureau of Labor Statistics data.

\$746-plus for civic engagement costs related to participation in community activities, including fees and admission and newspapers and education.

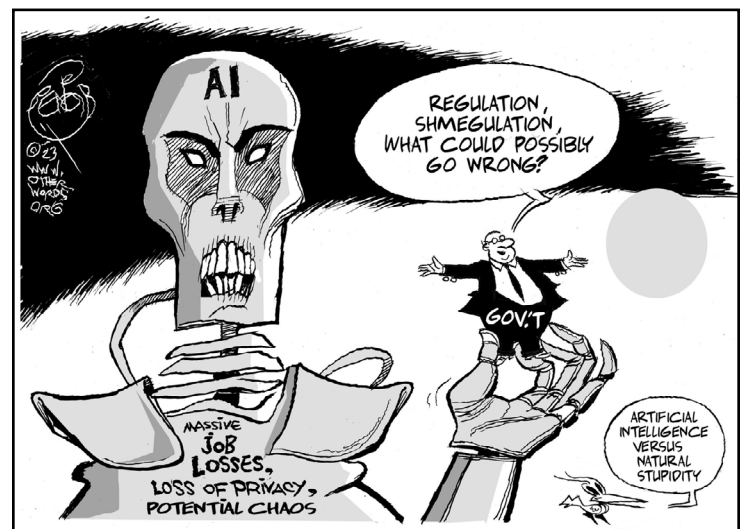
\$1,646-plus for federal and state taxes.

The MIT self-sufficiency standards do not include estimates for other expenses such retirement and education savings and life insurance, which many consider necessities.

Thirty-one dollars an hour is a conservative estimate, but it does provide a yardstick for an ongoing community dialogue about what it costs to make ends meet. Raising the state and local minimum wage, implementing free universal pre-K, and establishing rent control laws, are all policy pathways to living wages. Most important, there is an upsurge of workers at Starbucks, Amazon, UC, and other workplaces unionizing to bargain for a living wage.

A living wage should be the right of all working Americans. 🙌

Martin J. Bennett is Instructor Emeritus of History at Santa Rosa Junior College and a consultant for UNITE HERE Local 2.



# Celebrating the Life of Daniel Ellsberg

by Barry Barnett

Daniel Ellsberg, who leaked the Pentagon Papers in 1971, thus exposing the US Empire's genocidal, ecocidal war on South-east Asia, turned 92 on April 7.

Unfortunately, he was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in February. Doctors have given him three to six months to live. Ellsberg has opted not to undergo chemotherapy, but will accept hospice care when needed.

In case you missed it – or didn't – April 24-30, 2023 was Daniel Ellsberg Week, to honor him and celebrate his life and work, as well as to educate people and stimulate political action. Defense Nuclear War is publishing Ellsberg's valediction, and he has expressed, "All the young activists rising up give me hope as I leave my life."

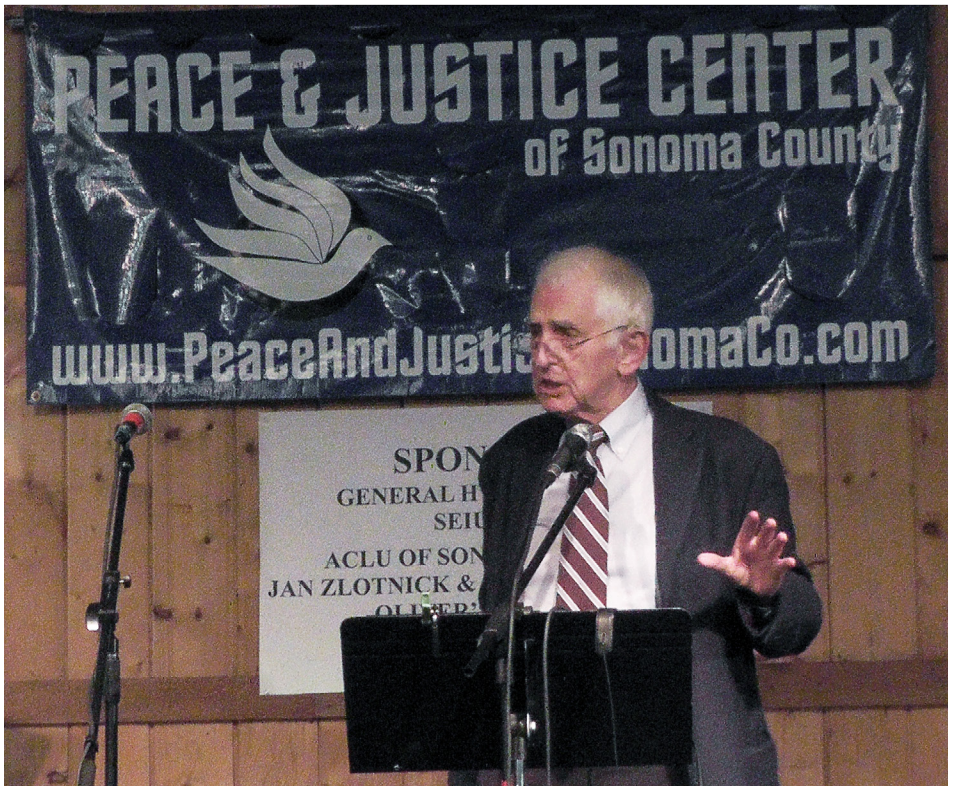
Leaving these, perhaps, morbid sentiments behind, after his trial for leaking classified documents – 7,000 pages of them – Ellsberg continued his brave and historic activism. He avoided a 115 year prison sentence because Tricky Dick's "Plumbers" broke into his psychiatrist's office, forcing Judge Matthew Byrne to declare his indictment under the Espionage Act a mistrial. Ellsberg stated that he would gladly have gone to prison if it shortened the Vietnam War. His efforts did, in fact, help bring down Nixon and end the war.

Ellsberg has been arrested for nonviolent civil disobedience actions almost 90 times. An expert on nuclear weapons from his top-secret work in the Marines and the Air Force-affiliated Rand Corporation, he has given hundreds of lectures on the threat of nuclear war, and taught courses on the nuclear arms race at Stanford and Harvard Medical School.

Two years ago he initiated one of his most audacious acts – still comforting the afflicted and discomfiting the comfortable in his 90's – requesting that he be retried by the US under the Espionage Act. Ellsberg hopes the courts will take on the Act, which has unjustly harassed and imprisoned numerous people who took the risk of publicizing military secrets that should be public knowledge. The sharp increase in the past 15 years, in using the 1917 law intended for prosecuting spies, antiwar protesters and suffragettes, chills needed whistleblowing. So now Americans will know even less about our government, rendering us less able to know what to do.

Subsequent to my release from jail for blockading the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant in August 1981, I met Dan Ellsberg at a big rally at the Concord Naval Weapons Station, where I, and my antinuclear, antiwar affinity group, were protesting against US arms shipments to murderous militias in Central America. I also hugged Alice Walker and listened to the beautiful and defiant voice of Joan Baez.

After a heartfelt talk with him, during which I told him about my activism since age 14, including successfully dodging becoming



Daniel Ellsberg was invited by the PJC to receive the 2013 Peacemaker of the Year award honoring him and all Whistleblowers, present and throughout US history, who courageously revealed information and intelligence and risked their reputations and lives for the people's right to know the truth about governments and corporations. Ellsberg has spoken out in support of Chelsea Manning, Julian Assange, Edward Snowden and the many the public might have forgotten, including: Karen Silkwood, who challenged Kerr-McGee about the safety of a New York state nuclear facility; Jeffrey Wigand, former vice president at Brown & Williamson who proved that cigarette companies were fully aware that they packed their products with addictive levels of nicotine... and so many more. [See list of whistleblowers.](#)

draft fodder for the Vietnam War, my concerns about unjustified US interventions, and fear of nuclear conflict, Dan gave me his personal phone number. He was my best and most empathetic mentor in political organizing for some years. He was a compassionate and unassuming man.

Daniel Ellsberg has been an inspiration to many whistleblowers, including Edward Snowden, Chelsea Manning, and Julian Assange. In the tradition of Dan Ellsberg, we must support them and act to make sure that they, and all political prisoners, are free.

Sources: KPFA News April 2023; The Deceit and Conflict Behind the Release of the Pentagon Papers, Ben Badlee, Jr., The New Yorker 4/8/21; Daniel Ellsberg Week, Defense Nuclear War @ [defensenuclearwar.org](http://defensenuclearwar.org) (with links to many articles and videos by and about Daniel Ellsberg); Why Daniel Ellsberg Wants the US to Prosecute Him Under the Espionage Act, John Swartz, The Intercept 6/1/21. 🐦

Barry Barnett is a political and environmental author and activist writing on the left coast of the US Empire. 100+ articles, political fantasy stories, poetry, and much satire/humor are free of charge to read at [Patreon.com/BarryBarnett](https://Patreon.com/BarryBarnett) (feedback welcome at [barymuse123@gmail.com](mailto:barymuse123@gmail.com), also may donate to support my work for as little as \$1/month). Also past articles at [counterpunch.org/archives](http://counterpunch.org/archives), and [bohemian.com/archives](http://bohemian.com/archives).

# I Ain't Got No Home in this World Anymore

by Rebel Fagin

The number of unhoused people is growing daily. With Covid-19 rent protection, extended food stamps and other pandemic related benefits over, those living on the edge have been quietly pushed over it. But we are not without resources. There are at least two progressive organizations with decidedly different approaches to helping homeless people in need.

SAVS, Sonoma Applied Village Solutions, is led by a combination of social activists, government influencers, business professionals and outreach professionals, to provide affordable shelters with a focus on tiny houses for the unhoused. This helps folks gain the necessary stability to move forward. Horizon Shine Village is managed by SAVS, in cooperation with the city of Sebastopol, to provide support, dignity and a home for 18 to 20 RV residents at 845 Gravenstein Highway.

SAVS caseworkers ensure that every individual has access to wraparound services for recovery. Villagers agree to rules and procedures in order to assist the program's progress. The village provides safe parking, security, sanitation and showers. The idea is that once these campers have achieved some degree of stability, they will be able to move onto more permanent housing.

"As we continue to push for more permanent housing solutions, transitional housing sites like Horizon Shine play critical roles," Sonoma County Supervisor Lynda Hopkins stated. "We have to keep people housed while new sites like George's Hideaway and Caritas Village, and others, prepare to open."

George's Hideaway is a former tavern near Guerneville that is being converted into supportive housing as part of the state's Project Homekey. Caritas Village is a huge project by Highway 101 and the Santa Rosa Mall, operated by Catholic Charities, with temporary housing and many of the services unhoused people need.

One of the county's goals is to create 128 apartments of affordable permanent housing. Now, last I checked, "affordable" housing for a one-bedroom was \$1,500 a month. As of last November, Sonoma County has created 220 temporary Project Homekey housing units.

SAVS also fields an outreach team, which provides emergency

help and supplies such as help with sweep evacuations, cooling/warming centers, food, tents, trash removal, clothes and Narcan (opioid overdose antidote). SAVS can be reached at [sonomavillages.org](http://sonomavillages.org).

And if you are homeless, and trying to find your way through the twisted homeless support systems, there is a place you can find companionship and help. Sonoma County Homeless Action, one of the original activist organizations for the unhoused, is rooted in self-advocacy. "Nothing about us without us" is its motto. It is not a provider/receiver relationship but one of egalitarianism.

Homeless Action is completely volunteer run, and is beholden to no funders and their restrictions. Members include both housed and unhoused people. They meet currently by Zoom on Mondays from 9:30 to 11:00. Go to [homelessaction.net](http://homelessaction.net) to hook up with them and see what they're about. Their mission is to kindly provide mutual support for anyone without a stable home. They take the time to do something very, very important. They validate the individual. So often unhoused people are turned away – people don't talk with them. They shun them and treat them with suspicion. Imagine this is happening to you. How would you feel? What would happen to your psyche?

Homeless Action provides a sympathetic ear and helps people overcome the social isolation and ostracism that comes with not owning property in the United States. The major focus of Homeless Action is to advocate for homeless people, as a whole – within the governmental, law enforcement, and bureaucratic system of Sonoma County. Each week they ask themselves what they can do to change and improve the current situation for homeless people. They act with the advice and assistance of homeless people at their meetings, and welcome those with housing to join them in their efforts.

There's help out there and you can join these groups and others, or send them money to help show compassion to those a step or two less fortunate than you.

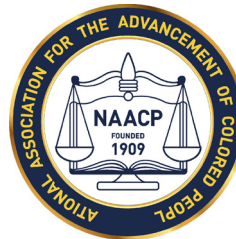
Sources: [sonomavillages.org](http://sonomavillages.org), [hassonoma.org](http://hassonoma.org) and advice from Adrienne Lauby. 🙌



## Sonoma County Commission on Human Rights

The purpose of the Commission on Human Rights is to promote better human relations among all people in Sonoma County through education, mediation, cooperation with County and community agencies, and by initiating action that fosters the recognition of and an appreciation for the cultural diversity of the community.

Monthly meetings on the 4th Tuesday. [See schedule here.](#)  
Email: [chr@sonoma-county.org](mailto:chr@sonoma-county.org) • [Website](#)



# NAACP

Santa Rosa – Sonoma County

Become a member of the NAACP  
Santa Rosa – Sonoma County



PO BOX 3964, Santa Rosa, CA 95403  
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Website: [naacpsantarosasonomaco.org](http://naacpsantarosasonomaco.org)  
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# Violent Response to Food Not Bombs Efforts

by Keith McHenry

On Monday, April 2, Reno Food Not Bombs volunteers Diamond and Clarissa Roman were helping a local woman select items from the clothing donations at the weekly meal when all three were struck by a motorist. They were rushed to the hospital where the woman seeking clothes, 55-year-old Michelle Jardine, was pronounced dead.

Diamond and Clarissa were in critical but stable condition according to hospital staff. Diamond arrived in the emergency room with a broken back. Clarissa's condition upon arrival at the ER was significant. She had a broken clavicle, broken ankle, broken ribs, collapsed lung, and a brain bleed.

The driver, identified as David Turner, made statements to officers that this incident was intentional. He faces one count of open murder and two counts of attempted murder.

Politicians and the media regularly dehumanize the homeless, poor, those who are forced to live outside as criminals and the mentally ill, while passing laws they claim will "protect" the public from the homeless and those who help them. The city of Houston passed a law against the Food Not Bombs meal outside the main library and has been issuing tickets to the volunteers at every serving.

City officials across the country have coordinated with local anti-homeless vigilante groups, whose members and allies encourage violence against the homeless while providing what officials call citizen support for their sweeps of homeless camps and the towing of vehicular homes. Nextdoor.com, and local anti-homeless Facebook sites across the country, spew a tirade of threats against the unhoused, encouraging people to beat the homeless as they sleep, or torch their tents.

Attacks on the homeless are not limited to Reno. A man in a white pickup truck has driven at people during the Food Not Bombs meal in Santa Cruz several times in the last half year.

A homeless man, Jordan Neely was strangled to death on a New York City subway May 1. The freelance journalist who recorded the incident, Juan Alberto Vazquez, told the New York Post that Neely was screaming "in an aggressive manner," and complaining of hunger and thirst. He said Neely did not physically attack anyone.

New York Governor Hochul joined a chorus of people who justified the murder saying that there were many homeless and mentally ill people on New York's subways, but that "There are consequences for behavior." Many on social media called the murderer, Daniel Penny, a "Good Samaritan." Prosecutors charged him with manslaughter. A fundraiser for his legal bills has raised more than \$2.4 million after people called for donations as a show of support. A fundraiser for Neely's funeral arrangements has

raised about \$140,000.

One hate group, Take Back Santa Cruz, has as its treasurer Manuel Prado, the husband of Google's chief council Halimah DeLaine Prado. According to emails we received under the public records act, Prado met regularly with city officials demanding tougher police action against the homeless.

Passing laws to "protect the public" from the homeless helps make it acceptable to attack those who live outside. In Reno, local News 4 reported December 14, 2022, "Washoe County commissioners voted Tuesday to advance an ordinance banning non-recreational camping – a proposal requested by the sheriff to give his office more leeway to clean up homeless encampments in the unincorporated parts of the county." The segment featured piles of trash and dehumanizing descriptions of people with no place to be. Violators would be guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by six months in jail and/or a fine of up to \$500.

The callousness of the public towards the homeless is highlighted in this May 16, 2023 story in the National Post, "One third of Canadians are fine with prescribing assisted suicide for homelessness." The poll shows that, "If a Canadian's only affliction was "poverty," 27 per cent of people said they would be fine with legalizing that person's access to Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID). Another 28 per cent pegged "homelessness" as an appropriate bar to qualify for MAID."

States across the country are preparing for the tidal wave of homeless Americans forced onto the streets by the crashing economic conditions. But instead of making plans to keep families in their homes they are introducing policies to intern the millions who will find themselves without a roof over their heads.

Tennessee was the first US state to make it a felony to camp on public property. It was already illegal to sleep on private property and state property, and now public property has been added.

State senators in California have introduced SB-31. "This bill would prohibit a person from sitting, lying, sleeping, or storing, using, maintaining, or placing personal property upon any street, sidewalk, or other public right-of-way within 1000 feet of a sensitive area, as defined. The bill would specify that a violation of this prohibition is a public nuisance that can be abated and prevented, as provided."

Unlike those driving this ugly inhumane plan to demonize the unhoused into their prison camps we have no access to the media or to the millions of dollars they have allocated to sweep clean the streets of "useless eaters." But we do have the compassion of millions who are one paycheck from becoming homeless themselves.

Food Not Bombs, PO Box 422, Santa Cruz CA 95061-800-884-1136, [foodnotbombs.net](http://foodnotbombs.net) 🐦




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 District 2 - [David.Rabbitt@sonoma-county.org](mailto:David.Rabbitt@sonoma-county.org)  
 District 3 - [Chris.Coursey@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Chris.Coursey@sonoma-county.org)  
 District 4 - [James.Gore@sonoma-county.org](mailto:James.Gore@sonoma-county.org)  
 District 5 - [Linda.Hopkins@sonoma-county.org](mailto:Linda.Hopkins@sonoma-county.org)

**State Senator Mike McGuire**

50 D St., Ste. 120A, Santa Rosa, CA 95404  
 (707) 576-2771, Fax: (707) 576-2773  
[Senator.McGuire@sen.ca.gov](mailto:Senator.McGuire@sen.ca.gov)

**Assemblymember Stephanie Nguyen**

District Offices, 9250 Laguna Springs Drive  
 Suite 220, Elk Grove, CA 95758,  
 Tel: (916) 670-7888  
 Capitol Office: State Capitol  
 P.O. Box 942849, Sacramento, CA 94249-0010  
 Tel: (916) 319-2010

**Assemblymember Jim Wood**

50 D Street, Suite 450, Santa Rosa, CA 95404  
 (707) 576-2526, Fax: (707) 576-2297  
 California Assembly Website: [assembly.ca.gov](http://assembly.ca.gov)

**U.S. Representative Jared Huffman**

1630 Longworth Office Bldg.  
 Washington, DC 20515  
 202-225-5161, 202-225-5163 (Fax)  
 Nearest local office:  
 999 Fifth Ave., #290, San Raphael 94901  
 415-258-9657, 415-258-9913 (Fax)

**U.S. Representative Mike Thompson**

231 Cannon Bldg., Washington D.C. 20515  
 (202) 225-3311, Napa (707) 226-9898  
 Fax: (202) 225-4335, Santa Rosa (707) 542-7182  
 Fax (707) 542-2745

[m.thompson@mail.house.gov](mailto:m.thompson@mail.house.gov)

**U.S. Senator Alejandro Padilla**

112 Hart Senate Office Bldg.  
 Washington, D.C. 20510  
 (202) 224-3553, S.F. (415) 403-0100  
 Relay Fax: 202-224-0454  
[padilla.senate.gov/content/contact-senator](mailto:padilla.senate.gov/content/contact-senator)

**U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein**

331 Hart Senate Office Bldg.  
 Washington, D.C. 20510  
 (202) 224-3841, S.F. (415) 393-0707  
 Fax: (202) 228-3954  
[feinstein@senate.gov](mailto:feinstein@senate.gov)

**California Gov. Gavin Newsom**

State Capitol, Sacramento, Ste. 1173, CA 95814  
 (916) 445-2841, Fax: (916) 445-4633  
[governor@governor.ca.gov](mailto:governor@governor.ca.gov)

**Lt. Gov. Eleni Kounalakis**

State Capital, Rm. 1114, Sacramento, CA 95814  
 (916) 445-8994, Fax (916) 323-4998

**Citizen Comment:** (202) 456-1111

(A 1-minute call before 8 am costs 29 cents; caller's message is recorded for reference of public opinions)

**Congressional Switchboard**

(202) 224-3121

**President Joseph R. Biden**

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 you're watching them.*

# Sonoma County Social Justice Groups

ALL PHONE AREA CODES ARE (707)  
 UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE

**350 Sonoma County** – Engaging our community in the work of [350.org](http://350.org) to solve the climate crisis. [350sonomacounty.org](http://350sonomacounty.org)

**ACLU Sonoma Co.**, working to preserve individual working rights and liberties. [sonomaaclu.org](http://sonomaaclu.org)

**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

**Comité VIDA** – Defends the human and civil rights of immigrants. 523-1740, [cirsc@yahoo.com](mailto:cirsc@yahoo.com),

**Daily Acts** – Offers sustainable solutions rooted in the power of inspired daily actions. 789-9664, [dailyacts.org](http://dailyacts.org)

**Fukushima Response** – works to inform about the Fukushima melt downs, monitor the consequences, advocate for the shut down of Diablo Canyon. [fukushimaresponse.org](http://fukushimaresponse.org). 823-9203

**Green Party of Sonoma County** – [sonomagreenparty.org](http://sonomagreenparty.org)

**Green Sangha** – Spiritually engaged environmental action. [info@greensangha.org](mailto:info@greensangha.org)

**HPEACE** – Health Professionals for Equality and Community Empowerment. [hpeacesonomacounty.wordpress.com](http://hpeacesonomacounty.wordpress.com)

**Healdsburg Peace Project** – Peace and social justice action group, Healdsburg. 431-1129, [healdsburgpeaceproject.org](http://healdsburgpeaceproject.org)

**Hate Free Petaluma** Progressive organization.  
[www.facebook.com/hatefreepetaluma/](http://www.facebook.com/hatefreepetaluma/)

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

**Indivisible Goups** – All the groups are on Facebook.

**Indivisible Sonoma County:** [indivisiblesoco.com](http://indivisiblesoco.com)

**Indivisible Petaluma:** [indivisiblepetaluma@gmail.com](mailto:indivisiblepetaluma@gmail.com),

or follow on Twitter at @IndivisibleLuma

**Indivisible Sebastopol:** [indivisible.wsc@gmail.com](mailto:indivisible.wsc@gmail.com)

**Indivisible Healdsburg**

**Indivisible Windsor**

**LezResist!** A visible unified Lesbian presence in support of each other, and stand in solidarity with the many communities, causes, and policies under attack by the US administration. Info @ [LezResist@gmail.com](mailto:LezResist@gmail.com).

**LGBTQ Connection, Napa & Sonoma Counties** – Sonoma County, 714 Mendocino Ave., Santa Rosa, CA 95401, 707-582-0552, [emerson@lgbtqconnection.org](mailto:emerson@lgbtqconnection.org)

**Listening for a Change** – Programs support listening and oral history to create a caring community. 578-5420, [listeningforchange.org](mailto:listeningforchange.org) **MECHA de Sonoma** – Student group that focuses on issues affecting the Chicano/Latino community. [info@mechadesonoma.org](mailto:info@mechadesonoma.org)

**Los Cien** – advances belonging, trust and equity by engaging with community, facilitating honest dialogue, elevating Latinx pride and power in So.Co. [loscien.org](http://loscien.org)

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

**MOVES-Minimizing Occurrences of Violence in Everyday Society** – Stresses nonviolence as the answer to society's ph. 524-1900

**NAACP - National Association for the Advancement of Colored People** – Seeks to eliminate racial hatred, racial profiling and discrimination. [naacpsantarosasonomaco.org](http://naacpsantarosasonomaco.org) Email: [naacp.srcs1074b@gmail.com](mailto:naacp.srcs1074b@gmail.com) 707.536.1047

**National Women's History Project** – coordinates observances of Women's History month around the country. 636-2888, [nwhp@aol.com](http://nwhp@aol.com)

**North Bay Jobs with Justice** – organized for better conditions and a living wage for workers. Email: [northbayjobswithjustice@gmail.com](mailto:northbayjobswithjustice@gmail.com), Website: [northbayjobswithjustice.org](http://northbayjobswithjustice.org), [www.facebook.com/nbjwj](http://www.facebook.com/nbjwj) Ph: 346-1187

**North Bay Organizing Project** – a regional community organization. [www.facebook.com/NorthBayOrganizingProject](http://www.facebook.com/NorthBayOrganizingProject) 318-2818

**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](http://www.nccpal.org) or find us on Facebook.

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

**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](http://OccupySonomaCounty.org)

**Organizing for Action:** Progressive organizing project. Contact Linda Hemenway: [whatisworking@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:maggik3@sonic.net), [thepeacealliance.org](http://thepeacealliance.org)

**Peace Roots Alliance** – We seek to create a peaceful, just and sustainable world for future generations. 765-0196, [Linda@peaceroots.org](mailto:Linda@peaceroots.org)

**Petaluma Blacks for Community Development** – [facebook.com/pb4cd](https://www.facebook.com/pb4cd)

**Petaluma Progressives** – Grassroots, political education and action group. Producers of the Progressive Festival. 763-8134, [info@progressivefestival.org](mailto:info@progressivefestival.org)

**Praxis Peace Institute** – Peace Education organization, 939-2973, [praxispeace.org](http://praxispeace.org)

**Progressive Sonoma** – Peaceful Resistance Network. An umbrella association to network Sonoma's local progressive action groups. [peacefulresistance9.wix-site.com/progressivesonoma](http://peacefulresistance9.wix-site.com/progressivesonoma). Facebook at Peaceful Resistance Sonoma

**Project Censored/Media Freedom Foundation** – Publishes the top 25 most censored news stories each year. [Mickey@projectcensored.org](http://Mickey@projectcensored.org). [projectcensored.org](http://projectcensored.org)

**Racial Justice Allies** – Developing anti-racist practices among white social justice activists. 795-2890 [racialjusticeallies@gmail.com](mailto:racialjusticeallies@gmail.com), [www.racialjusticeallies.org](http://www.racialjusticeallies.org)

**Sonoma County Black Forum:** Our mission is to lead, serve, and thrive, by promoting positive community and youth engagement events. Monthly meetings. [sonoma-countyblackforum@gmail.com](mailto:sonoma-countyblackforum@gmail.com)

**Physicians for a National Health Program, Sonoma County (PNHP)**. In support of single payer health insurance. 763-1925. [sngold@juno.com.pnhpca.org](http://sngold@juno.com.pnhpca.org).

**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 [Sonoma-CountyCAN@gmail.com](mailto:Sonoma-CountyCAN@gmail.com) (email preferred).

**Sonoma County Coastal Hills:** [gardens@mcn.org](mailto:gardens@mcn.org)

**Sonoma County Nonviolence Training Collective** offers free trainings in methods and principles for progressive social change and peace. [soconvtc@gmail.com](mailto:soconvtc@gmail.com).

**Sonoma County Resistance** via [change.org](http://change.org)

**Sonoma Solidarity with Standing Rock** – Supporting indigenous rights and fossil fuel resistance. [SonomaSolidarity.org](http://SonomaSolidarity.org), [facebook.com/SonomaNoDAPL](http://facebook.com/SonomaNoDAPL). 792-4422.

**Sonoma Valley Peace & Justice** – Peace and social justice group for Sonoma Valley. [audreyvh@sbcglobal.net](mailto:audreyvh@sbcglobal.net)

**Sunrise Movement, Sonoma County Hub** – Our hub believes in the power of mobilizing youth, taking direct and indirect action, building political power, civic engagement, and partnerships. More info: [www.sunrisesoco.org](http://www.sunrisesoco.org) and [facebook.com/SunriseSoCo](http://facebook.com/SunriseSoCo)

**SURJ (Showing Up For Racial Justice, Sonoma County)** – [facebook.com/SURJSonomaCounty](https://www.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

**VIDAS - Vital Immigrant Defense Advocacy and Services** 576 B St Suite 1C, Santa Rosa, CA 95401, [vidaslegal.org](http://vidaslegal.org) Sonoma County, Napa County, Solano County Providing Low-Cost, Immigration Law Services, Advocacy, and Community Education. (707) 523-1740, Spanish/English, Monday-Friday 9am-1pm and 2-5pm

**Legal Assistance 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. 575-3150, [justicewomen.com](http://justicewomen.com)

**For additions or changes to this list,  
 please email [zenekar2@gmail.com](mailto:zenekar2@gmail.com)  
 type "PEACE PRESS" on Subject line.**

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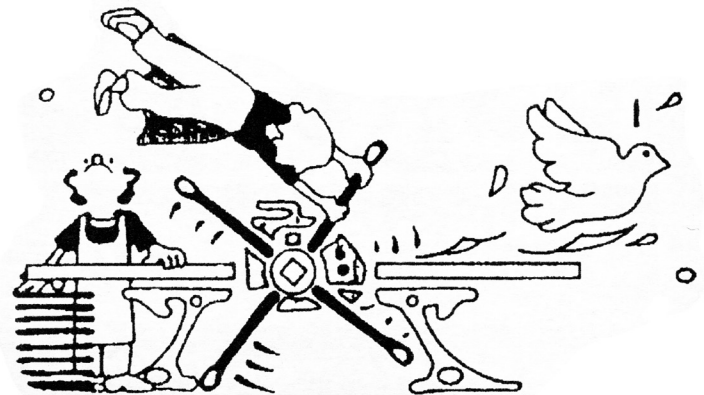
**PEACE & JUSTICE CENTER**  
467 SEBASTOPOL AVE, SANTA ROSA  
More info: [HealthcareForAllSonoma@gmail.com](mailto:HealthcareForAllSonoma@gmail.com)

## PEACE & JUSTICE CENTER OF SONOMA COUNTY

467 Sebastopol Ave.  
Santa Rosa, CA 95401  
(707) 575-8902

[peacentr@sonic.net](mailto:peacentr@sonic.net)  
[PJCso.co.org](http://PJCso.co.org)

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