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The City that Ended Hunger

Hunger is not caused by a scarcity of food but a scarcity of democracy.

*By Frances Moore Lappé;
Abridged by Astrid Webster*

What does a democracy look like that enables citizens to have a real voice in securing life's essentials? Does it exist anywhere? Is it possible or a pipe dream? With hunger on the rise here in the United States—one in 10 of us is now turning to food stamps—these questions take on new urgency.

Brazil's fourth largest city, Belo Horizonte, is a rich trove of the possible. **Belo, a city of 2.5 million people, once had 11 percent of its population living in absolute poverty, and almost 20 percent of its children going hungry.** Then in 1993, a newly elected administration declared food a right of citizenship. The officials said, in effect: If you are too poor to buy food in the market—you are no less a citizen. I am still accountable to you.

The new mayor, Patrus Ananias—now leader of the federal anti-hunger effort—began by creating a city agency, which included assembling a 20-member council of citizen, labor, business, and church representatives to advise in the design and implementation of a new food system. The city already involved regular citizens directly in allocating municipal resources—the “participatory budgeting” that started in the 1970s and has since spread across Brazil. During the first six years of Belo's food-as-a-right policy, perhaps in response to the new emphasis on food security, the number of citizens engaging in the city's participatory budgeting process doubled to more than 31,000.

The city agency developed dozens of innovations to assure everyone the right to food, especially by weaving together the interests of farmers and consumers. It offered local family farmers dozens of choice spots of

public space on which to sell to urban consumers, essentially redistributing retailer mark-ups on produce—which often reached 100 percent—to consumers and the farmers. Farmers' profits grew, since there was no wholesaler taking a cut. And poor people got access to fresh, healthy food.

When my daughter Anna and I visited Belo Horizonte to write Hope's Edge we approached one of these stands. A farmer in a cheerful green smock, emblazoned with “Direct from the Countryside,” grinned as she told us, “I am able to support three children from my five acres now. Since I got this contract with the city, I've even been able to buy a truck.”

The improved prospects of these Belo farmers were remarkable considering that, as these programs were

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Boom or Bust: Passing Gas In Mora County

By Fiona Sinclair

As our cities partake in green vision quests, dreaming a carbon neutral future, rural New Mexicans tremble at the possibility that this beautiful landscape will be gutted and poisoned by the pipelines, access roads, flare-stacks and toxic holding ponds wrought by a natural gas boom carried on in the name of climate change.

With the Federal Administration pushing natural gas cars and “energy options” as stepping stones to reducing CO2 emissions on target with a new global deal, those of us sitting atop “Split Estates” are experiencing how the agenda of global corporations takes precedence over community concerns like the future of our land base and our water; not to mention our overall quality of life.

The Emperor's New Clothes

At the end of the year the world meets in Copenhagen to hash out a new climate agreement to supersede the Kyoto Protocol. Kyoto should have driven global emissions down to 1990 levels, but without the participation of the USA—which produced approximately 25% of the world's carbon emissions until recently overtaken by China—Kyoto was bound to fail. Copenhagen is a different story in one respect at least: the Obama Administration is on board. Having said that:

The “emission impossible” task on the table this time around has the politicians promoting alternative energy, BUT --- alongside “renewables” such as natural gas, nuclear (fission) power and “clean” coal. The drive behind the current push to buy-up subsurface mineral rights is directly connected to this agenda. Talk about the



Ojo Feliz, Mora County, NM. Photo by Fiona Sinclair

emperor's new clothes.

So What's a “Split Estate”?

This simply means that many land owners own only the surface of their land; not what's under the surface. With 80% of land ownership falling into the Split Estate category many folk are finding that the subsurface rights under their land—the dominant estate—are being bought up by prospectors and sold to oil and gas companies. Under the Takings Law a gas rig can be set up 100 feet from your house, use enormous amounts of water and routinely inject “non-proprietary fluids” into the ground. This undisclosed cocktail of chemicals is not only exempt from the Clean Air and Clean Drinking Water Acts, but ends up in surface ponds (some lined, some not), contaminates wells, causes severe health problems, can poison cattle, deplete the water table, and generally ruin the integrity of all life in the area.

Given the enormity of the prob-

lem humanity currently faces as atmospheric carbon levels rise, it is understandable that the primary decision makers—government and business officials, intellectuals—should rally to pull out all the stops and put every energy option on the table. But it doesn't make sense, by any meaning of the word, to consider short term profits at the expense of the environment; especially given the fact that we have renewable technologies that achieve the same result without harming the environment or the lives of people who depend on this fragile land base for survival.

Unfortunately, short sighted decision making at the federal level filters down to the local. In Mora County Shell Oil recently submitted a re-write of the county Land Use Plan removing references to historic agricultural practices in favor of drilling and development. Meanwhile, protests

*See **GAS** on page 2*

Galaxies Colliding

By V.B. Price

The Hubble Telescope has shown us images recently of colliding galaxies, one larger and more powerful than the other. The larger consumes the smaller, and a new chaotic system is born.

In Albuquerque and the American West, two economic galaxies are on a collision course right now. It's an unprecedented situation. And no one really knows how to respond.

A smaller economic galaxy, that used to seem dominant, is about to be swallowed up by an immense, new, uncontrollable swirling of energy.

The old economic galaxy spins around a moribund view of prosperity that's built on population growth, building starts, immense water debt, vulnerable federal highway money, colonization by national and international corporate giants that control whole retail sectors and crush local business.

This is the galaxy of physical growth at any cost, what urban historian Lewis Mumford used to call “mindless giantism.” Not only is this energy system running out of steam, its brain trust finds itself in power in Albuquerque. But it's a galaxy of fading stars.

Mayor Richard Berry, a Republican, will try to steer this old galactic boat through uncharted spaces. We can only hope that, by some miracle, he sees the vast new galaxy that looms ahead and manages to squeak past it before its overwhelms him and us.

But, I'm afraid, this new galaxy threatens every city in West, many infinitely richer and more powerful than ours. It's a negative force at the moment, looking for more energy. We don't know where its silver lining can be found.

It spins around bank failures, crippling fears of both deflation and inflation, around bitter joblessness, housing bubbles bursting, interest rates that punish responsible savers, and banks that won't lend money at all. In the center of this vortex is peak oil, dirty coal, global warming and the water scarcity it causes which promises to ignite ferocious water wars among cities and states in the West. As the Colorado River and the Rio Grande are diminished by protracted periods of drought, even megacities are vulnerable to financial withering.

These wars will cost more millions than small states like New Mexico can afford. The old cluster of fading stars spun on the illusion of limitless energy, limitless water, and limitless growth. The colliding stars are limits come to life.

When these galaxies collide, the small dying ones filled with dimming stars like Albuquerque, with all its lost money and out of date expertise, might just fall out of the sky. Most will keep on doing what they know how to do, grow on waste. But the energy won't be there. Al-

buquerque won't be able to compete with big cities desperately facing the same new force of negative energy that threatens even them. And when monster urbs come after our water, chances are we could lose.

As these force fields collide, big cities will seem to gobble up smaller ones, not physically, but psychologically, and as marketing realities. Albuquerque/Santa Fe will become cultural spas and hideaways for Denver, San Antonio, and Phoenix. Until they run out of excess money too.

The new galaxy of scarcity could literally leech money and energy from small states and their cities, so they must withdraw from active participation in old style growth competition because they are forced to spend vast sums just to keep what water they have.

Chances are Albuquerque's new administration will keep on trying to do things—like loop roads and big developments—that simply no longer work, waiting for conditions to change, planning for when the brutal new galaxy magically goes away. But it won't.

As these forced collide, big cities in the West that took the old economic model as far as it could go, growing malignantly without restraint, will find themselves facing the unthinkable—that they can't sustain themselves by overpowering farmers for water and simply exhausting the competition by their sheer size. Who knows what they'll do.

But steering a small city through a galactic storm has to be easier than trying to steer a mammoth armada of gigantic vessels that have run out of gas.

At some point, small cities like Albuquerque will see that the old economic energy has spent itself trying to survive the new force fields of scarcity. And as big cities around it flounder trying to save themselves, little cities like ours might gain the competitive edge—if they can build new economic energy from the surrounding chaos by responding to scarcity in innovative ways and abandoning old dreams proven unsustainable.

In the collision of waste and scarcity, a new galaxy might be born, one populated by small urban stars embracing conservation, local agriculture, infill development, cultural richness, alternative fuel transportation, and a love of the land on which they depend. These small cities will be enclaves in which waste has been banished, in which new energy is generated by the tension between imagination and hard times.

And when you stop to think about it, steering a course through galactic chaos, a small city like Albuquerque is much easier to turn around than sinking ships like Los Angeles, Phoenix, Las Vegas, and Denver—if the captain is open to what it takes to prevail.

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NYC: Climate Activists Expose the True “Green” of Big Enviros, Deliver Giant Climate “Bill” to Offices

Published by Matt Wilkerson, September 25th, 2009

(New York) Climate justice activists from Rising Tide North America and Climate SOS in New York took to the streets on the final day of the UN Climate summit, making house-calls to the New York offices of the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), and the Nature Conservancy. NRDC’s street-level banner was festooned with a 14 foot mock “Climate Bill” in the form of \$2 trillion bank note (the approximate value of a U.S. carbon market). Imagery on the giant spoof bill critiques roles of many large environmental groups in their push for passage of the American Clean Energy and Security Act (ACESA), chiefly for its advocacy of a carbon market. Following NRDC, the offices of EDF and The Nature Conservancy received delivery visits where activists desperately tried to present organizational representatives with their ver-



sion of the “green”. These organizations are leading members of the US Climate Action Partnership (USCAP), which has united them with highly polluting corporations such as Dow, DuPont, General Electric and Alcoa Aluminum under the auspices of lobbying Congress to reduce emissions. This unsavory alliance played a major role in crafting the Waxman-Markey

ACESA bill (HR 2454) passed by the US House of Representatives in July, and expected to make its way for a Senate vote imminently. Hundreds of environmental groups OPPOSE the current US climate bill. They recognize the bill’s cap and trade provisions as a dangerous false solution, that is inherently unstable and that has historically proven incapable of reducing carbon dioxide

emissions. This event is the culmination of a three week, seven city tour, sponsored by Climate SOS, an informal alliance of scientists, activists, and local and regional environmental groups that are opposed to the current climate bill, having observed the failure of “market mechanisms” used to date to ameliorate the climate crisis. The activists argue that the House

ACESA bill “just doesn’t add up,” pointing out that it falls far short of scientifically valid targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions; removes the EPA’s authority to regulate emissions under the Clean Air Act; and incorporates massive corporate giveaways into its cap-and-trade program. If such a bill were to pass, polluting corporations would be able to defer urgently needed emissions reductions for decades under the bill’s offset provisions. International groups widely condemn the lack of US leadership on climate issues and demand that wealthy countries pay their share of the accumulated “climate debt.”
Contacts:
David Vine (Rising Tide): 207-956-0141
Rachel Smolker, Ph.D. 802-482-2848
Brian Tokar, 802-595-9677
Organizational Links & Info:
Rising Tide North America – <http://www.risingtidenorthamerica.org>
Climate SOS – <http://www.climate-sos.org>

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getting underway, farmers in the country as a whole saw their incomes drop by almost half. In addition to the farmer-run stands, the city makes good food available by offering entrepreneurs the opportunity to bid on the right to use well-trafficked plots of city land for “ABC” markets, from the Portuguese acronym for “food at low prices.” Today there are 34 such markets where the city determines a set price—about two-thirds of the market price—of about twenty healthy items, mostly from in-state farmers and chosen by store-owners. Everything else they can sell at the market price. “For ABC sellers with the best spots, there’s another obligation attached to being able to use the city land,” a former manager within this city agency, Adriana Aranha, explained. “Every weekend they have to drive produce-laden trucks to the poor neighborhoods outside of the city center, so everyone can get good produce.” Another product of food-as-a-right thinking is three large, airy “People’s Restaurants” (Restaurante Popular), plus a few smaller venues, that daily serve 12,000 or more people using mostly locally grown food for the equivalent of less than 50 cents a meal.”I’ve been

coming here every day for five years and have gained six kilos,” beamed one elderly, energetic man in faded khakis. “It’s silly to pay more somewhere else for lower quality food,” an athletic-looking young man in a military police uniform told us. “I’ve been eating here every day for two years. It’s a good way to save money to buy a house so I can get married,” he said with a smile. No one has to prove they’re poor to eat in a People’s Restaurant, although about 85 percent of the diners are. The mixed clientele erases stigma and allows “food with dignity,” say those involved. Belo’s food security initiatives also include extensive community and school gardens as well as nutrition classes. Plus, money the federal government contributes toward school lunches, once spent on processed, corporate food, now buys whole food mostly from local growers. **The result of these and other related innovations?** In just a decade Belo Horizonte cut its infant death rate—widely used as evidence of hunger—by more than half, and today these initiatives benefit almost 40 percent of the city’s 2.5 million population. One six-month

period in 1999 saw infant malnutrition in a sample group reduced by 50 percent. And between 1993 and 2002 Belo Horizonte was the only locality in which consumption of fruits and vegetables went up. **The cost of these efforts?** Around \$10 million annually, or less than 2 percent of the city budget. That’s about a penny a day per Belo resident. Behind this dramatic, life-saving change is what Adriana calls a “new social mentality”—the realization that “everyone in our city benefits if all of us have access to good food, so—like health care or education—quality food for all is a public good.” The Belo experience shows that a right to food does not necessarily mean more public handouts (although in emergencies, of course, it does.) It can mean redefining the “free” in “free market” as the freedom of all to participate. It can mean, as in Belo, building citizen-government partnerships driven by values of inclusion and mutual respect. And when imagining food as a right of citizenship, please note: No change in human nature is required! Through most of human evolution—except for the last few thousand of roughly 200,000 years—Homo sapiens lived

in societies where pervasive sharing of food was the norm. As food sharers, “especially among unrelated individuals,” humans are unique, writes Michael Gurven, an authority on hunter-gatherer food transfers. Except in times of extreme privation, when some eat, all eat. “We’re fighting the concept that the state is a terrible, incompetent administrator,” Adriana explained. “We’re showing that the state doesn’t have to provide everything, it can facilitate. It can create channels for people to find solutions themselves.” *Frances Moore Lappé wrote this article as part of Food for Everyone, the Spring 2009 issue of YES! Magazine. Frances is the author of many books including Diet for a Small Planet and Get a Grip, co-founder of Food First and the Small Planet Institute, and a YES! contributing editor.* *The author thanks Dr. M. Jahi Chappell for his contribution to the article.* YES! is a part of the Creative Commons movement. We don’t use standard copyright licensing on our work because we want you to pass along our stories of hope and positive change. Back issues are available at www.yes-magazine.org

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submitted by hundreds of county residents fall on deaf ears as a new county court house rises into the sky. At 55,000 square feet this Anti-Christ of Green is roomy enough for every county resident and their milk goat with room to spare. This is a heavy weight for future generations to bear, yet a weight that Shell Oil bears lightly as it rides the wave of global demise to bring hope in the form of a dark angel swinging her sword of destruction so the county can pay its dues on time. **Some Better Ideas** These are critical times, with critical decisions to be made. Yet some very bad decisions are already on the table, primarily influenced by the lure of money and power. Instead, we need holistic actions which consider the big-

ger picture without compromising the integrity of the land. These include feed-in tariffs from household solar arrays, mini-hydro, geothermal and local small scale wind technologies, alongside a decision making process that encourages local food production, efficient building practices and less consumption; all this coupled with the promotion of local markets. Such a long term perspective not only creates a sounder economy for poor rural communities, but empowers folk with the tools and consciousness to move forward into a world where decisions are made for the benefit of all instead of a few corporate hogs vying to squeeze the last drop of profit from an already compromised earth. I encourage those of you comfortable with

the easy flick of a thermostat to think twice about where your energy comes from. Natural gas is pretty clean and convenient at the user (our) end, but at the production end it’s creating a host of problems; not only for those of us busy preparing your top soil, but also in our underground water as it makes its way to your lips and your shower. This is not a boom or bust issue. The intricate web of life requires that we consider multiple solutions that protect the environment and address equality while promoting economic vitality and restraining abuse. Given our planetary odds right now it’s about the best shot we have. *Dr. Fiona Sinclair is a community activist who lives off the grid in Mora, NM, where she produces zero net emissions and a near zero waste footprint. To schedule talks, projections, workshops, video showings or ask questions, email rumgumption@yahoo.com*

This issue cannot cover adequately the many important concerns that are left out of MSM, minimally covered or misrepresented. Truth is hard to come by! The FOAT Board would like to suggest additional sources of information to our readers and we would like to know yours. Send your suggested sources to ABQ Trial Balloon, P.O. Box 35058, Albuquerque NM 87176-5058.
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Come hear Dr. Sinclair speak about both the Split Estate issue and what the oil and gas industry is up to in Northern New Mexico:

“SPLIT ESTATE”
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Citizens Win Shutdown of Kirtland AFB Open Burning; Now Challenge Open Detonations and Perchlorate Contamination in Albuquerque’s Groundwater

By Dave McCoy
October 16, 2009

Protect Air and Water (PAW), Albuquerque and Santa Fe environmental organizations and over a thousand petitioners shared a victory with the New Mexico Environment Department in halting the annual open burning of 80,000 pounds hazardous waste at Kirtland Air Force Base. Supporters to end open burning and detonation included many health care workers and residents living near Kirtland AFB.

Citizen concerns still remain high for the Open Detonation unit that will explode up to 100,000 pounds of hazardous waste a year. Citizen Action New Mexico, Citizens for Alternatives to Radioactive Dumping (CARD) and Registered Geologist Robert Gilkeson requested by letter that Secretary Ron Curry of the New Mexico Environment Department make efforts to:

- stop the ongoing detonation of hazardous waste;
- install groundwater monitoring wells, and;
- clean up toxic wastes such as

perchlorate and heavy metals.

Open detonation practices at the Kirtland AFB Explosive Ordinance Depot have much more impact on Albuquerque’s air quality than open burning. The list of dangerous chemicals and heavy metals that are exploded into the air that Albuquerque breathes fill six pages.

The largest source of the toxic waste for open detonation is tens of thousands of pounds of rocket motors sent to Kirtland AFB from Sandia Labs.

The disposal of rocket motors and ammunition has led to widespread contamination of groundwater by perchlorates at Kirtland AFB and other military installations in New Mexico and 21 other states. Drinking water for millions of people has been contaminated by perchlorate.

A 2005 National Academies of Science report reveals that perchlorates are roughly ten times more toxic to humans than the Department of Defense has been claiming. Perchlorate can inhibit thyroid function, cause birth defects and lower IQs. They are considered particularly dangerous to children. 97% of

breast milk samples taken randomly from around the U.S. have tested positive for perchlorates.

A letter from Environment Department Secretary Ron Curry to the Environmental Protection Agency describes perchlorate found at Kirtland AFB and Sandia Labs as seeping into Albuquerque’s city municipal drinking water wells. Secretary Curry stated, “Data collected in 2008 showed perchlorate in the School House Mesa Well. Yet very little groundwater monitoring data has been obtained for perchlorate at Kirtland.”

The only monitoring well at the Explosive Ordinance site is the School House Mesa Well.

According to Robert Gilkeson, a Registered Geologist and hydrogeologist, “A minimum of three down-gradient monitoring wells and one background monitoring well are required to be installed at the range under the Hazardous Waste Act. The groundwater monitoring at the Kirtland AFB open detonation range is completely unreliable for water sampling as is true for numerous groundwater monitoring wells at

Kirtland AFB, Sandia Labs and Los Alamos National Laboratories.”

Mr. Gilkeson adds that although the School House Mesa Well is detecting perchlorate, the monitoring well is unreliable for detecting just how much perchlorate and other other contaminants are in the groundwater. He says a new monitoring well should be installed at the location of the School House Mesa Well at the same time that the old well is plugged and abandoned.

Mr. Gilkeson says, “The continuing explosions create craters that continuously fracture the ground. The craters are a collection point for rainfall to carry the poisonous soil contaminants into the shallow groundwater. The strongly sloping topography predicts that the groundwater flow is to the west toward the Rio Grande River. There is no groundwater monitoring well to the west of the explosion crater. The only monitoring well, the School House Mesa Well, is cross-gradient 3/4 of a mile away to the north.”

Repeated open detonations over decades on the same contaminated tract of land at Kirtland AFB cause

the re-suspension of accumulated soil contamination into Albuquerque’s air pathway.

The open detonations release other poisons to soil and air such as organic solvents, Hexavalent Chromium (Erin Brokovich), Arsenic, Lead, Mercury, Beryllium, Barium, Chromium, Selenium and radionuclides that are known to cause cancer, respiratory diseases, brain damage and fetal injury.

- Open detonations cause higher carbon monoxide emissions when Albuquerque already exceeds carbon monoxide limits under the Clean Air Act.
- The annual amount of particulate matter from open detonation is 20 times greater than for open burning;
- Nitrogen dioxide from open detonation is more than ten times greater than open burning.
- Open detonation for hydrogen sulfide is at the maximum allowable amount by New Mexico’s ambient air standard.

Contact: Dave McCoy, Director
Citizen Action New Mexico
(505) 262-1862

Obama administration moving forward on oil shale development on public lands

Published by Matt Wilkerson,
October 21st, 2009

As further proof that the Obama administration is serious about tackling climate change kissing up to big oil, the Dept of Interior announced today that it would go ahead with a second round of federal oil shale leases. While most news outlets focused on the DoI scrutinizing royalties for shale oil, the real news is that the Obama administration is opening up our public lands to destructive oil extraction. “With this new round of [research, development, and demonstration] leases, we hope to move closer to responsibly and sustainably developing our oil shale resources,” said

Interior Secretary Ken Salazar.

Of course there is nothing responsible or sustainable about oil shale. The process of extracting oil shale is similar to tar sands. The land is strip mined, then the oil is baked out of the rock by heating it to high temperatures. This is a process that destroys the land, uses massive amounts of water (most US oil shale is in arid climates), and uses massive amounts of energy. If tar sands are any indicator, it may take as much as 1 barrel of oil to extract two barrels of oil, greatly boosting the carbon footprint of shale oil.

While oil shale is still in the research and development phase, and oil companies have yet to find an

economical way to extract it, we must take it seriously. Not only is shale oil a global warming time bomb (potential recoverable reserves estimated as high as 800 billion barrels), we would witness the wholesale destruction of our public lands due to strip mining. The majority of oil shale reserves are found on public lands which have remained largely untouched by development. If oil shale gains a foothold we may very well be facing the same atrocious environmental crimes committed in the Alberta tar sands on our home turf.

itsgettinghotinhere.org/author/mattwilkerson.

Dispatches from the Youth Climate Movement



New Plug-In Electric Vehicles Need Legislative Fix

By Janet Bridgers

Editor’s Note: *The following article, like the film Who Killed the Electric Car, documents how innovative, energy and environment saving products can be legislated or advertised into the invisible fringes of the marketplace by elected officials, even the products own developers, because allowing them to become viable or even popular would threaten the acceptance of lesser, but already highly profitable products.*

Things were looking good last January in Santa Fe for a bill to create a new category of Medium Speed Vehicle (MSV) for the next generation of urban electric cars. It had passed the New Mexico House unanimously, 66 to 0, and was passed by two Senate Committees. When the final days of the legislative session passed without the bill being brought up for a Senate vote, it died.

Unfortunately, this meant another year that well-constructed electric

city runabouts would languish in the marketplace. Confining these cars to the Low Speed Vehicle (LSV) category, which restricts their speed to 25 mph, for use only on roads posted 30 mph or less, keeps them from being considered as transportation, able to meet the demands of most city driving far more efficiently than drivers now expect.

This vehicle is not your father’s golf cart, though the automobile industry would probably rest easier if you thought so. Dr. Paul Watson, a UNM biology professor, after extensive research on this category of cars and finding the Zenn Electric to be by far the most readily available, middle-class affordable and well-engineered electric car in the LSV category, began to market the Zenn in New Mexico. Its design is derived from a European vehicle with a diesel drive train and a crash cage. Its robust chassis is constructed in France, its motor and many other major parts are made in America and its assembly is completed in Canada.

The Zenn Electric has the capacity to carry four adults or a generous mixture of kids, dogs and groceries. It is designed for use in cities where the majority of daily car-trips average well within the 25-35 mile range of the electric’s military-grade lead acid “traction” batteries. A 30-60 minute mid-day plug-in into any regular 110 volt outlet can boost the range another 10 miles, a major innovation over earlier electric cars.

In one of the most hopeful indicators for the planet, these vehicles can run off solar energy generated by photovoltaic panels then converted to AC, requiring only a 1500 watt power converter. Just imagine.

The legislative fix for Zenn and similar cars, HB294A, will be reintroduced in January 2010 as part of the Governor’s legislative agenda. It defines what a medium speed vehicle is and how it has to be constructed. “It takes the whole LSV world and selects out a new type that is much better constructed, provides more occupant protection than the tradition-

al LSV and allows for the addition 10 mph, up to 35 mph on roads posted for 45 mph or less,” said Dr. Watson. “The idea, though, that keeps running through my head is that when the community truly realizes the true multiple costs of a gallon of gasoline, in terms of oil wars in the Middle East, vehicle-generated air pollution and the global warming component of vehicle transportation, it will do

even more for the Zenn Electric than a MSV category.”

But for now, it’s 25 mph or less for the Zenn. More information on this and like powered vehicles may be obtained at www.zenncarsabq.com, pluginamerica.org, and nmsea.org (so we won’t need to build new nuclear power plants to charge our cars).

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Loco or Local: Bi-polar New Mexico

By Astrid Webster

New Mexico is a great cross-roads, at once the site of some of the most hopeful developments of our times and some of the most ominous. Living here affords us many opportunities to influence and participate in the decisions and actions that will shape our collective future.

The importance of these times, and our place in them, brought David Orr to UNM twice in the past six months. His first talk, “Aldo Leopold’s Land Ethic and Confronting Climate Change” on April 9, dealt with the dual economic and environmental crises. The first to record things going awry environmentally, noted Orr, was Svante Arrhenius when he observed a “greenhouse effect” arising from atmospheric carbon concentration of 220 parts per million (ppm) in 1896. “A clear uptick began around 1958 with 315 ppm,” without causing much concern and Lyndon Johnson was the first president to be told of the rise, with warnings becoming increasingly frequent and urgent during 1970’s and 90’s.

Human forcing of climate exerts much more impact than was anticipated and small changes have very large effects. According to the Stern Review, temperature change, relative to pre-industrial times, will affect our water, our food and all ecosystems. What happens to the water from drought happens to food and everything else. Jim Hansen, the best climate scientist in Orr’s estimation, said 5 years ago that we have a 10 year window to solve this, needing to go very quickly back to 350 ppm and then more gradually to 300 ppm. Those of us from industrialized nations contribute most of the 7 billion tons of carbon added to the atmosphere annually, Orr cautions, yet find global warming unfathomable and therefore don’t think about it.

Much as we might want to, we won’t achieve the necessary 90% reduction of our carbon footprint by 2050 without acknowledging and changing the ways in which we are destroying, in Orr’s words “the only Eden we have ever known.” Energy is key, though

there are many other resource saving steps we can take on the way to cleaner, more sustainable sources. One concrete, very effective suggestion that Orr had was to put reservoirs further north and at higher elevations to conserve water by reducing evaporation.

The Slow Money Gathering in Santa Fe, on September 9-11, centered around the kinds of fundamental change that sustaining our planet will demand: local economies, farm to table operations supported by local investors to minimize the need for transportation and the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides “that destroy soil fertility” according to Slow Money author, Woody Tasch. The “modern agricultural system has had enormously violent consequences when measured in things like the destruction of rural economies, the destruction of rural culture, the loss of biodiversity, soil erosion, and unsustainable patterns of rural-to-urban migration,” says Tasch. The Santa Fe meeting, Slow Money’s first national gathering following three regional planning events, brought investors and stakeholders together with farmers, producers of organic whole food items, restaurateurs and other business owners seeking investors.

Judging from the spirited conversation and smiling faces at lunch on the second day, many happy entrepreneur-investor matches were made over a wholesome, delicious and locally grown La Montanita meal. Attendees heard talks by several dozen entrepreneurs including Judy Wicks, former owner of Philadelphia’s White Dog Café and founder of BALLE, the Business Alliance for Local, Living Economies and the owner of Gather, a raw food restaurant and meeting place in the Bay Area. Also represented were the Carrot Project, Red Tomato and Estancia’s own Old Windmill Dairy. Slow Money’s vision of food production without violence was illustrated in two fun and informative documentaries shown at the gathering, *Dirt* and *Food Fight*.

In stark contrast to Tasch and Orr’s work, much of New Mexico’s occupation and preoccupa-

tion is with weapons and military operations designed to secure ever larger shares of the world’s resources for ever fewer people. Both put sustainability and a healthy planet on the chopping block as they squander energy in pursuit of resources belonging to others. Most of the people so occupied would assert that they are making a living but evidence is to the contrary; they are making a killing, both in terms of the profitability of violence and the cost in lives.

David Korten’s Agenda for a New Economy does a masterful job of sorting good from ill in both our history and economy. He makes a solid case for needing to stop predatory business practices that inevitably lead to one disaster after another, from growing inequity and violence to resource wars and planetary degradation. Here in New Mexico we need only point to an over 2 billion dollar price tag for a new nuclear weapons factory at Los Alamos and a new generation of nuclear bombs to see where money for renewable energy is hemorrhaging from the holes in our logic and our morals. As if nuclear weapons were not enough of a curse, we are also the source of the drones that make war mimic video games. Point, click and kill has no legitimate place in either democracy or humanity. No wonder we have a hard time waking up; if we get rid of such nonsense, we might want to awaken. If you doubt the wisdom of Korten’s belief that we must divest ourselves of the Wall Street model of capitalism, reading Matt Taibbi’s “Wall Street’s Naked Swindle” in the October 15th issue of Rolling Stone magazine should change your mind.

Tasch believes we are all making a difference, three times a day, in fact, each time we put a fork into our mouths. It does lie within our grasp to change the US economy, the way we meet our need for food and all else. Just like the lobbyists, House and Senate, we vote with our money and the choices we make every day. All of the people quoted above would have us stop spending money on the foxes who line their pockets with the contents of our nest eggs.

Harry’s Rant

By Harry Willson

BOOK REVIEW

After too many rants revealing our “disappointment with Obama,” it is time for a change of pace and a change of mood. I’m going to review Obama’s first book, DREAMS FROM MY FATHER: A STORY OF RACE AND INHERITANCE. The book is much more important now than it was when it was first published in 1995.

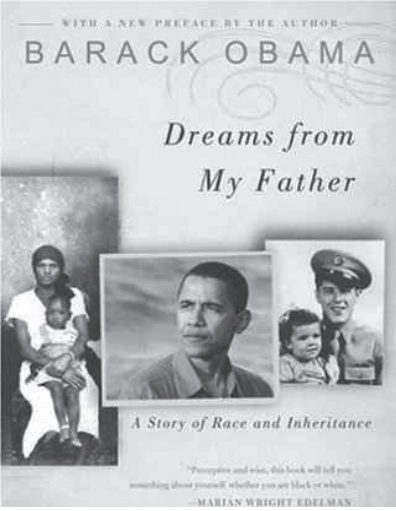
Several of us, former colleagues on the faculty of an Albuquerque prep school, met for lunch. We hadn’t seen each other in many years -- the others were travelling through Albuquerque, having moved away decades ago. We had all held onto our progressive views, with similar attitudes toward current national and world problems. We were all disappointed with the way things were going -- bank bailouts, health care, war. One of the visitors startled me, when she blurted out, “We don’t deserve him. Obama is a better man than we could have hoped for.”

This book gives us amazing insight into the man. What he wants, what he wants to accomplish, his normal way of thinking and reacting are all revealed. What’s gone wrong is not his fault. The problem is too much ignorance, too much unawareness and meanness and cruelty and falsehood.

Never in our history have we had such an opportunity to know and understand the man who wields all that power. “Give him a chance,” many wise persons have pleaded. The health care issue, war and plain old arithmetic [negative numbers!] may yet overwhelm us all, including Obama and all his hopes and all our hopes. But let’s not let anyone get away with lying about what kind of man he is.

DREAMS FROM MY FATHER. I read it aloud because the print is too small for my wife, Adela. We were both able to savor the excellent writing. Don’t speed-read this one, please! Reading this book will help anyone understand Obama’s patience, his ability to hope, his coolness under mean and nasty fire, his good humor, his willingness to compromise. Impatient people, like me, wonder what’s with all the hesitancy to confront, to push, to insist, to prosecute. This fellow doesn’t work that way. And his awareness of his blackness makes him wiser than we impetuous types would be in such a situation.

This book comes in three sections. The first section is called “Origins.”



His black African father is absent. But Barack has to decide who he is, that is, what he is. It isn’t urgent in Hawaii, where a little brown boy can live with his white, that is, pink, mother and pink grandparents. It’s even less of a problem in Indonesia, where he lived with his dark-skinned stepfather and white mother. But when he went to college in Southern California, a decision had to be made. He decided he was black. He could hardly do otherwise, given the color of his skin and the prevailing attitudes in this country. There is no slavery in his background, but nevertheless he joins the black movement.

The second section, called “Chicago,” tells of his experiences in community organizing in that city. He worked mostly with black churches and black politicians. Results were meager and frustrating, but extremely satisfying when they turned up. Persistence, patience, courtesy, solidarity -- this is where he learned all about all that.

The third section takes place in Africa, where Barack meets all his stepmothers and half-siblings, who don’t bother calling it “half” at all -- he is simply “brother” and “son.” The reader may be confused a little at first, but it is worth persisting, to appreciate the richness of extended family life, and to see one more time the devastating effect Europeans have had on people of color.

There is nothing mysterious about Barack Obama. Family, race, career, accomplishments -- he’s just like us, only clearer. There is insight in this book about being black. Here’s one who decided to be black. But the important thing is getting clear. Accept the genes you have. Get past the bitterness. Be yourself, not someone else’s appendage. And be thankful for allies, helpers, kin.

Check out Harry’s “Rant of the Month” and the library of old rants at www.amadorbooks.com

Cleveland’s Worker-Owned Boom Rust-belt to recovery

By Gar Alperovitz, Ted Howard, Steve Dubb

This June, the doors will open at the Evergreen Cooperative Laundry, a state-of-the-art, nearly \$6 million facility in Cleveland, Ohio.

What’s so special about this laundry? In a word, ownership. The business will be 100 percent owned by its 50 employees, virtually all of whom live in the surrounding community. Life is tough in this neighborhood, where the poverty rate exceeded 30 percent and thousands of homes lay stripped and abandoned even before the current recession began.

In the midst of this urban distress, the Evergreen Laundry employee-owners will earn a living wage and health benefits. As members of the co-op, they will enjoy greater job security than workers at more traditional businesses, and, after seven years on the job, they will

have built an ownership stake of as much as \$65,000.

The laundry is the flagship of a wider network of Evergreen Cooperative businesses, part of an effort to transform the quality of life for Cleveland’s low- and moderate-income residents.

While its planners—the Cleveland Foundation, the Ohio Employee Ownership Center at Kent State University, ShoreBank Enterprise and others—drew on experiences gained in cities around the country, the Evergreen initiative represents some important firsts. It is the first attempt to bring together the economic power of “anchor institutions”—universities and hospitals, in this case—that have a long-term commitment to the city. Instead of luring outside corporations with promises of tax breaks and lax standards for labor and environmental practices, the Evergreen strategy develops home-

grown worker-owned enterprises that can offer ongoing services to these anchor institutions.

This represents the first significant effort to create green jobs that not only pay a decent wage, but also build assets and wealth for employees, since they are not only workers, but also owners. If successful, this initiative could become a national model.

Solar Cleveland

Later this summer, Ohio Cooperative Solar (OCS) will begin installing solar panels on the roofs of the city’s biggest nonprofit health, education, and municipal buildings. These institutions will lease their roofs to the employee-owned energy co-op, and in turn will purchase electricity from OCS. Within a few years, OCS and its worker/owners will own and reap the income from the largest installation of solar panels in the Midwest. The long-term goal is to develop a workforce capable

of carrying out similar installations throughout the state.

Another co-op will advance large-scale urban agriculture—something missing in an area that spends \$7 billion on food shipped in from California, Arizona, and even Hawai’i.

Evergreen City Growers will build and operate a year-round hydroponic greenhouse located in the heart of Cleveland capable of producing more than 3 million heads of fresh lettuce and nearly 1 million pounds of basil per year. The company will employ about 50 local low-income residents.

That Cleveland may become a center of an innovative, green, wealth-sharing economy is especially remarkable because the city has been one of the hardest hit by the flight of capital and jobs. Cleveland was once home to major steel producers and auto-makers, and at its peak in 1950, it was the

nation’s fifth-largest city, with a population of 915,000.

Today, the population is 440,000 and falling. Cleveland is among the five poorest cities in America. There are at least 15,000 vacant buildings in the city and more than 3,300 acres of vacant land.

Is there a future for older industrial cities like Cleveland? That was the question Ronn Richard, president of the Cleveland Foundation, asked himself when he was appointed in 2003.

The answer, he and his colleagues concluded, lay in building on the city’s most significant assets: the network of health care, higher education, and cultural “anchor institutions” that are a legacy of the city’s once-strong manufacturing base. The university and hospitals are prominent among them.

These institutions together

See **BOOM** on page 11



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As we mentioned in our previous edition, after publishing for a year on donations, we're expanded from eight pages to twelve, with the new four pages to include advertising.

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this is a critical way for this publication to continue to "walk its talk," because it involves us in the local economy.

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Continued on page 7



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Continued from page 5

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Veggiegrower Gardens

Urban Winter Gardening Made Easy

By Chuck O'Herron-Alex

As winter approaches many people are harvesting the last vegetables from their gardens and getting ready to make the shift from fresh produce from their yards to vegetables shipped long distances and harvested many days before. This does not have to be the case though! Because New Mexico is blessed with bright sunlight all winter long, it is possible to grow some food crops even in the dead of winter. Choosing the right location and the right protective cover is essential because nighttime lows in Albuquerque can dip to 0 degrees Fahrenheit and below. Often times people rig up their own systems using cold frames, hoop houses, and/or mini greenhouses. These work to varying degrees. One system that provides ex-

cellent food production is the micro intensive garden made by Veggiegrower Gardens of New Mexico. The micro intensive garden design has been tested and adapted over the past six years all over the Southwest. It has proved successful in a variety of settings and works well no matter the experience level of the user.

Micro intensive gardens combine a variety of time honored gardening philosophies including square foot gardening, raised beds, cold frames, and biointensive planting techniques. The micro intensive gardens come in a variety of sizes to fit all space, production, and budget needs. They include both a winter cover and a summer cover that allows food production to continue throughout the year.

Veggiegrower Gardens of New

Mexico is a small local business devoted to helping people grow some of their own food. Owner Chuck O'Herron-Alex designed the micro intensive garden six years ago and has provided 400-500 of these growing systems to people all around the Southwest. He continues to make and sell micro intensive gardens to home owners, apartment dwellers, and schools out of the Veggiegrower Gardens of NM storefront at 3211 Silver Ave. SE in Albuquerque. Chuck also contracts with some non profit organizations to provide micro intensive gardens and garden training to low income folks in New Mexico, Juarez, Mexico, New York City, and Athens, Georgia.

For more information stop by the store or see the website: www.veggiegrower.net.



Prairie Dog 101

By Yvonne Boudreaux

The prairie dog is now one of North America's most beleaguered species. Of 13 prehistoric species, only five remain. In the past century, these remaining five species of prairie dogs — Gunnison's, black tail, white tail, Utah and Mexican—have plummeted to one to two percent of their historical range and populations. The number of Utah prairie dogs may number only several thousand, despite protection under the Endangered Species Act.

Even as their numbers diminish, researchers are sharply aware, even sadly mindful, that prairie dogs are important to as many as 160-170 other species of wildlife. Nine species are completely dependent on prairie dogs as prey, including the black-footed ferret, another critically endangered species. Besides providing food, homes or shelter to other species, the colonies enrich plant communities and aid the health of arid grasslands by aerating soil.

Research is also discovering that prairie dogs have complex language ability.

Bark and snitch, yap and chirp, yip and chatter, yelp and twitter, chip, squeak, and chirrup....

All are prairie dog sounds that humans can identify, and not the least of which is the distinctive woo hoo of the

black tail prairie dog. Con Slobodchicoff, Ph.D., a researcher at Northern Arizona University, has used state-of-the-art equipment to analyze prairie dogs' sounds.

Following years of controlled experiments, Dr. Slobodchicoff was able to discern that prairie dogs are frequently separated by regional dialects. An Arizona prairie dog would sound a little different compared to a New Mexico prairie dog, and both would sound different compared to a Texas "dawg."

When controlled intrusions entering a colony were repeated and recorded, audio wave analysis detected minute changes in their alarm calls depending on the size, color, direction, and speed of the object entering the colony. These minute changes demonstrate the use of syntax; the formal construction of sentences. Slobodchicoff has deciphered over 200 words that prairie dogs use to form sentences, identifying intruders by size, color, and type of risk.

One experiment revealed that while a coyote that saunters through a prairie dog colony elicits a clear and identifiable response, a silhouette of a coyote run on a wire through the same colony will illicit a different response. This language skill is called displacement, the ability to talk about things and events, rather than something that



Photo by Jeremy Stein "Gunnison's Prairie Dog"

is actually there.

When a similar experiment was conducted by running a black oval through the same prairie dog town, the "word" created was something completely new and different, showing that the colony had assigned meaning to the unfamiliar object. The word for this is "productivity"; the act of creating new language is one of the highest levels of language use.

Prairie dog facts:

- Of the 11 states with existing prairie dog populations, New Mexico has the smallest remaining acreage of occupied habitat. Both black-tails and

Gunnison's prairie dogs, also known as Four-Corners prairie dogs, are found in New Mexico.

- Prairie dogs are territorial and will remain in or near their ancestral habitat if possible. The colonies seen in Albuquerque are remnants of vast prairie dog towns that existed for centuries.

- Prairie dogs live an average of 3-5 years in the wild.

- Prairie dogs are annual breeders. Only 50% of females over 2 years of age will breed, each producing an average of 4 pups.

- Prairie dog burrows are complex, with chambers for sleeping, nesting, food storage, toilets, and flood, plus escape "bolt holes", and listening posts.

- Prairie dogs are victims, not the vectors, of plague. Fleas carrying plague bacteria are brought into the colony by cats, dogs or wild animals. Because they have no immunity, prairie dogs die within days of exposure to the plague.

- Poisoning prairie dogs is not only cruel, but also is ineffective, causing a slow agonizing death that may take days. While a mature colony tends to expand at approximately 2% annually, a poisoned colony can expand at an annual rate of 70%. Additionally, poison poses danger to humans, domestic animals and other non-target species.

Based in Albuquerque, **Prairie Dog Pals (PDP)** is dedicated to the preservation of prairie dogs and their native habitat in appropriate areas. The organization has three main programs:

Stewardship: Urban prairie dogs are in constant peril due to human encroachment. They become trapped by development and are forced into increasingly smaller areas, where natural vegetation cannot support the population. The situation is exacerbated by drought conditions. These colonies require supplemental feeding to survive, which remains controversial, though it does prevent prairie dogs from dispersing into nearby neighbor-

hoods in search of food. PDP volunteers provide stewardship at over 35 sites in Albuquerque.

Education: Outreach volunteers provide information and education about prairie dogs to classrooms, to special student and adult groups and at collaborative events. PDP works closely with other regional groups to promote preservation of the five remaining species over their entire range.

Rescue: Rescue and relocation is the most labor intensive of all of the organization's efforts. Prairie dogs are only relocated when threatened with loss of habitat, encroachment, or human conflict. PDP volunteers have humanely captured and relocated more than 5,000 prairie dogs, over 2,000 in 2008. With the exception of the relocation program for the City of Albuquerque, PDP operations are staffed by volunteers and funded by donations. The City reimburses PDP for expenses encountered in relocating prairie dogs from city properties. Relocation of prairie dogs from private properties is funded on a case-by-case basis and requires an alternate habitat.

Each year the pressure to relocate has increased. PDP has experienced a rising number of requests, both within the city and across the state. Increasingly, people are concerned about the plight of prairie dogs and demand humane solutions to conflicts.

PDP's vision is to secure sufficient and appropriate habitat within the state of New Mexico to accommodate any colonies of prairie dogs threatened by loss of habitat or human conflict. The organization hopes to expand its outreach and stewardship programs to include all urban settings within New Mexico as the only way to ensure the continued existence of this keystone species. For more information, visit www.prairiedogpals.org. To volunteer, call 505-296-1937 or Email: prairiedogpals@comcast.net



Interested in attending the November Vigil to shut down the School of the Americas (SOA)?

Albuquerque presente! Join us this year November 20-22.

There will be a massive rally at the gates of Fort Benning as well as workshops, teach-ins and concerts in Columbus, Georgia. Hundreds of thousands of Latin Americans have been tortured, assassinated, raped, "disappeared," massacred or forced into refuge by those trained at the School of the Americas - now called the Western Hemisphere Initiative for Security Cooperation. If you are Interested in attending the vigil contact Renee at 341-9146. Go to www.SOAW.org/november for more info.

Right Livelihood Award 2009: Alyn Ware

“...for his effective and creative advocacy and initiatives over two decades to further peace education and to rid the world of nuclear weapons.”

Alyn Ware is one of the world’s most effective peace workers, who has led key initiatives for peace education and nuclear abolition in New Zealand and internationally over the past 25 years. He helped draft the Peace Studies Guidelines that became part of the New Zealand school curriculum, initiated successful programmes in schools and thousands of classrooms throughout the country, and has served as an adviser to the NZ government and the UN on disarmament education. He was active in the campaign that prohibited nuclear weapons in New Zealand, before serving as the World Court Project UN Coordinator which achieved a historic ruling from the World Court on the illegality of nuclear weapons. Alyn Ware has led the efforts to implement the World Court’s decision, including drafting resolutions adopted by the UN, bringing together a group of experts to prepare a draft treaty on nuclear abolition which is now being promoted by the UN Secretary General, and engaging parliamentarians around the world through Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament.

Alyn Ware believes that his peace education work in schools and his international peace and disarmament work are intricately linked. He says: “The principles of peace are the same whether it be in school, at home, in the community or internationally. These are primarily about how to solve our conflicts in win/win ways, i.e. in ways that meet all peoples’ needs. My kindergarten teaching was thus good training for my international peace and disarmament work. And when I am back in the classroom, I can help students see that the ideas and approaches they are using to solve their conflicts are similar to the ideas and approaches

we use at the United Nations to solve international conflicts.”

- Alyn Ware

About the Right Livelihood Award

The Right Livelihood Award was established in 1980 to honour and support those “offering practical and exemplary answers to the most urgent challenges facing us today”.

It has become widely known as the ‘Alternative Nobel Prize’ and there are now 137 Laureates from 58 countries.

Presented annually in Stockholm at a ceremony in the Swedish Parliament, the Right Livelihood Award is usually shared by four Recipients. One of them may receive an Honorary Award, given to a person or group whose work the Jury wishes to recognise but who is not primarily in need of monetary support. The others share the prize money, which, in 2009, will be EUR 150,000. The prize money is for ongoing successful work, never for personal use.

The Prize’s impact

The Right Livelihood Award is widely recognized as the world’s premier award for personal courage and social transformation. Besides the financial support, it enables its Recipients to reach out to an international audience that otherwise might not have heard of them. Often, the Award also gives crucial protection against repression. For the Laureates, the Award has opened many doors, including prison doors.

In 2008, Monika Hauser received the Right Livelihood Award for her work with women who have experienced sexualised violence. In the six months that followed the Award’s announcement, Hauser’s organisation medica mondiale received twice as much in donations than in

the same time period the year before. The public attention was also enormous.

Monika Hauser said: “The Prize certainly played a major role in this jump in donations. So the Award’s value is not only about the prize money itself, it goes far beyond that.”

From Peace to Spirituality and Agriculture

Unlike the Nobel Prizes (for Physics, Physiology/Medicine, Chemistry, Literature, and Peace), the Right Livelihood Award has no categories. It recognises that, in striving to meet the human challenges of today’s world, the most inspiring and remarkable work often defies any standard classification. For example, people who start out with an environmental goal frequently find themselves drawn into issues of health, human rights and/or social justice. Their work becomes a holistic response to community needs, so that sectoral categories lose their meaning.

2009 Right Livelihood Awards: Wake-up calls to secure our common future

“The 2009 Right Livelihood Award Recipients demonstrate concretely what has to be done in order to tackle climate change, rid the world of nuclear weapons, and provide crucial medical treatment to the poor and marginalised.”

The 2009 Right Livelihood Awards go to four recipients:

David Suzuki (Honorary Award, Canada) “for his lifetime advocacy of the socially responsible use of science, and for his massive contribution to raising awareness about the perils of climate change and building public support for policies to address it”.

Three recipients receive cash



David Suzuki



Alyn Ware



René Ngongo



Catherine Hamlin

awards of EUR 50,000 each:

René Ngongo (Democratic Republic of Congo) is honoured “for his courage in confronting the forces that are destroying the Congo’s rainforests and building political support for their conservation and sustainable use”.

Alyn Ware (New Zealand) is recognised “for his effective and cre-

ative advocacy and initiatives over two decades to further peace education and to rid the world of nuclear weapons”.

Catherine Hamlin (Ethiopia) is awarded “for her fifty years dedicated to treating obstetric fistula patients, thereby restoring the health, hope and dignity of thousands of Africa’s poorest women”.

2010 Nobel Peace Prize nominee speaks in Santa Fe

A Journey to Forgiveness: Dr. Abuelaish in Santa Fe, NM, 10/27/09

By Iris Keltz

The world’s headlines came to Santa Fe at this sold out event. Dr Abuelaish, a 2010 Nobel Peace Prize nominee and a finalist for the 2009 Sakharov Prize from the EU was proud to be from Jabalya refugee camp in Gaza. Now living and teaching at the university of Toronto, the doctor responded to a question about returning to Gaza. “No one can take my home from me. I will travel to Gaza every few months. They are my people. Humanity is above all.”

The audience listened attentively, sometimes forgetting to breathe. This man survived the dark night of his soul and was here to offer a message of reconciliation. Many could not understand how he found his way to forgiveness, after witnessing the death of three daughters and a niece, shelled before his eyes in their Gaza home during the Israeli invasion last winter. Dr. Abuelaish’s three daughter’s had attended the Creativity for Peace Camp in Pecos, NM. Their mission was to nurture understanding and leadership for Palestinian and Israeli girls who never would have met back home.

The doctor’s daughters once lived among us— shopping, playing, dancing, learning, discussing, crying and laughing. He invoked their presence, especially Bessan, who would have wanted him to speak out for peace and reconciliation. “She was the wise

daughter. When she attended the (Creativity for Peace) Camp in Santa Fe, she discovered that we are all human. I lost three precious daughters and a niece— Bessan 20, Mayar, 15, Aya, 14 and my niece, Nour, 17.” The doctor was referring to the Israeli invasion of last December that left Gaza reduced to rubble. The streets filled with the stench of death. Israeli warplanes destroyed mosques, police stations, a university compound, the Parliament building, six hospitals and four United Nations facilities including three schools. There was no place to run after thousands of people received recorded phone calls from the Israeli Army warning them to leave homes targeted to be bombed. The official death toll stood at 1,300 Palestinian civilians, 350 of them children and 5,200 wounded. The Israeli death toll was 13, including 4 soldiers killed by in two separate incidents by their own army. The bereaved father shared his daughter’s dreams for their future. That they were able to forge dreams for themselves while living in such a harsh reality was a great leap of faith.

“When I was screaming and crying for my daughters, my 13 year old son turned to me and said, ‘My sisters are with their mother.’ The doctor was still mourning the death of his wife when his daughters were killed. A fourth daughter, Shatha, 17, was severely wounded in the attack. “I saw her eye coming out, her fingers

amputated.” In spite of her wounds and the trauma of war, the doctor was proud to share that Shatha completed her school year with excellent grades.

An excerpt from today’s NY Times states: “Many abroad view Gaza as a large slum, yet there is near universal literacy here and infant mortality is low by regional standards.... Thousands have advanced degrees.... Stylish restaurants fill each day with young women — a few with heads uncovered — carrying laptop computers, and with the underemployed, who smoke hookahs and lament their future.” Literacy rates remain high in Gaza because people value education, this in spite of their immeasurable ongoing misery.

“We need to act,” Abuelaish implored. Although the doctor did not offer a roadmap for direct actions, he moved us with his eloquence, “Leaders need moral courage.” he said, hinting at the lack of inspired leadership around the world, including Israel, the US and the Palestine.

“Here is the truth. When the Israeli army shelled my home, snipers were shooting from the roof. And inside my home were militants— my three daughters were militant fighters for humanity— armed with love. Another truth: there will be no reconciliation until everyone knows the facts. When asked about the bias in reporting events in Israel/Palestine, the doctor warned everyone to be critical

consumers of all media. Think critically and question authority as we used to say in the sixties.

“God chose me,” the doctor said, “to bring a message of peace and reconciliation. The doctor does not speak the language of politics. He speaks the language of bereavement. “Nothing is as important as saving a life,” a basic tenet of Judaism.

“The human situation is critical. We need to smash the mental and physical barriers between us. Hatred is poison. So is revenge. Only love can light the dark. Forgiveness is a tool. It is the way to move forward so we do not keep repeating the mistakes of the past. I am not defending Israel. I am defending humanity. In the end we will not remember the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.”

We must speak out, where ever and whenever we can— at your church or synagogue, with our congressional reps, letters on blogs and in newspapers. Speak from your broken heart. The doctor reminded me of Itzhak Frankenthal, who also lost a beloved son to violence. He appeared on Israeli TV the same night, proclaiming forgiveness, not revenge as the way forward. Frankenthal started Bereaved Parents— a group for Jews, Moslems, Christians— any family who ever lost a child to violence.

The doctor believes that women will ultimately be the peacemakers— “Educate a woman and you educate

an entire nation.” If humanity is to survive the future, it will be because we finally understand that we must share all resources equitably and treat everyone with dignity— something we should have learned in kindergarten.

Iris Keltz is a writer, teacher and activist.

ACTIONS - Stay informed. Some websites for up to date info: <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article10859.shtml>. Learn about the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Movement happening around the world, known as BDS www.bds-movement.net/. There is a group that has formed around BDS in Abq and Santa Fe.

2009 National Campus Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions Conference, taking place Nov20th - Nov 22nd at Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts. Find out more and register at: <http://www.hsfp.org/2009/09/21/CampusBDS/>.

If you would like to support and find out more about the local organization that sponsored Dr. Abuelaish go to: www.creativityforpeace.com

Anna Baltzer and Dr. Mustafa Barghouti appeared on the Daily Show on October 28th. The show received complaints even before it was aired. They have received so many calls their phone lines became jammed. You can view the episode at www.daillyshow.com

Anna’s website is: www.AnnaInTheMiddleEast.com

Ranked Choice Voting in Santa Fe

By Rick Lass
votingmatters.blogspot.com

On Monday, Santa Fe city clerk Yolanda Vigil conducted a demonstration of whether it would be possible to conduct a Ranked Choice Voting runoff using existing voting machines and software. Ranked Choice was adopted by city voters in March 2008, with the condition that it could be done using machines, at a reasonable cost. Voting machines used in New Mexico are not capable of taking a ballot image, which would make runoff tabulation simple. Machines that are capable of doing so are not certified for use here, so, tallying a runoff will require a good deal of hand sorting of ballots and then feeding some ballots through the machines a second or third time.

The reason for the demonstration was to determine whether this method of vote tallying would be consistent with the charter and other laws, and whether it would be possible to conduct the runoff in a timely and efficient manner. The city is expected to have a decision by November 10, the date that the March municipal election is officially ‘proclaimed’.

Thanks also go out to Automated Election Services www.election-people.com for providing the ballots and memory cartridges and to Santa Fe county for providing machines and staff for the demonstra-

tion. After some preliminary discussions about voter education, how the runoff fits in with other election duties like the canvass, and how to deal with other issues such as overvotes and undervotes, the demonstration began.

Fifty ballots were marked for the demonstration, including three separate races with four candidates each. The ballots were then fed into the voting machine (ES&S model M100). This part of the process represents Election Day. “Election Day” results showed that a runoff would be required for the Mayor’s race between Elvis Presslee(17), John Knee Cash (16), Alher Acain (10), and Sue B Honey (6), since none of those candidates received a majority. The next step was to remove the ballots from the ballot box and sort them into four piles based on first choice selections marked on the ballot (noted above in parentheses).

At this point, a new cartridge was placed in the voting machine, and ballots listing Sue B Honey were fed into the machine. The second choice votes were added to the previous totals, and still no candidate had over 50% of the vote total. Those ballots were then set aside, and the ballots listing Alher Acain as first choice were fed into the machine, adding those second choices.

In addition, any ballots listing Alher Acain and Sue B Honey as

the first two choices were tallied counting the third choice votes on those ballots, by inserting a new memory cartridge and feeding those ballots through the machine. Now the tally could be finalized, and Elvis Presslee won with 28 votes compared with 21 for John Knee Cash. (one ballot was spoiled because the voter made two selections for first choice).

The conclusion: it is possible to conduct a runoff using Ranked Choice Voting as adopted by the city. There are some logistical issues that need to be resolved. There is nothing to prevent the city from implementing Ranked Choice that can’t be resolved through administrative rules or an ordinance.

We at Voting Matters certainly hope that Santa Fe will implement Ranked Choice Voting for the March 2010 election, which appears very likely to have more than two candidates in at least two of the five races on the ballot.

Voting Matters is a non profit organization dedicated to democracy. We support electoral reforms that will increase voter and candidate participation. Our program areas include public campaign financing, ranked choice voting, independent redistricting commissions, meaningful election machine audits, and other measures that ensure government is representative of and accountable to the people.

What Should High School English Be?

By Rudy J. Miera

A kiss of poetic blessing from Rumi. A blast-from-the-past, cruising, Dylan’s amphetamine-paced Highway 61 of America’s highway of dreams. A jazz-fueled road trip on Route 66 from coast to coast on Kerouac’s jalopy, with side-detours to Hillerman’s Navajo country, haunted by Jim Chee. A stop-over in the Mississippi delta where Robert Johnson stretched blue notes on a brown pawnshop guitar at the mythical crossroads.... Long, timeless afternoons on a raft in Mark Twain’s river of sleepy dreams down South. Phantom riding with Paul Revere and playing hide and seek with he dancing shadows in a Greenwich Village apartment while Edgar Allen Poe found a raven at his window. The hoot of Última’s owl as she prays to the yerba del manso before picking it’s frail green leaves out of the llano and hands it to her 7 year-old apprentice, Antonio Marez. And writing a poem or diary entry or travel essay on one’s unique journey through the Chicago ‘Magic Mile,’ the amber Nebraskan fields, the mystical Southwest desert, or a walk on the sandy shore that kisses Venice, California....

An immigrant cannon for an Immigrant Land, with streams of world poetry cutting furrows in the shifting sand... Walt Whitman’s America, Allen Ginsberg’s Kaddish America, Rudolfo Anaya’s alabado America, Buffy St. Marie’s “America ‘tis of they people are dying” America.....

America, where the Poetry ‘Slam’ was born in a smoke and jazzed club in a corner in crowded Chicago. (Marc Smith, modern word-smith, synthesizing America’s love of a Champion with his vision of re-

turning poetry to the standing young Troubadours of a post-modern Urban Tribal cityscape.)

Once upon a time, the 2 books taught in the first North American schools were the Bible and Shakespeare’s complete plays. From the optimism of Isaiah’s prophetic cries in the desert to Hamlet’s frozen Danish doubts and ruminations. Two men on a raft in the ‘Big Muddy’ reciting hacked soliloquies. America, where poetry and prose were the twin rivers that watered a native-born new Literature of the clash and exchange of Pueblo, Souix, Navajo and European and African cultures. Let America be the land where we can weep together over past injustices and celebrate the hope of a New World formed from the contributions of the Immigrants in an Immigrant land. Todos somos Inmigrantes, we are all immigrants if you go back far enough.

Let the America’s classrooms be a safe place to talk about angels and Fools on the throne, about homeless finding a voice and the voiceless finding a home. A home in a classroom where Democracy can be reborn through Literature.

Piaget once said that “Disequilibrium is the first step towards growth.” We as teachers should be the “Disequilibrators”.....

Shakespeare, speaking though Hamlet, once said, “Let there be no more marriages” and let us say, “Let there me no more marriages between ignorance and power.” For the New Millenium let us proclaim, “Let there be no more marriages between simplistic politician’s unfunded mandates and the curriculum for the future.... Let us declare, “Let there be no more marriages between the factory model of unstruction of the past and the critical thinking ex-

igencies of the future. Let us make the English classroom safe for the participatory Democracy of Literature. Let discontent spark new student work in the Writer’s Workshop. Let us ‘Leave No Child Behind” but let us not leave the thinking mind behind in the process. Let the poetry of the multi-cultural communities never again be drowned out by the blind, hypnotic chants of “ 4 More Years....”

Francis Ford Coppola once predicted that the art of Cinema will be changed by a 9 year-old girl playing around with a video camcorder somewhere in the heartland. The English classroom could be the Writer’s Workshop where her 9 year-old counterpart will be given the opportunity, encouragement and literary skills to write screenplay for her, and our, future film. Where they will be fully-prepared to thrive in the High School classroom of the future..

Let us make it safe for our young to inherit the classroom and produce tomorrow’s students, but also, tomorrow’s teachers.

What should we teach in High School English class of the future ?

All the worlds that fit in the school year and the formal, informal, technical, revised and visionary ways to use the words that express and describe those worlds to tell the story of America and its place in Gaia.....

Rudy J. Miera, a native New Mexican, recently retired from a 25+ year teaching career in Secondary Ed. , working in public schools (primarily with ‘at-risk’ youth) in Albuquerque and Santa Fe. He is currently continuing to write on education issues and is in the process of editing a short film series - “Drive-By Shakespeare” intended for use by teachers and students.

MUSIC REVIEW

Los Jaraneros del Valle Build Musical Bridges with Son Jarocho

By Bill Nevins

Victor Padilla uses engineering terms to describe the musical goals of Los Jaraneros del Valle: “We started out to find bridges built long ago with Mexico instead of the walls which, unfortunately, are now going up. We found the vigas of a musical bridge and we are re-constructing it.” Based in Albuquerque’s South Valley, Los Jaraneros are-- besides founder Victor Padilla-- Felipe Lucero, Antonio Aragon, Teresa Slack, Rafaelita Gonzales, Lorenzo Candelaria and Ricardo Maes. They perform every Friday morning at La Placita Café on Isleta Boulevard, in the heart of Albuquerque’s Mexican and Latin American immigrant community, and they are being featured regularly at local arts fests and other venues. A cd is in preparation and they have tracks on a recent anthology of New Mexico music.

Los Jaraneros’ bridge is son jarocho, a folk music style until recently little heard in New Mexico, where the ranchera, norteno and mariachi styles of Texas and Chihuahua are more evident. Son jarocho originated centuries ago far from El Norte, in the balmy Gulf coastal region of southern Veracruz, where the annual late January Fiesta de la Candelaria showcases regional poetry and son jarocho. This music is the complex heritage of a transcontinental cultural journey, linking African influences with European and Native American styles, instrumentation and outlook.

Los Jaraneros draw their group name from the jarana, a small guitar-type instrument with five strummed courses of strings, several of them doubled-- the rhythmic heartbeat of son jarocho. Against this, Victor’s or Lorenzo’s arpa jarocho (Mexican folk harp) delivers arpeggios over a syncopated bass pattern on la liona (bass guitar). Meanwhile, Victor improvises melodies on his four-string requinto guitar, plucked with a bull-horn pua (pick) as additional percussion is provided by the cajon (wooden box) and dancer Teresa’s staccato heel-strikes on la tarima, a small dance platform. Singing (in Spanish) alternates among all members of the group, with short choral responses following a lead singer. There is much improvisation, as jarocho musicians claim they never perform the same son exactly the same way. The overall effect is exhilarating!

Son, of which there are several regional types in Mexican music, originally denoted the “noise” (son) of the people, as contrasted to the “dignified” music of the Church. Son jarocho is characterized by a 6/8 rhythm syncopated with 2/4 and 3/4 rhythms (sesquialtera) and the staccato heel dance (zapateado). It links Spanish fandango and theatrical song styles with Native American influences and the African-originating music of slaves and free Blacks, particularly the call-and-response element and note-bending also found in work songs, spirituals and blues.

Irreverent was the original meaning of the term jarocho, and witty sarcasm has become a matter of pride among the musicians and



Photo by Priscilla Baca y Candelaria

people of southern Veracruz, many of whom are African-Mexicans who historically asserted themselves despite being outside the framework of mainstream Mexican society. This attitude bothered the colonial Church so much that it tried to suppress son jarocho for its “devilish qualities” of frequent sexual doble sentidos (double meanings) and a tendency to make fun of death, sorrow and the Church itself.

“Devil’s music” or not, son jarocho is entrancing, focused in compas-- harmonic and rhythmic phrases repeated throughout each piece and within which the musicians improvise. You’ve heard it in the song “La Bamba” and in Ozomatli’s jarocho-flavored rock. Mexican style “trance blues”, if you will, which pulls listeners in, smiling and moving their feet.

Victor Padilla, an Albuquerque native and lifelong “chicano guitarist”, first encountered son jarocho up close on a visit to Tlacotalpan, Veracruz in 1996 when he met Ramon Gutierrez-Hernandez, founder of the internationally famed group Son de Madera, and a leader, with his brother Gilberto Gutierrez-Silva, of the modern roots-revival of son jarocho. Son de Madera have taken this rural Mexican music around the world, appeared in films including the fascinating documentary The Third Root (about cultural interaction among musicians in Mexico and Morocco), and recently appeared with Los Angeles trad-rockers Quetzal at National Hispanic Cultural Center. Victor credits Ramon with inspiring the emergence over the last three decades of major son jarocho bands like Mono Blanco in Mexico, Tenocelomeh in California, La Tuza in Boston--and, of course, Albuquerque’s own Los Jaraneros.

Victor and other members of Los Jaraneros, following the apprenticeship tradition of son jarocho, study under the guidance of Maestro Oti Ruiz, the great Veracruzano harpist who now lives in Albuquerque and teaches music in Bernalillo. Victor speaks in reverent terms of Oti Ruiz, adding with a smile, “Oti says I am his bridge to the US, but the truth is that it is a two-way bridge!” Lorenzo Candelaria adds his hope that local fans and students of son jarocho will join with arts organizations to bring masters of this art to New Mexico for workshops and performances in coming years.

Lively, addictively danceable, irreverent-- the music of Los Jaraneros and their compadres in son jarocho strengthens joyful bridges among peoples and slyly winks at sadness.

Los Jaraneros may be contacted at (505) 563-0910 or (505) 263 6554.

Why Attending College Should Be Free Again

By Donald Gutierrez

I) Many college students are deeply in debt today. An average debt recently quoted on the news mentioned a figure of \$22,000.00. And the debts of students going into pre-professional graduate programs are far higher, amounting to six-digit sums. Usurious loan-company interest rates have certainly been part of the problem.

A larger and basic part of the student-debt crisis, however, are current college tuition rates. When I attended the University of California, Berkeley in the early 1950s, California colleges were virtually free. There was an “Incidental Fee” (\$35.00 per semester) that covered such privileges or needs as use of gym facilities or the campus hospital and access to an excellent scholarly library. Course books were relatively inexpensive. Now, even at a state university like Berkeley, the cost per year for an undergraduate, according to the U. C. Office of the Registrar, is almost \$5,000.00 a semester and for a state-non-resident, over \$16,000.00, while enrolling in Berkeley’s Boalt Hall School of law costs almost \$18,000.00 per semester—all this without counting books and living expenses.

State school fees such as Berkeley’s, if less than those of private colleges, still constitute debts that can imprison students financially for many years. A quick check of representative public universities like the University of Michigan and the City University of New York reveal similar high college fees. In California, moreover, at least twice as much money goes towards building and sustaining prisons as gets directed towards the state’s college budgets.

Higher education should be free to all young people who show an aptitude for and aspiration to advanced learning and professional or technical training. Society needs doctors, nurses, teachers, scholars, engineers, lawyers, architects, philosophers, accountants, scientists, artists, writers and other experts, but if high-debt hurdles exist and persist, the consequences are obvious—only those youths from wealthy or well-off families will be able to afford college, especially the quality colleges that allow students to secure significant jobs. What results is not only a class-based educational structure but the hardening of a class-structured society.

One major reason children with good grades but coming from low-income families could attend public schools like U.C. Berkeley was that wealthy and well-off Californians paid a sizable, progressive-tax share of property taxes. This all changed in 1978 when there was a California “revolution” brought about by an anti-property-tax activist named Howard Jarvis. Strongly appealing to the rich and to landlords, Jarvis’s Proposition 13 cut property taxes by 57% and allowed property to be taxed only during sale, no longer annually. This “relief” to the state’s rich and well-off had a devastating impact on California’s county and city budgets. Civil institutions like public libraries and public schools that potentially promote a more egalitarian society were badly hit financially. And though Berkeley today continues to have full enrollments and high ranking nationally among state universities, not everyone who merits attendance can afford to attend. And Pell Grants being slashed by half in recent years has obviously worsened matters.

II) In a society as wealthy as ours, what’s happening to the monies needed for something as crucial to a society’s future and well-being as financially democratic colleges? Let’s consider the kind of monies available in America’s financial institutions and the military sector. Extremely wealthy investors contribute billions of dollars to hedge-fund managers who transmit these monies electronically around the world in seconds—huge sums of monies free of taxation—to make more money for those investors. The issue implicit here is that the availability of wealth has been structured in such a way that vast sums of money badly needed and deserved for social, public needs have for generations not only been privatized but—especially re-

cently--manipulated for extreme levels of personal gain.

This complex, devious activity has long evolved and occurred in too many ways to describe here, though Congress has played its part since the 1980s in creating regressive taxation and helping the rich get richer. Enormous sums of money that should be accessible for America’s infrastructure, schools, medical health programs and cultural facilities have been pouring into corporation, bank, and private-investor coffers. The most egregious manifestation of this robbery of the public is of course the recent financial meltdown in which the individuals and financial institutions that have devised and profited extraordinarily from deregulated financial dealings are now “solving” the crisis with public monies used to restore their former financial status quo and CEO bonuses.

One institution using massive amounts of public monies with very little critical media attention or evaluation is the Pentagon. A recent Mother Jones ongoing report entitled “Shock and Audit: the Hidden defense Budget” (June 6, 2009) indicates that “cost overruns for current major weapons programs now /run/ \$296 billion.” The report further observes that the 2009 budget President Obama requested is \$534 billion and that the 2010 Pentagon budget will be \$707 billion. Those two sums would, combined, amount to \$ 1,241 trillion—for merely two years. This figure would—one hopes—include the immense cost of some 725 American military posts spread all around the world, which, according to Chalmers Johnson’s The Sorrows of Empire would cost around \$118 billion to replace.

As if all this isn’t enough public monies seized for the military, the Pentagon has a \$300 billion twenty-year plus program to build F-35 Joint-Strike-Fighter warplanes. Though this ambitious and extremely costly plan will be done in league with eight “partner” nations, the United States plans to foot much of the bill. Finally, as if to fantasize about more ways to spend American taxpayers’ money, the Pentagon harbors a high-placed senior officer named Michele A. Flournoy whose job it is to conceive and plan for new wars which involves, according to The New York Times (“prepar/ing/ for conflicts that could tie up American forces for decades....” The golden era of peace and thus of monies for civil needs that was promised to follow the demise of the Cold War is to continue being wiped out by Washington’s endless lust for wars and the Pentagon’s for more and newer ordnance.

III) Massive sums of monies going through hedge-funds, enormous bank and corporation-taxable monies slipping into off-shore tax-havens, monies supporting our two current unnecessary and illegal wars projected by economist Joseph Stiglitz to amount to \$ three trillion over a decade, the enormous ordnance and military base costs (super Camp Bondsteel in the Balkans, built 1999, costs \$180 million to run annually)—all of this involves sums of monies just a moderate portion of which would allow all young people qualifying in merit to go to college free (it would also supply enormous sums of money to finance a virtually free health system). According to journalist Adolph Reed Jr., “education is a social right, like health care.... the cost of free college education is laughably low... about \$80 billion to make all public institutions free...” (Nation, 6/29/09, 14) That \$80 billion is less than ten percent of the current Pentagon budget.

The University of California and other state universities throughout the country in the 1950s embodied educational democracy by making merit rather than wealth the means of access to higher education. We are now betraying that ideal and reality through a rigidly class-oriented structure of college costs and access that will doom the United States as an open society of opportunity for all if education is not once again democratized as it was after World War II. Monies unjustly arrogated by America’s financial and military sectors must be returned to essential civilian needs, among which higher education is crucial.

New German Leadership Wants U.S. Nukes Out

Friday, Oct. 23, 2009

A policy document prepared by Germany’s new governing coalition calls for the United States to withdraw its nuclear weapons from its European ally, Agence France-Presse reported yesterday (see GSN, April 13).

The coalition, which includes Chancellor Angela Merkel’s right-of-center Christian Democrats and the Free Democrats, said in their new common program that Germany would back U.S. President Barack Obama’s global disarmament efforts (see GSN, Sept. 23).



“We will ask the (Atlantic) Alliance and our American allies to withdraw American nuclear weapons from Germany,” said the document.

Between 10 and 20 U.S. nuclear weapons are thought to be located underground in Buchel, in southwest Germany. After the fall of the Soviet Union, the United

States removed most of its nuclear arms from Europe, though there are still some nuclear gravity bombs scattered across Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey (see GSN, Oct. 16).

Approximately 130 nuclear weapons were withdrawn in 2004 from the German Ramstein air base in Rhineland-Palatinate (Agence France-Presse/ Khaleej Times, Oct. 22).

Global Security Newswire by National Journal Group. Daily news on nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, terrorism and related issues. www.globalsecuritynewswire.org

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purchase many billions of dollars of goods and services, and they are among the only institutions still growing. Because they are rooted in place, they have a self-interest in ensuring their surrounding neighborhoods are safe, healthy, and vital communities.

“If we could work with these institutions, particularly in helping them focus their business and investment practices locally, we could create economic energy and opportunity for local residents,” he says.

Thus was born the Greater University Circle Initiative, which includes the Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals, Case Western Reserve University, and a number of other health and cultural institutions in the city.

The Evergreen Cooperatives represents the Initiative’s best bet for Cleveland’s future, and other stakeholders are getting on board. Local foundations, hospitals, nursing homes, banks, a university, and City Hall are each investing in the Evergreen network of community- and worker-owned enterprises. These co-ops are structured to serve the anchor institutions’ ongoing needs for laundry services, energy, food, janitorial services, records retention, and so on. The goal is to create jobs and wealth within the city, multiply the impact of local dollars by keeping them in the community, and regenerate the local economy, particularly in the city’s most distressed neighborhoods.

Evergreen companies will hire and train employees from low- and moderate-income neighborhoods for jobs in the cooperative enterprises. A local nonprofit specializing in workforce development is recruiting workers through church and other networks. More than 90 neighborhood residents—some who have been laid off during the current recession, others who have been underemployed for years—attended the first community hiring meetings. Some of these men and women will become the first Evergreen employees.

By linking green jobs to wealth creation, Evergreen is pioneering a new approach to organizing the green economy. After all, if green jobs are good, isn’t a green job you “own” even better?

Green Jobs You Own

The Evergreen businesses are aptly named: all aim to be environmentally sustainable. The Evergreen Laundry, for instance, will be the greenest commercial-scale laundry in Northeast Ohio. The cooperative plans to construct its building to LEED silver

certification standards, and it will use energy-efficient washing machines and dryers along with processes to reuse waste heat and water.

These green features give the cooperatives a competitive advantage. Most of the city’s anchor institutions are committed to decreasing their carbon footprints, and doing business with the Evergreen enterprises will help them deliver on their goals.

These co-ops are a good start, but there are many people in Cleveland who need good, stable employment.

So the issue of “moving to scale” is central to Evergreens’ economic development strategy. Put simply, how do you move from 50 jobs to 500, and then to 5,000?

Access to capital is the key to expanding impact. In Cleveland, the Evergreen Cooperative Development Fund was formed to provide seed financing for the next generations of worker cooperatives. The Fund is modeled in part on Spain’s Caja Laboral bank, with initial funding from foundations. But as they grow, the Evergreen co-ops will be an increasingly important source of funding for other co-ops; each will dedicate at least 10 percent of their pre-tax profits to the Fund to help build the cooperative network.

Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson probably speaks for many mayors when he says: “In these tough economic times, our cities need not only good jobs, but ways for working people to build up their family assets and wealth. Why shouldn’t all of our citizens have access to meaningful jobs in workplaces where they can own a piece of the company and participate in the company’s direction?”

Matching words to deeds, this spring the mayor’s Department of Economic Development became an “investor” in the Evergreen Cooperative Laundry with a low-interest loan of \$1.5 million.

Ted Howard, Steve Dubb, and Gar Alperowitz wrote this article as part of The New Economy, the Summer 2009 issue of YES! Magazine. Ted is the executive director of The Democracy Collaborative at the University of Maryland. Steve is the senior research associate of The Democracy Collaborative. Gar is the Lionel Bauman Professor of Political Economy at the University of Maryland and the author of Unjust Deserts. The Democracy Collaborative worked with the Greater University Circle Initiative on the development and implementation of this economic development strategy. www.Community-Wealth.org.

An energy solution comes up every morning.

Push Back against Big Money
November 28 to December 5: Week of Action

This is the 10th anniversary of the Seattle protests that stalled the World Trade Organization. Worldwide there will be protests, teach-ins, rallies, marches and festivals to say “Our World is Not for Sale” and push for a future where the needs of people and the planet are respected. You can be part of these activities. See:www.wiserearth.org/group/Seattle10.

BOOK REVIEW

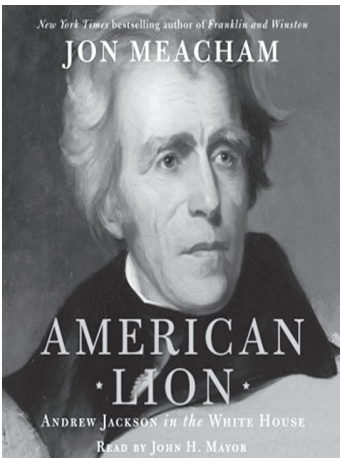
By Jack Pickering

American Lion: Andrew Jackson in the White House
By Jon Meacham
Random House, 2009,
Pulitzer Prize Winner

This book is accurately titled. Old Hickory was surely a protector of his tribe as a male lion protects his pride. While I still regret Jackson’s harshness toward Native Americans, author Meacham has helped me to understand the mindset journalistically dubbed “Manifest Destiny” in 1845. Historical inevitability remains a thorny issue. Yet, when technologically advanced European men pushed aside less advanced natives, the conquerors were bound to protect their women and children. Jackson showed leonine qualities in doing so.

Jackson also was a lion in the colonies’ struggle for independence from an unimaginative mother country. Most notable for me were two of his characteristics: his passionate equalitarianism and unionism. While he recognized the industrial North’s unfairness to the agricultural South, he faced down would-be secessionists such as Calhoun. Author Meacham helped me to understand my maternal grandfather’s admiration for “old Andy” since both were self-made poor boys and staunch Unionists.

Jackson had a special disadvantage that my granddad lacked: he became fatherless while still in his mother’s womb. Author Meacham touchingly recounts Jackson’s devotion to his mother and, by extension



sion to his wife and all women. Widowed before his Presidency, Jackson spent 8 lonely but largely productive years in the White House. Back at “The Hermitage” in Nashville, Jackson was paternalistic toward his “servants” (as he called his slaves) but clearly did not regard them as even potentially equal. He regarded abolitionists as troublesome do-gooders.

Jackson’s great blind spot was his failure to see the inevitable conflict resulting from a nation half slave and half free, though his death in 1845 was only 16 years before Secessionists fired on Fort Sumter. Jefferson, also a slave-holder, was more prescient when in 1820 he called slavery a “momentous question like a firebell in the night.” My only criticism of author Meacham is his failure to emphasize this blind spot in his hero. When I audited an American history course at UNM a decade ago, my professor Daniel Feller, led us to hear Jefferson’s firebell. Feller, whose work is generously acknowledged by Meacham, left UNM to edit the Jackson papers at the University of Tennessee.

MOVIE REVIEW

By Bill Nevins

Black 47 At Connolly’s, The Movie—A Rollicking Good Time and the Next Best Thing to a Live Show!

Black 47, inimitably led—lo, these 20 full years-- by Wexford-born Irishman Larry Kirwan is the undisputed House Band of New York City, but in many ways they have become America’s Hometown Band as well! Blasting out reels, reggae, hornpipes and good old fashioned rock n roll on uilleann pipes, trombone, sax and Stratocaster, Black 47 power Kirwan’s wittily skewed and often highly political lyrics to swirling heights—turning and turning in the widening gyre, indeed!

The band sings about Ireland, old and new, America rough and sweet and wars in Iraq, Belfast, or on the mean streets of Manhattan with fierce sincerity and roguish laughter. What other band could make the tale of their being shut down by dubious AUTHORITY on stage in Hoboken, Fordham Road or Dublin into uproarious anthems like “Green Suede Shoes” and “Rockin’ the Bronx”? Kirwan has even mined the band’s rocky road adventures for his full length memoir Green Suede Shoes and the soon to be published novel Rockin’ the Bronx.

If you’ve been to a Black 47 live show, you probably have been to many—or you’re waiting anxiously for them to come ‘round again so you can get another “New York fix” of their delightful brew of humor, feeling and mind-expanding historical musings on the Irish diaspora and all diasporas in this mixed up wild world of singing, dancing, struggling peoples. This movie will take you back to those



unforgettable live shows, or get you psyched to seek out the band when they roll into a venue near enough for you to catch them—hardcore fans drive hundreds of miles to see them and their cds are said to be favorites among our troops overseas!

Black 47 defines the term “working band”. From their base at Connolly’s Pub and Restaurant just off Times Square in NYC, they circulate around the East Coast and sometimes out to Chicago, San Francisco, Denver—they even stopped once to play in Albuquerque and may again! Maybe not quite the “200 gigs a year” they boast of in one song, but darn close to it!

Like all hard working New Yorkers, Black 47 bust loose on New Year’s Eve, particularly in these tough economic and political times. This hour long film made lovingly by Victor Zimet and Stephanie Silber of Hand Made Films, grabs the essence of a recent Black 47 New Years in Times Square Blow Out—“full bore and balls to the wall”, as Larry Kirwan likes to declare after a

pint or five. And interspersed with live concert wildness and sweat, the film looks back at Black 47’s beginnings from 1989 onward, when piper/NYPD cop Chris Byrne met Kirwan in a lower Manhattan dive and struck up the musical friendship which birthed the band and led to many’s the mad night in Paddy Reilly’s, Connolly’s, Rocky Sullivan’s Pub and other legendary watering holes. (Full disclosure: I first met Larry Kirwan myself and became a lifelong admiring pal, back in the 1970s dark ages at Malachy McCourt’s late great and notorious NY pub, The Bells of Hell—but that’s another story, and the name of a Black 47 song itself, come to think of it.)

Catch this movie when you can!

The dvd can be ordered via www.hometeamproductions.com and the movie Black 47 at Connolly’s will be shown on the BIG screen on Wednesday, November 11, 2009 during the WORD! Poets & Songwriters Movie Program at The Guild Cinema, Albuquerque, NM www.guildcinema.com

Guild Cinema Hosts Poetry & Song Movie Programs, November 9-11, 2009

Albuquerque— The Guild Cinema of Albuquerque will host the first annual WORD! Poets & Songwriters Movie Program on November 9, 10, 11, 2009. This event will start at 4pm each day, Monday through Wednesday. According to organizer Bill Nevins, “We want to share the excitement of seeing and hearing sharp writing, and dynamic writers on the big screen.” Among the poets and songwriters appearing in the movies being screened are Beat poetry icons Jack Kerouac and Lawrence Ferlinghetti and radical Poet Laureates Amiri Baraka and Jack Hirschman. Songwriting stars to be featured include West Texas heroes The Flatlanders, Talking Head David Byrne and NY Irish rebel rousers Black 47, among others.

New Mexico’s rich poetry culture will be represented in films about the Poetry of Atrisco and the poetry of UNM writer Richard Vargas. There will also be surprises, including the US premiere of Talkies! by UK video-poet Steve Tasane and a widely praised mockumentary about the mysterious Humberville Poetry Slam. The program also features the Southwest premiere of Polis Is This: Charles Olson and the Persistence of Place, director Henry Ferrini’s visionary tribute to the art and mind of one of American poetry’s giants. Another American poetry hero, Carl Sandburg, will be celebrated in Rio Rancho film maker Daniel Steven Crafts’ Emmy-winning The Song & The Slogan.

Detailed information on screening schedules and ticket prices at www.guildcinema.com

Co-sponsors of WORD! Poets & Songwriters Movie Program are The Poetry Society of New Mexico and Sanjevani Poetry Circle.

The Guild Cinema, Albuquerque
Nov. 9, 10, 11, 2009
Monday-Wednesday
Movies scheduled to be screened (screening dates/times to be announced soon.)

Feature length films:
Red Poet: Jack Hirschman directed by Matt Furey
Polis Is This, Charles Olson and the Persistence of Place directed by Henry Ferrini
Amiri Baraka and the Last Poets: Who Blew Up America? directed by Rod Hollimon
Lubbock Lights, The Flatlanders and West Texas Songs directed by Amy Maner
Black 47 at Connolly’s in NYC on New Year’s Eve directed by Handmade Films
The Song & The Slogan, Carl Sandburg by director Daniel S. Crafts
Short films:



Albuquerque-Atrisco poet-director Priscilla Baca y Candelaria, whose film Alamo Viejo is in our fest and whose poem Mama’s Kitchen is featured in the short film Poetry of Atrisco.

Talkies! by United Kingdom poets, directed by Steve Tasane
The Humberville Poetry Slam by director Emily Chang
Jack Kerouac by director Henry Ferrini
DLIPS, poem by Richard Vargas
WORD! I Am a Poet, poem by Mary Oishi
Alamo Viejo, poem by Priscilla Baca y Candelaria
Levi Romero poem with music
Poetry of Atrisco by director Esteban Rael
CONTACT:
Bill Nevins
505 264 6979
Bill_nevins@yahoo.com
Deena Klein, Operations Director

WORD! 2009 Poets & Songwriters Movie Program

November 9, 10, 11
www.guildcinema.com
Deena Klein
505-319-1131

From the Board

This publication by the Friends of the Albuquerque Tribune (FOAT) happens bi-monthly because many volunteers invest their time, energy, and funds. We are a non-profit, and a community owned opportunity to bring citizen journalism to Albuquerque.

Many writers have supported this effort and contributed outstanding work to create this publication. Volunteers help at all the stages of production. Janet Bridgers brought her expertise to launch our advertising. Astrid Webster does copy editing and proof reading, as well as guiding content. Francis Rausch actually distributes thousands of copies of each issue to sites she monitors. She does this as she walks! Alex and Andrew Kolberg assist the hardworking editor, Rosamund Evans with all things computer related(not easy!).

Christine Carter, owner of Envision Graphics, patiently works out our layout and design. We are fortunate that Vanguard Printing brings the 8000 copies to life with soy based ink on 75% recycled paper. Compostable!

The Board shares the organizational tasks of the non-profit, but the treasurer Marvin Gladstone, carries a heavy load. Not that we have a lot of money but the bureaucratic responsibilities of the non-profit organization must be met.

The many donors that have invested in our publication have made this a reality. For two years you have maintained faith in the idea and encouraged our progress.

Tell your friends about the ABQ TRial Balloon. We distribute by “network” so pass out some copies. You can always find copies at Page One bookstore on Juan Tabo and Montgomery NE, at both La Montanita Co-ops, Nob Hill and 2400 Rio Grande Ave NW. Supplies of copies are kept at Newsland Bookstore, 2112 Central Ave SE and the Peace and Justice Center on Harvard and Silver SE. Take a stack of copies and join the distribution brigade!

With heart felt thanks,
FOAT Board,
Rosamund Evans
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David Barbour
Leslie Fishburn-Clark
Ted Cloak