

SONOMA COUNTY

# peace press

Publication of the Peace & Justice Center of Sonoma County  
PJCso.co.org • June/July • Vol. 36, No. 3

## WHAT'S INSIDE?

- ▶ We're Still Here for Peace and Justice
- ▶ Rohnert Park Says 'No' to Law Enforcement Oversight
- ▶ Ain't Got No Home in This World Anymore
- ▶ Ways You Can Support Palestine
- ▶ Preoccupied in Gaza 2021 (poem)



## 'ART ATTACK' on Israel's Apartheid Wall

NOTORIOUS, anonymous graffiti artist Banksy has made art in Palestine several times tagging different areas of the West Bank and Gaza, and creating nine images on the apartheid wall (including this 'ART ATTACK').

S O N O M A C O U N T Y  
*Peace Press*

Newsletter of the Peace & Justice Center of Sonoma County,  
an affiliate of the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR).  
467 Sebastopol Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95401  
Published bi-monthly: Feb., April, June, Aug., Oct., Dec.

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See Membership form on back cover

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Deadline for Aug/Sept issue: July 16, 2021

Email articles in MSWord to [peacentr@sonic.net](mailto:peacentr@sonic.net)

Word limit up to 700 words.

Shorter pieces under 400 words welcome about local activism and events.

**Authors are encouraged to delineate fact from opinion and wherever possible to substantiate their facts with references.**

Poems limited to 30 lines.

### EDITING POLICY

The Editorial Collective selects articles that serve the movement for peace and justice in a positive way. Articles are edited for clarity, syntax, grammar, length and spelling. If needed, authors will be contacted to assist with editing.

Submissions must contain author's name, address, phone number, word count and a brief – one or two sentence bio. Decisions about editing fall within these guidelines and are the final judgment of the Peace Press editorial collective.

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

### CALENDAR ITEMS

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

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**FRONT COVER** Design by A.A.Nagy; art on Separation Wall by Banksy

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# CONTENTS

page

- 1 We're Still Here for Peace and Justice
- 1 I Ain't Got No Home In This World Anymore
- 2 Rohnert Park Says 'No' to Law Enforcement Oversight
- 3 How to Protect our Homes from Fire and Protect our Forests? Both Are at Risk
- 4 Can We Protect Nature by Giving it Rights?
- 5 Greenhouse Gas Impact of Different Kinds of Milk
- 6 Ways You Can Support Palestine
- 7 US Abrogation of Chevron's Judgment fo Ecuador Pollution; An Assange in America
- 8 Preoccupied in Gaza, 2021 (poem)
- 10 Sonoma County Social Justice Groups
- 11 Donations for Houseless Neighbors



To receive the PJC  
weekly Social Justice  
email calendar,  
call (707) 575-8902

No meetings will be held  
at the Peace & Justice Center  
until further notice

# We're Still Here for Peace and Justice

*Shekeyna Black*

*"I'm telling the whole world. We're human beings, just like everyone else. It's our right to live a normal life. We also have a right to live a nonviolent life," –Ahed Tamimi*

In lieu of the regular Getting Centered column, I have opted to share the Spring Appeal Letter that was snail mailed to our Members. We appreciate each and every one of you for your continued support of the Peace & Justice Center.

## Spring Appeal Letter:

The impact of the pandemic is still rearing its ugly head more than a year into the global crisis. The Peace & Justice Center remains closed for meetings and in-person events; and currently, the office hours continue to be suspended as we comply with CDC and Sonoma County Health Department mandates regarding COVID-19. If you call or send an email, we thank you for your patience while we do our best to reply to messages.

On a happier note, the PJC will be hosting the Annual Peace & Justice Awards online on Saturday, November 13, 2021. Please visit our [website](#) for details regarding nominating Sonoma County residents and/or organizations for the five Award categories.

Your donations, large or small, help support our nonprofit organization so that we may continue to do our vital work striving for equity and justice. A convenient Donate tab is on our website so that donations can be made online via the secure PayPal link at [www.](#)

[pjcsoco.org/donate](#). Donation Checks can be mailed directly to the Peace & Justice Center.

The PJC cosponsors and participates in events online in addition to the occasional 'Socially Distanced Mandatory Masks' marches and rallies regarding social justice issues. We help get the word out about these vital activists' events in our weekly e-newsletter. If you have not already done so, sign up to receive the PJC's e-newsletter via our website. The Sonoma County Peace Press; which, the PJC publishes six times per year, has not been available in print form since the beginning of the pandemic. We continue to publish and archive the *Peace Press* on our website. We count on you to share the *Peace Press* with others.

Board Member, Audrianna Jones facilitates the ongoing "Donation Drive for the Homeless" where people can drop off their donated items at the PJC on Tuesdays from 3:00-5:00 pm only. She and Board President, Rebel Fagin deliver the items to homeless people every week. Additionally, Ms. Jones oversees the monthly hot meal delivery by volunteers, which are given to homeless people living on the streets.

The Peace & Justice Center of Sonoma County is a community asset that does not get any government funding. We ask that you please make a generous donation during our 2021 [Spring Appeal Drive](#). Thank you for your heartfelt support! 🙌

## I Ain't Got No Home In This World Anymore

*Will Shonbrun*

They're the American refugees, our homeless. Now you might be thinking, what do you mean *our* homeless? I didn't make them homeless. They're not *my* responsibility. And strictly speaking you'd be right. But as a society of people that has chosen civilization, its laws and its accepted behaviors – and therefore we have shared responsibilities in its upkeep and maintenance – when we have people living on our streets (roughly 580,000 in our country), it's clearly obvious something is amiss in our world. Too many of our people – mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters – can't make it here and must drift from place to place... outcasts in their own land.

I've met some homeless people – talked with some and heard their stories – and as different as these stories were, the one thing they all had in common was that they'd fallen on hard times. A few had been professionals, some were well educated, and others just or-

inary working people that dropped through a hole when life collapsed around them. There but for fortune could easily have been my fate, and I'd venture to guess many of you.

Yes, there are alcoholics, drug-users, free-loaders and ne'er-do-wells in the ranks of

*It's curious that we care enough for the welfare of dogs and cats and provide shelter and care for them... providing clean shelter provisions for stray animals, they're given food, medical care and large doses of love.*

homeless, as well as mentally disabled people. Nevertheless they are all of human flesh, feel pain, know sorrow and joy, and some knew love in their lives. All people deserve at minimum, sustenance, shelter and safe harbor. Those sick with addictions to deadly substances deserve care and treatment, as do the mentally afflicted. These fundamental

needs, as so well made clear in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights penned many years ago, are the responsibility of a civilized society... our responsibility, all of us.

It's curious that we care enough for the welfare of dogs and cats and provide shelter and care for them, as well we should. Besides providing clean shelter provisions for stray animals, they're given food, medical care and large doses of love.

How is it that we do not feel as strongly about those among us with those same needs? Is it because we blame and fault them for their misfortune, and therefore the hell with them? No doubt that's true of some of us, but those of us that know better, that understand our fortunes could easily have turned, it is not that hard to withhold judgment. Who among us never needed a helping hand at some time in life?

It's estimated there are at least 3,000 people homeless in Sonoma County and a number of those are children. They're no-

*I Ain't Got No Home...see page 9*

# Rohnert Park Says 'No' to Law Enforcement Oversight

*Jerry Threet and D'mitra Smith*

On May 11 the Rohnert Park (RP) City Council finally took up a discussion of civilian oversight of its Public Safety Department. This is a discussion that the community has demanded and begged for over the course of more than two decades. That call for oversight goes back prior to the 2000 Report of the US Civil Rights Commission that called for RP to establish a civilian oversight committee. The community demand for this discussion was repeated over and over as instance after instance of officer misconduct came to light and as more lives were lost unnecessarily to police violence in RP. We will never forget the night when dozens of community members appeared before the council in 2019 to demand oversight following the \$4M jury verdict in the brutal Branch Wroth killing by RP officers. The RP council sat in stone-faced silence as the community begged for



elected office. Those of us who had worked on police accountability issues in this county for years saw these welcome changes as the promise of a new day.

Unfortunately, it seems those hopes have been dashed by the reversal of the one White council member among the newly elected trio. Guidice, instead of fulfilling his promise to his Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) colleagues and the community to establish civilian oversight in RP, instead betrayed that promise last Tuesday. Guidice joined his two White establishment colleagues and refused to support Vice Mayor Elward's modest motion to start the process of looking at civilian oversight models for RP. Mayor Guidice instead imperiously announced that he "was not ready" for a discussion that the community has demanded for more than two decades. Retreating to the comfort of White complicity and privilege, the new RP mayor signaled to the good ol' boy network that he is just fine with business as usual – that continued deaths and payouts of

taxpayer money are just fine with him.

Things significantly shifted in this country and in this county last summer, as a multi-racial, multi-generational coalition rose up to protest ongoing police violence and the persistent stain of White Supremacy. This is not a new conversation, but it has a new urgency in a time when we are both exiting from a Presidency characterized by core beliefs of White Supremacy and when the nation has been rocked by Black Lives Matter Protests.

No doubt there are many members of the RP community who are comfortable with the way things have been, with the RP Public Safety Department and its officers and how it has operated. And there are many others who are not. This department has a troubled

history of mistakes and missteps, which RP council has seen in closed sessions to discuss settlements of lawsuits. We have seen these mistakes in press reportings of huge lawsuit settlements and officer shakedowns of legal marijuana growers on highways. The mistakes have been many for such a small department and of a very serious nature. There is much work to be done to regain the trust of the entire community. All members of the RP community deserve to feel safe, not just White community members.

This conversation is important and must continue along with the work to improve policing and police-community relationships in Rohnert Park. This process is not an attack on police officers or the City's Public Safety department. The type of community engagement process proposed is a key support for effective community policing. True community policing depends on ongoing, authentic engagement that seeks to understand the perspective and desires of those who will be policed. And that means an ongoing dialogue with the community in a formal structure that facilitates that process.

This is where a civilian oversight entity comes in. A formal civilian oversight entity is key to making ongoing engagement with the community successful. And because our BIPOC community members so often experience the brunt of impacts from policing, it is crucial that any discussion of a civilian oversight entity center BIPOC voices. To put it simply, centering BIPOC voices makes it more likely policing will actually serve BIPOC needs. And when our most vulnerable community members

*Rohnert Park Says 'No'...see page 9*

*Rohnert Park elected 3 new leaders in 2020, all of whom pledged to support civilian oversight of the RP Public Safety Department.*

a hearing on civilian oversight. No hearing was scheduled and there was no follow-up by any council member.

Rohnert Park elected 3 new leaders in 2020, all of whom pledged to support civilian oversight of the RP Public Safety Department. Vice Mayor Jackie Elward, a Black woman immigrant leader and Councilmember Willie Linares, a son of Guatemalan immigrant parents, joined with Mayor Gerard Guidice, a White local businessman, to promise change and responsiveness to RP community desires that had long been ignored. These refreshing commitments to discuss these persistent challenges garnered this trio the support they needed to overturn long entrenched incumbents and gain

# How to Protect our Homes from Fire and Protect our Forests? Both Are At Risk

*Sonoma County Climate Activist Network (SoCoCAN!)*

Sonoma County Supervisors recently approved \$3.7 million for “vegetation management projects to reduce wildfire risk.”

Fire has been part of the California landscape for aeons. We will not stop fire. We need to protect homes and communities from fire, keep evacuation routes clear, and stop new building in fire-prone zones.

Jack Cohen, PhD, a Research Physical Scientist retired from the US Forest Service, showed conclusively and repeatedly with thousands of studies that the best way to protect homes from fire is by home hardening, and creating defensible space up to 100 feet around homes. Most of the wildfires that destroy homes are ignited by wind-driven embers landing on flammable materials close to homes, or blowing in through open vents. Home hardening can be as simple as clearing flammable objects from immediately around homes and covering vents with 1/16 inch wire mesh, to installing fire resistant roofs and sprinkler systems. Creating defensible space up to 100 feet from homes by removing dead vegetation and ladder fuels is also important.

There is little evidence that clearing vegetation in forests far from homes helps to protect homes and communities from fire; in fact it can make matters much worse by removing the vegetation that shades the forests, keeping them cool and moist, instead allowing exposed soil to dry out and wind-driven fires to race through, and

making way for invasive weeds and grasses that are more flammable than the plants they replace. Logging did not save the town of Paradise from the Camp fire. Aerial photos show homes razed to the ground surrounded by trees barely touched by fire. “Vegetation management” and “fuel load reduction” sound so benign, but in reality these are code words for logging. Post-fire salvage logging destroys valuable habitat and removes some of the most fire-resistant trees. Thousands of acres in Sonoma County are being cut now, yet few know how widespread these removals are, as much of the cutting is unregulated or does not require permits.

Climate scientist Dr. Bill Moomaw argues that the best way to counter climate change is to sequester carbon in existing forests. Protecting forests is also one of the best ways to protect wildlife habitat and our watersheds. The heavy equipment used in vegetation removal compacts the soil, leading to erosion, which in turn runs off as sediment, clogging streams, rivers and wetlands.

Yet under the name of “vegetation management” or “fuel load reduction,” financial incentives lead to the cutting of the largest trees – and the price of lumber is at an all-time high.

The Supervisors recently held a Tree Ordinance workshop, recognizing the valuable role trees play in providing precious wildlife habitat, protecting our watersheds, and sequestering carbon. Yet thousands of acres of trees are being logged in the name of public safety and protection from fire, even forest health.

George Wuerthner, a retired forester, explains that there are two distinct ways of seeing forests. Foresters in general see trees as so many feet of board lumber – a resource to be extracted for our use. Fire ecologists see trees as more valuable in their natural state than when managed, and to them fire, dead wood, fungi, beetles, and all the things that foresters want to suppress, are essential parts of the ongoing natural processes that make up the interconnected living, breathing, systems we call forests.

At the state level, Governor Newsom approved a fire budget of \$1.24 billion for wildfire and forest resilience funding, with \$25 million- just 2% of the total - for home

hardening. Why isn’t more being spent to help homeowners, apartment complexes, mobile home parks, with proven methods of home hardening and creating defensible space? “In addition to being more effective, home-safety actions can produce more jobs and better-paying jobs than an equivalent amount of money spent subsidizing logging and other forest-altering activities” (Niemi 2018). \$39 million is allocated for “science-based management” but more than twice as much, \$76 million, for “forest sector economic stimulus”. Basically this monetizes the forests and incentivizes forest-based business.

Surely the first rule of operation should be to do no harm. Forests regulate temperature, store carbon above and below ground, create oxygen, create soil, purify our air and water, provide essential wildlife habitat, and so much more. We depend upon forests and destroy them at our peril. Let’s focus our resources on protecting human lives and property from fire by incentivizing home hardening and the creation of defensible space and protect existing forests and ensure that we do no harm. “Working From the Home Outward:

*Protecting forests is also one of the best ways to protect wildlife habitat and our watersheds.*

A New Direction for California Wildfire Policy” is an excellent resource explaining why and how we can protect both our homes and our forests. To sacrifice our forests to save our homes is a false solution which will only lead to disaster.

The Sonoma County Climate Activist Network (SoCoCAN!) is a strong and active network of over 50 local climate activist groups, over 200 individuals, and hundreds of local group members working together to address and reverse climate change. We meet in months with a 5th Monday, 7-9 PM. Currently we meet on Zoom. Next meeting is on August 30. Join our listserv for lively discussion and information sharing. Let us know if your group would like to join the network. Network support is available for all local climate activism. Contact us at [sonomaCountyCAN.org](mailto:sonomaCountyCAN.org). 🌿

# Can We Protect Nature by Giving it Rights?

*Russian Riverkeeper*

Rights of Nature is a growing international movement that recognizes natural systems not simply as resources for humans to use, but as living entities with rights of their own. It has the potential to transform

*The localization of environmental management and control is a key factor that defines how Rights of Nature might be realized in various regions.*

American law and protect watersheds like the Russian River.

Traditional ecological knowledge of indigenous peoples refined over thousands of years is at the heart of the Rights of Nature movement. The understanding that humans have a place in nature, and cannot own or destroy existing natural communities and ecosystems is a cornerstone of the movement's vision for a sustainable future where natural entities have an independent and inalienable right to exist. This comes in conflict with early colonial development that gave superior legal and financial might to corporations over people and the natural world, where corporate "personhood" made way for the legal right to destroy living systems. Rights of Nature is an emerging strategy to rebalance growing corporate power and existing law biased toward exploiting rather than protecting.

The localization of environmental management and control is a key factor that defines how Rights of Nature might be realized in various regions. In the context of early adopters Ecuador and Bolivia, decades of resource extraction and economic monopolization for profit at the expense of indigenous peoples prompted the need to push back to preserve both the environment and people who depend on it. In the United States, roughly three dozen local communi-

ties have adopted Rights of Nature laws although processes for enforcement are still lacking and are typically seen on a case by case basis. For example, Tamaqua Borough, Pennsylvania, successfully banned waste corporations from dumping toxic sewage sludge.

Today, environmental laws like the Clean Water Act are influenced by corporate entities in the highest levels of government functioning. Although our laws are meant to protect our lands and waterways, continued

compliance challenges and the legal notion of preemption make sustainable resolutions difficult. The contradictory stance of Rights of Nature within our legal system raises the question of whether a radical change and a complete systems overhaul would be necessary in order to make Rights of Nature pos-

sible across the board. As a starting point, the Universal Declaration of Rights for Rivers was developed by scientists and the Earth Law Center for groups to customize their own bill of rights based on local laws and culture. It draws from the victories for the rights of rivers worldwide and is being used as a template for legislative drafting.

The Russian River Bill of rights was written by Virginia Strom-Martin, former California Assemblyperson and Russian Riverkeeper Boardmember, and Tom Roth, Redwood Chapter Conservation Chair at Sierra Club and former Board of Director member. It was developed in 2008 in an effort to recognize our own responsibilities to our local treasure, and what it needs in order to continue existing and thriving. Is it time to revitalize these rights and build a new legal framework to ensure our River's future? Russian Riverkeeper will be following local changes as the paradigm shifts for how we think about and manage living systems.

Learn more from experts: CEDLF, U  
<https://russianriverkeeper.org>  
[info@russianriverkeeper.org](mailto:info@russianriverkeeper.org)



# Greenhouse Gas Impact of Different Kinds of Milk

## Occupy Sonoma County

Choice of diet is very personal and individual. We all have different needs and tastes. At Occupy Sonoma County we aim to create awareness about the impact of our choices for informed decisions. Eating a plant-based diet is one of many ways that each of us can reduce greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change. Animal agriculture is one of the highest sources of greenhouse gas.

Dairy milk has the biggest carbon footprint of all milks by far. When we take into consideration the impacts of different non-dairy milks, oat milk has the lowest footprint, is the cheapest and is the easiest to make. Other milks to consider are hemp milk, flax milk, soy milk, coconut milk and hazelnut milk.

*Climate change is a serious concern that requires more than individual actions, but we can all do our part by reducing our carbon footprint.*

Almond milk is popular but almonds require a lot of water and almond trees here in California are part of the problem during a drought. Almond milk also tends to separate in a hot beverage but it is delicious and nutritious. So let's not give it up entirely, but consider the other choices as well.

Commercial coconut milk tends to have fewer additives, is available unsweetened and has a thick, creamy consistency that doesn't separate and is delicious in a hot beverage. However, it also has a higher carbon footprint since it comes from a tropical country.



Soy milk is high in protein and other nutrients and is a good choice for some people. The phytoestrogens can cause fertility problems in men. People who did not grow up eating soy products are often intolerant of it. Some women balance their hormones by drinking and eating soy.

Hazelnuts are one of the most overlooked choices for dairy alternatives, as well as a nut source of nutrients. Hazelnuts don't require a lot of water and can be grown here in our area. If you are thinking about what foods to grow, consider growing hazelnuts. They can be used for milk, nuts, nut butter and many amazing treats when combined with chocolate.

Cashews are a go-to for many plant-based recipes and cheeses, but the way cashews are chemically processed when harvested makes them a less healthy choice. They make wonderful cream and sour cream (soak first, blend in equal parts of water and add either sweetener or lime).

Non-dairy milks are easy to make, are full of nutrition (a quart of commercial almond milk has less than one almond), and when you make your own you know exactly what went in it. Packaging is also an important consideration when reducing the carbon footprint of our food choices.

Oat milk is so cheap and easy to make. Don't even consider buying it! Put one cup of oats in a blender, fill half-full with water, blend on high, fill the blender with more water and blend again. For cold beverages and for cooking, straining is optional. (Tip: If you use it for chowder, put the thickener – corn starch – in the blender with the oats.) If you want to use it for hot beverages, it will require straining through cloth or a very fine sieve.

For almond milk and also hemp, flax and other nuts, use this same recipe but it will need to be strained. With almond milk you can put the meal back in the blender and make a second batch. The first batch is like half-and-half and the second batch is like regular milk. Use the meal to make burgers (with onion, veggies or beans and seasonings), add to baking or grains. Most nuts should be soaked to make the nutrients more available.

Climate change is a serious concern that requires more than individual actions, but we can all do our part by reducing our carbon footprint. Join us or one of many climate change groups to take significant action to stop climate change.

For more information about the greenhouse gas impact of animal agriculture, go to our campaign page at <https://OccupySonomaCounty.org/MayMeatChallenge>. Use our website contact form and join our Earth Action Campaign listserv to receive our weekly news-packed newsletter. ♻️

# Ways You Can Support Palestine

## Rebel Fagin

There are many ways to support the people of Palestine in their struggle. Let's look at some of them:

The International Solidarity Movement – the ISM – is a Palestinian-led movement that employs nonviolent direct action in resistance to the dispossession and occupation. Founded in 2001, they are there when houses are demolished, olive groves decimated and when people are attacked by settlers and soldiers. This international, volunteer movement is anti-oppressive and stands up to Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and Zionism.

Keeping in line with the Palestinian Declaration of 2012, the ISM strongly objects to the false conflagration of the settler-colonial philosophy of Zionism with the religion of Judaism. Resistance to the policies of the government of Israel is not anti-Semitism. Internationalists return home from their time in Palestine and tell their friends and family what they witnessed. This helps tear down the false narratives of violent Palestinians promoted by Zionist forces. People believe their friends. The struggle is less isolated.

When ISM volunteers are present, settler and soldier violence against unarmed Palestinians is reduced. ISM volunteers participate

in demonstrations and bear witness to the destruction, frequently documenting events for presentation back home. If you want to learn more, support them or join them. Start by going to [www.palsolidarity.org](http://www.palsolidarity.org).

The Middle East Children's Alliance – MECA – works to protect the rights and improve the lives of children in the Middle East. Headquartered in Berkeley, they support children and families in Palestine, Lebanon and Iraq through direct aid, arranging financial support and arranging professional assistance to community organizations to provide clinics, water fountains for schools, kindergartens, libraries, counselling centers, playgrounds, sports teams, dance, music, art programs and university scholarships.

They also educate people around the world about the lives these children endure and how US foreign policy impacts the lives of the people living in the region. MECA trains people on fundraising techniques, hosting house parties and more. Starting from a lemonade stand, Omar (13) and Nayema (11) Sisemore raised nearly \$4,000, enough to buy a water purification unit for a kindergarten in Gaza. You can learn more, donate or join them by going to [www.meca-forpeace.org](http://www.meca-forpeace.org).

Another way to support the people of Palestine is by shopping at places that sup-

port them. Shop Palestine ([www.shoppalestine.org](http://www.shoppalestine.org)) is one such place. They use fair trade principals with all their vendors. In support of MECA, Shop Palestine offers hand-woven rugs, glass, books, ceramics, jewelry, clothes, children's items, body products and more.

Land of Canaan sells olive oil while Palestine Craftaid offers handcrafted olive wood sculptures, textiles and more. The Palestine Box is a mystery box. In the past these boxes have held homemade music, ceramics and Keffiyehs. The money raised through Palestine Box sales helps support the Northern California branch of the ISM.

The cornerstone of all this for me is the organic, extra virgin, fair trade Palestinian olive oil and za'atar (thyme, sesame, sumac, sea salt. <http://www.palestineonlinestore.com/> features most everything I've listed before and DVDs, calendars, books, cards, posters, spices and more.

These are some of the groups that work for peace in Palestine. If you want to support them or join them, go to the web addresses listed above. You can learn more by listening to *Speaking of Palestine* on KBBF, 89.1 FM from 4-5 pm on the first Monday of the month, with an encore presentation on the third Monday. We can't shop our way to justice, but we can help the people in struggle with what we choose to buy. ✌️



Palestinians harvest olives from their lands which currently lie on the Israeli side of the controversial separation barrier (background) near the West Bank village of Dura.



# US Abrogation of Chevron's Judgment for Ecuador Pollution; An Assange in America

Barry Barnett

**C**hevron drilled for oil for 25 years in the Ecuadorian Amazon. They dumped 68 billion liters (16b gallons) of toxic wastewater into the rainforest, and spilled 75 million liters (17m gallons) of crude oil from leaks ("accidents") in the trans-Ecuadorian pipeline. They left toxic waste in hundreds of open pits, polluting rivers, lakes, jungles and pathways. There was a glimmer of justice for the many Ecuadorians who suffered cancers, miscarriages, birth defects, childhood leukemia and other ailments as a result of these practices, which are illegal in Ecuador and the US, but that seems to be on hold in our "justice" system.

Actually, it was Toxicco, I mean Texaco, that committed these crimes. In 2000, Texaco "merged" with (was gobbled up by) Chevron, who is the defendant in a series of landmark lawsuits.

Chevron is also responsible for cleaning up the mess, one of the worst environmental disasters on the planet. At the time, Texaco did all of this illegal dumping to save \$3 a barrel of crude oil. Little has been cleaned up, and the oil wastes continue to poison the rainforest ecosystem and its inhabitants. An area 4400 sq. km. (1700 sq. mi.) of NE Ecuador was subsequently dubbed the "Amazon Chernobyl." The discharges poisoned water for drinking, bathing and fishing. There was soil contamination and deforestation, and social, cultural and economic upheaval. At least 85% of the methane ("natural gas") extracted was burned into the atmosphere. There have also been over 1400 oil spills in the area in the 21st century.

Some 30,000 indigenous residents and rural farmers began a lawsuit against Texaco in 1993. Finally, between 2011 and 2013, Ecuadorian courts found Chevron (worth \$260b), now merged with Texaco, liable and ordered the corporation to pay \$9.5 billion in compensation to the affected residents. The Ecuadorians also filed a lawsuit in Canada seeking seizure of Chevron's assets to pay for the vast task of cleanup and remediation of the rainforest, which was upheld in a Canadian appellate court.

However, a ruling deeming the \$9.5b verdict as unenforceable was issued by a US court in 2014, and upheld by appeal in 2016. In 2018, the Permanent Court of Arbitration in the Hague, Netherlands ruled in favor of Chevron.

Chevron lied and said that Texaco spent \$40m cleaning up the area in the 1990s, and that courts were bribed. Chevron sued New York human rights lawyer Steven Donziger, who represented

the Ecuadorians for 27 years, under a civil provision of the Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act. Chevron paid \$2m to an Ecuadorian judge they flew to NY, who attested there was bribery in the judgment against Chevron, later admitting that this was false.

NY Judge Lewis A. Kaplan, a former tobacco company lawyer, would not permit a jury trial, and transferred the trial to a private law firm, Seward & Kissel, who has had several oil-and-gas clients, including... Chevron. Kaplan hand-picked a judge, his friend Loretta Preska, a member of the right wing Federalist society, among whose major donors is... Chevron. Prosecutor Rita Glavin has financial ties to... Chevron.

Donziger was ordered to turn over all client information, including his phone and computer. He considered this a breach of attorney-client privilege, and refused. So now he is under house arrest – for a misdemeanor! – with an abrasive ankle bracelet on him 24 hours a day for over 600 days now. He calls it the "black claw," and chafed and chafing, cannot even go outside his upper west side NYC apartment where he lives with his wife and son.

His law license was revoked. He won his appeal March 2, but this failed to end his ankle torture. 68 Nobel laureates, Amnesty International, Amazon Watch, the National Lawyers Guild, and numerous celebrities, environmentalists, and

human rights activists have called for release of this corporate political prisoner.

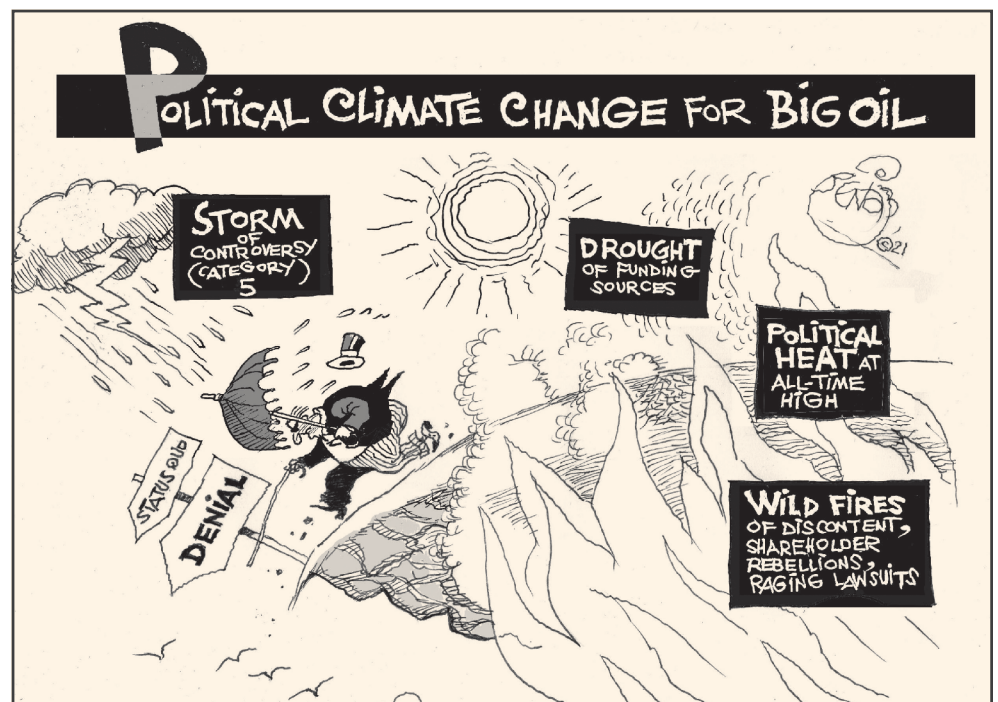
Six Congress members have demanded that Attorney General Merrick Garland investigate. You can sign a petition demanding Steven's immediate release at [amazonwatch.org/take-action/free-steven-donziger](https://amazonwatch.org/take-action/free-steven-donziger).

His contempt of court case opened in NYC on 5/10/21. The corrupt judge and prosecutor are acting very similarly to Judge Berater, I mean Beraitser, in the Old Bailey where Julian Assange is being tried.

This Kafkaesque trial goes on...

Sources: US Lawyer Steven Donziger Speaks From House Arrest in NYC, Democracy Now! 3/15/21; Free Steven Donziger!, Amazon Watch Petition; The Ongoing Persecution of Steven Donziger, James North, The Nation 3/30/21; Unusual Contempt Trial of Lawyer Who Took on Chevron Gets Underway, Josh Russell, Courthouse News 5/10/21; The Judicial Persecution of Steven Donziger, Eve Ottenberg, CounterPunch 4/9/21; Steven Donziger's Instagram page; Steven Donziger's Twitter page. 🐦

Barry Barnett is a political and environmental author and activist, health professional, and musician living on the left coast of the US Empire. You can follow him on Twitter, CounterPunch archives, Daily Kos, and his website at [Patreon.com/BarryBarnett](https://patreon.com/BarryBarnett), with 80+ articles, political satire and humor, political fantasy stories, and poetry, all free of charge to read. Feedback welcome at [barrymuse123@gmail.com](mailto:barrymuse123@gmail.com).



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## Preoccupied in Gaza, 2021

*Dennis Bernstein*

### 1. two places at once

To stay alive in Gaza, he says,  
You have to have a place to live,  
Separate from the place you hide.

### 2. silent watch

Speech is out of the question.  
She can tell you everything  
she needs to with her eyes:  
At noon they hone in on  
a sniper - and his shadow -  
watching us eat lunch  
through a telescopic lens.

### 3. stones

These days the dead are  
too angry to die.  
I see their hands reaching  
up out of fresh graves,  
grasping for stones:  
I buried my niece  
and marked her place with a  
circle of fine throwing stones -  
By dawn, they were all gone.

### 4. the brains of resistance

The soldier's bullet blew  
the boy's brain clean  
from his skull. The medic  
scooped it up and placed it  
on the stretcher next to  
boy's still-warm corpse.  
It seemed to the medic that  
the boy's brain was still  
gathering up stones -  
hurling his hardened  
poems at the tanks of  
occupation.



PHOTO: GEORGE ROSE

*An epidemic of homelessness plagues the US. Will society realize a humane solution or continue to criminalize homelessness?*

### ***I Ain't Got No Home In This World Anymore... from page 1***

mads, living in make-shift camps or small groups, and consistently rousted by the police and so move from place to place. A homeless person cannot lay down on a bench, sleep in a park, or rest for any period of time in any public place. It is against the law in many states to be indigent; it's called vagrancy. They are guilty of the crime of being poor. They have no place to go to the bathroom unless they find a public

accommodation. Even to stop and rest is a crime. Consider for a moment how you would fare in those conditions.

In 1938 Woody Guthrie wrote:

*I ain't got no home, I'm just a roamin' 'round  
Just a wandrin' worker, I go from town to town.  
And the police make it hard wherever I may go  
And I ain't got no home in this world anymore*

In 1986 Paul Simon wrote:

*Homeless, homeless*

*Moonlight sleeping on a midnight lake*

*Strong wind, destroy our home*

*Many dead, tonight it could be you*

See Homeless, Graceland: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cb04PK\\_oTIM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cb04PK_oTIM)

Is it not time for us to correct this? 🙏

*Will Shonbrun is a writer and human rights activist who lives in Sonoma. His latest book, which he labels autobiographical fiction, The Road to Find Out is available at Readers' Books in Sonoma and can be viewed at [www.willshonbrun.com](http://www.willshonbrun.com).*

### ***Rohnert Park Says 'No' to Law Enforcement Oversight... from page 2***

are safe, we **all** become safer.

Each community must decide for itself what form of civilian oversight will best suit its particular needs. For that reason, it is necessary that the Rohnert Park City Council establish an advisory body to study the different models of civilian oversight, take input from civilian oversight experts, gather input from community members and make a recommendation to the City Council on what oversight should look like for Rohnert Park. The National Organization for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) will be glad to help RP with this endeavor,

if contacted. Other local oversight practitioners will be happy to help. The first step is to pass a resolution establishing the advisory body to study this issue and to staff and fund it for its work.

Everybody is now talking about how they support Black and Brown lives in this county and how we must use **equity** as a lens in making decisions. Equity demands that RP listen to the council voices who have **lived experience** with policing and with how it feels to live in RP. Equity demands that the White members of the RP City Council listen to the BIPOC lead-

ers elected to the council and follow their leadership on this issue. Equity demands that the White mayor, who promised his BIPOC colleagues and the voters that he would support civilian oversight, actually fulfill his promise.

**Please contact the Rohnert Park city council and let them know you support civilian oversight at [https://www.rpcity.org/city\\_hall/city\\_council/meet\\_my\\_city\\_council](https://www.rpcity.org/city_hall/city_council/meet_my_city_council) or call 588-2226.** 🙏

*Jerry Threet is the Chair of the Sonoma County Commission on Human Rights. D'mitra Smith is the former Chair of the Commission on Human Rights (titles for identification purposes only).*

## ENGAGE YOUR GOVT.

**Sonoma County Supervisors** (707) 565-2241  
 District 1 - Susan.Gorin@sonoma-county.org  
 District 2 - David.Rabbitt@sonoma-county.org  
 District 3 - Chris.Coursey@sonoma-county.org  
 District 4 - James.Gore@sonoma-county.org  
 District 5 - Linda.Hopkins@sonoma-county.org

### State Senator Mike McGuire

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

### Assemblymember Marc Levine

Petaluma City Hall, Petaluma  
 11 English Street, Petaluma, CA 94952  
 Tel: (707) 576-2631, Fax: (707) 576-2735  
 Rattigan State Building, Santa Rosa  
 50 D Street, Suite 301, Santa Rosa, CA 95404  
 Tel: (707) 576-2631, Fax: (707) 576-2735

### Assemblymember Jim Wood

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

### U.S. Representative Jared Huffman

1630 Longworth Office Bldg.  
 Washington, DC 20515  
 202-225-5161, 202-225-5163 (Fax)  
 Nearest local office:

999 Fifth Ave., #290, San Raphael 94901  
 415-258-9657, 415-258-9913 (Fax)

### U.S. Representative Mike Thompson

231 Cannon Bldg., Washington D.C. 20515  
 (202) 225-3311, Napa (707) 226-9898  
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padilla.senate.gov/content/contact-senator

### U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein

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Fax: (202) 228-3954

feinstein@senate.gov

### California Gov. Gavin Newsom

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 (916) 445-2841, Fax: (916) 445-4633  
 governor@governor.ca.gov

### Lt. Gov. Eleni Kounalakis

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

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

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 president@whitehouse.gov

# Sonoma County Social Justice Groups

ALL PHONE AREA CODES ARE (707)  
 UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE

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

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

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

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

**Comité VIDA** – Defends the human and civil rights of immigrants. 523-1740, cirsc@yahoo.com,

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

**Fukushima Response** – works to inform about the Fukushima melt downs, monitor the consequences, advocate for the shut down of Diablo Canyon. fukushimaresponse.org. 823-9203

**Green Party of Sonoma County** – sonomagreenparty.org

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

**HPEACE** – Health Professionals for Equality and Community Empowerment. hpeacesonomacounty.wordpress.com

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

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

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

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

**Indivisible Sonoma County:** indivisiblesoco.com  
**Indivisible Petaluma:** indivisiblepetaluma@gmail.com, or follow on Twitter at @IndivisibleLuma

**Indivisible Sebastopol:** indivisible.wsc@gmail.com

**Indivisible Healdsburg**

**Indivisible Windsor**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**North Bay Organizing Project** – a regional faith and values based peoples' organization. 318-2818

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Petaluma Blacks for Community Development** – facebook.com/pb4cd

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

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

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

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

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

**Sonoma County Chapter of Physicians for a National Health Program (PNHP).** In support of single payer health insurance. 763-1925. sngold@juno.com. www.pnhpca.org.

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

**Sonoma County Coastal Hills:** gardens@mcn.org

**Sonoma County Nonviolence Training Collective** offers free trainings in methods and principles for progressive social change and peace. soconvtc@gmail.com.

**Sonoma County Resistance** via change.org

**Sonoma Solidarity with Standing Rock** – Supporting indigenous rights and fossil fuel resistance. SonomaSolidarity.org, Facebook: Sonoma Solidarity with Standing Rock. 792-4422.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Women's Justice Center** – Advocacy for victims of rape, domestic violence, and child abuse, particularly in the Latina community. 575-3150, justicewomen.com

*Democracy is NOT  
 a spectator sport!*

*Please email zenekar@comcast.net  
 for additions or changes to this list.*

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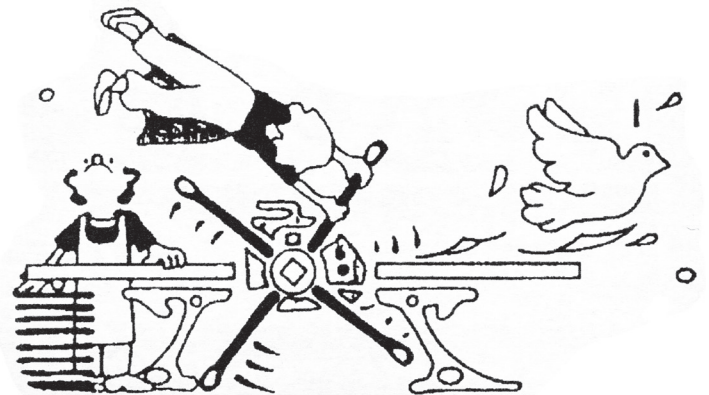
**Please call (707) 575-8902 or visit [PJCso.org](http://PJCso.org)**

## PEACE & JUSTICE CENTER OF SONOMA COUNTY

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