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ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY
AT CHRISTMAS

Rest easy, sleep well my brothers.
Know the line has held, your job is done.
Rest easy, sleep well.
Others have taken up where you fell, the line has held.
Peace, peace, and farewell.

Readers may be interested to know that these wreaths — some 5,000 — are donated by the Worcester Wreath Co. of Harrington, Maine. The owner, Merrill Worcester, not only provides the wreaths, but covers the trucking expense as well. He’s done this since 1992. A wonderful guy. Also, most years, groups of Maine school kids combine an educational trip to DC with this event to help out. Making this even more remarkable is the fact that Harrington is in one the poorest parts of the state.

SAN BERNARDINO – The air was filled with excitement and the thrill of a new experience as 1,200 or more young students filled the enormous California Theatre of Performing Arts in San Bernardino to hear a special Christmas performance by the nationally-acclaimed Mariachi Sol de Mexico de Jose Hernandez, with an added special treat of seeing the outstanding ballet folklorico performance by the Pacifico Dance Company of Los Angeles.

Elementary students from Redlands, San Bernardino, and Colton were exposed to an experience, of mariachi music and colorful dances from various regions in Mexico, the first time for many students.

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"...the essays offer a great window into both Chicanoism and development of identity politics in the 20th century. The two essays written by cultural theory to support the Chicano Movement: Writings from Vasquez from 1968-1972 for the path-breaking Chicano newspaper, El Grito del Norte."

Highlighting the involvement of women in the Chicano movement, Enriqueta Vasquez and the Chicano Movement: Writings from El Grito del Norte, is an anthology that combines for the first time in one volume the columns written by Hispanic civil rights activist Enriqueta Vasquez from 1968-1972 for the path-breaking Chicano newspaper, El Grito del Norte.

As a teenager Enriqueta Vasquez wrote her first letter to complain against the injustice she saw around her while growing up in the Southwest. Why was she, a Mexican American, not allowed to eat in local restaurants, while her brothers were fighting to preserve their country's principles of freedom and democracy? Why were Mexican Americans good enough to fight and die for their country but not good enough to be treated as equals at home? And so began Enriqueta Vasquez's Life-long fight for justice.

Enriqueta Vasquez's columns written during the peak of the civil rights movement provided a platform for her fierce but hopeful voice of protest. In her column, entitled "Desdeptien Hermosas! [Awaken, Brothers and Sisters!], she used both anger and humor in her efforts to stir her fellow Chicanos to action. Drawing upon her own experiences as a Chicana, she wrote about such issues as racism, sexism, imperialism, and poverty, issues that remain pressing today.

With introductory and concluding essays by editors Lorena Oropesa and Dionne Espinosa, this collection of Vasquez's original articles arranged thematically into six chapters seeks to inform and inspire a new generation. Each is annotated to clarify references to people and events, and the editors have included English language translations of any essays that appeared originally appeared in El Grito del Norte. The volume includes a foreword by John Nichols and a preface by Enriqueta Vasquez. Among the contributors are Diana Lopez, a Chicana and political activist who is currently she lives in New Mexico and where she is finishing her next book, a sweeping history of the women of La Raza from independent times to the present.

Lorena Oropesa, an associate professor of history at the University of California, Davis, is the author of Raza Sí! Guerra No!: Chicano Protest and Patriotism during the Viet Nam War Era. Dionne Espinosa is an associate professor in the Department of Chicano Studies and Director of the Center for the Study of Genders and Sexualities at California State University, Los Angeles. Her research and teaching are centered on the topics of Chicanas and Latinos in the U.S., cultural studies, and feminist studies.

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CHRISTMAS SEASON CELEBRATION IN THE INLAND EMPIRE

SINFONIA MEXICANA PRESENTS OUTSTANDING MÉRÍ-ACHI CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

An outstanding Christmas program was presented by the Sinfonia Mexicana and enjoyed by over 1,600 loyal concert patrons from throughout the Inland Empire. The Christmas Program was presented by the El Mariachi Sol de Mexico de Jose Hernandez, with an added attraction by the outstanding Pacifico Dance Group of Los Angeles.
Families and friends celebrated the Christmas holiday all throughout the Inland Empire.
CHRISTMAS SEASON CELEBRATION IN THE INLAND EMPIRE

SINFONIA MEXICANA SPONSORS FIRST STUDENT CONCERT

Continued from page 1

“The Sinfonia Mexicana was pleased to present a special program to celebrate the Christmas season with our students in the area,” stated Tony Bocanegra, executive director of Sinfonia Mexicana. “This program allowed our students to be exposed to the music of Mexico and extend their education and knowledge of other cultures.”

The special Christmas program was an extensive coordinated effort by Sinfonia Mexicana and local school districts, with major sponsorships by the City of San Bernardino, James Irvine Foundation, Southern California Edison, The Sun, and Arrowhead Credit Union.

Mariachi Sol de Mexico, one of the foremost mariachi groups in the world, performed musical pieces such as Noche de Paz, Feliz Navidad, El Niño del Tambor (Silent Night, Merry Christmas, Little Drummer Boy, respectively) and other popular Mexican and Christmas season music.

Pacific Dance Company ballet folklórico, accompanied by the Mariachi Sol de Mexico, performed dances from regions in Mexico, and dressed with their traditional costumes. The young audience applauded the dancers for their excellent professional performance.

Sara Ordaz, a Colton High School junior, sang traditional songs: Jingle Bells and Have Yourself a Merry Christmas, receiving a tremendous applause from the audience.

Local talent also appearing in the program were the Manuel Salinas Elementary School students, Ballet Folklórico Cultural de San Bernardino, Máriliz Martínez, El Teatro Universitario en Español, and Cal-State, San Bernardino’s Sigma Pi Alpha.

After the program many students said that they had a wonderful time with the Christmas music and the performance of the dancer. Other students requested to see the program next year.

Sinfonia Mexicana was founded in 1985 by a community volunteer group with the goal of promoting symphonic music by Mexican composers and performed by Mexican artists. Funds are derived from the City of San Bernardino, corporate and private foundations.

Sinfonia Mexicana recently established a new office at the California Theater of Performing Arts, 462 W. Fourth Street, San Bernardino. Telephone numbers are (909) 884-3228 and toll free 1-866-687-4284.
IMMIGRATION LAW CHANGES NOT A TOP DEMOCRATIC PRIORITY

By Herman Rozemberg — San Antonio Express-News

Sen.-elect Claire McCaskill wants the U.S. government to ramp up security by building a new border fence, avoid giving undocumented immigrants a chance at permanent residency, and enforce immigration laws. But she wants to see the legislation on the floor before the next Congress.

"This is a national security issue," McCaskill said. "And we're going to make sure that it happens."
Perchlorate was discovered in the Rialto/Colton Water Basin in 1997, almost ten years ago, yet there is no long-term cleanup plan for the basin. The contamination in the Rialto Area is only getting worse—recently 10,000 ppb (one of the highest levels in the United States) of Perchlorate was discovered in Rialto. A cleanup and abatement order was issued recently, but to date, polluters have not been forced to clean up their mess.

PERCHLORATE CONTAMINATION IS THREATENING PUBLIC HEALTH. At very low concentrations in drinking water, this toxin can lead to an increased risk of neurodevelopmental problems such as learning disabilities, decreased IQ and attention deficit disorder.

PERCHLORATE CONTAMINATION FURTHER STRAINING LOCAL ECONOMY. To ensure basic water supply needs are met and pursue polluters for cleanup, residents of Rialto have seen their water utility bills increased, sometimes as much as 65 percent. One Perchlorate treatment system costs $1 million and $300,000 to $500,000 a year to operate. Of the more than $200-300 million it will cost to clean up Perchlorate contamination in the Rialto region, less than $10 million has been recovered to date from corporate parties.

DRAFT OF CLEANUP AND ABATEMENT ORDER ISSUED: On October 17, 2006 the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board) issued a draft cleanup and abatement order to Goodrich Corporation, Black & Decker, Inc., and PyroSpectacular, Inc. Even though the order does not impose monetary penalties if the polluters do not meet the deadlines set in the order, it is a significant step forward. The order will hold Goodrich Corporation, Black & Decker, Inc., and PyroSpectacular, Inc. jointly and severally liable for the Perchlorate contamination cleanup in Rialto and Colton.

The polluters must replace the water (pay for treatment until the Perchlorate is completely gone) for all contaminated wells above 6 ppb and the treated water should have the quality comparable to the water quality of 1950 (before the polluters contaminated the water). The polluters must develop a water contingency plan for wells below 6 ppb, but at risk of further contamination by the migration of the plume. Even though the order does not require the polluters to replace the water for the wells with Perchlorate at levels from 1 ppb to 5 ppb, if the water companies choose to install treatment systems on those wells to meet the demands of the residents, the polluters would be required to reimburse the water companies through an amended order.

The order mentions that the Perchlorate Public Health Goal (PHG) might be lowered, therefore the list of wells required for water replacement would change to reflect the new PHG Workplan for cleanup will be submitted in March 2007.

The polluters are required to reimburse the cities of Rialto and Colton and West Valley for cleanup costs incurred to date. This is the first time that a Regional Water Quality Control Board has required polluters to reimburse parties for cost incurred.

Jan Misquez
Policy Director / San Bernardino Office Manager Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice San Bernardino / Riverside Counties

For the vast majority of Americans and Iraqis the only victory regarding the war in Iraq requires an immediate pullout of all foreign troops. While politicians and pundits have framed the debate over the war in terms of military victory versus cutting and running versus redeployment, we must make it clear to each other and the new Democratic leadership in Washington that Americans—soldier or civilian—and Iraqis are losing every second this disaster of a war continues, and the muddled debate over timetables is just delaying ending a policy that was a mistake from day one.

The war serves no purpose for most of us. There are no weapons of mass destruction and never were. There were no ties to Al Qaeda or plans to support a terrorist attack on Americans. The Iraqis want us to leave, most Americans want our soldiers out, and even our “volunteer” soldiers are coming forward with their discontent in increasing numbers.

The Nation is reporting this week that hundreds of American soldiers have been signing onto an internet Appeal for Redress. As one of the signers—a U.S. Army Sergeant deployed with the 20th Infantry Regiment near Mosul—explained, “So far in three years we have succeeded in toppling a dictator and replacing him with puppets. Outlawing the old government and its standing army and replacing it with an unreliable and poorly trained crew of paycheck collectors. The well is so poisoned by what we have done here that nothing can fix it.”

Yet we continue to kill Iraqis, send our young people to die and spend billions on this war either because we’ve yet to reach some undefined “victory,” or as others argue, we can’t abandon Iraq to chaos and civil war. Both reasons to stay are hollow rationales for pure Western imperialism.

Last week Donald Rumsfeld left his position as Defense Secretary and during a farewell address said, “It may well be comforting to some to consider graceful exits from the agonies and, indeed, the ugliness of combat. But the enemy thinks differently.” As usual, “the enemy” was not easily defined. But Rumsfeld’s enemies are certainly different from the enemies of most Americans.

A victory for the Bush administration, most politicians in Washington, or the executives at Halliburton and Lockheed Martin is not the same as a victory for working-class American soldiers or the average American facing cuts to social services, difficulty affording health care and other problems that continue to mount as billions of our tax dollars go to war. For Washington and much of corporate America, the reasons are clear: Maintain dominance in the region, particularly because of the oil that exists there, and keep the war machine a strong, profitable and necessary part of what defines our foreign policy. This isn’t how they sell the war to Americans of course, because none of this benefits us, and most of us would never support such an endeavor.

Indeed most of us don’t support this war despite all the lies of the Bush administration and spin of the cable news cheerleaders. Demanding and getting an immediate pullout would be an incredible victory for democratic principles. Demanding and getting an immediate pullout from the new Democratic leadership, which is now content with calls from Bush and McCain for a “victory” that would be a rare blow against U.S. imperialism.

Politicians from both political parties are trying their best to take the clear mandate of the November elections—widespread desire for an end to the Iraq war—and come up with a policy that will both silence opposition and bring about their narrow victory. They are committed to continuing war and occupation regardless of the sentiment of the American people. They must believe they know what is best for America; they believe the American people can’t be trusted with or don’t understand matters of foreign policy. And those who insist we must remain in Iraq to clean up the mess we caused apparently know better than the Iraqi people what they need, since large majorities of Iraqis want us out.

It is most Americans and the Iraqi people who pay while these politicians discuss “options,” “timetables,” and “redeployment.” Every day billions of Americans are spending part of their day working to fund this war on behalf of the handful of politicians, executives and shareholders who might actually benefit. Each day American soldiers and Iraqis are dying for the selfish interests of a few. Every day that it continues we all continue to lose. Victory for most, victory for all of us requires immediate withdrawal.

Carlos Villarreal is the Executive Director of the National Lawyers Guild of the San Francisco Bay Area. He can be reached at: carlos@nlgsf.org or http://www.counterpunch.org/villarreal2192006.html.
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**Route 210 Roundup**

Holiday season marks the last stretch of construction

This holiday season marks the final year of construction for Route 210 in Rialto and San Bernardino. The freeway is set to open by late 2007.

Construction crews are focusing on freeway lane paving, which began this fall and will continue into the new year. Lane paving is a three-step process with a lean concrete base, a thin middle layer of asphalt concrete and a top thick layer of Portland cement.

On-ramps and off-ramps will be paved at Alder Avenue, Ayala Drive, Riverside Avenue and State Street.

Crews also are busy working on the final bridge of the project, which extends over the Lytle Creek Wash. The Lytle Creek bridge is the largest bridge of the entire Route 210 project.

SANBAG wishes you and your family a safe and happy holiday season. Please remind family members and friends to drive safely through the construction areas and to watch for pedestrians.

For more information, call the Route 210 Helpline:
1-866-HELP-210 "Se habla español!"

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