IN THIS ISSUE!

Maxwell’s Musings
(pg. 2)

22nd Annual Dennis Thomas Art & Writing Challenge
(pg. 4-5)

Meet Elizabeth Wathuti: A Climate Activist to Know!
(pg. 6-7)

Student Climate Justice Summit 2020—April 18th
(pg. 8)

AND MORE!

Actions of the Month!

Join us at the Social Justice Fair at Rossmoor on March 12th

Familiarize yourself with the events/actions taking place during Earth Week! (April 18th—26th)

Information on local actions can be found here: www.earthday.org/take-action-now

IN THIS ISSUE!

Maxwell’s Musings
(pg. 2)

22nd Annual Dennis Thomas Art & Writing Challenge
(pg. 4-5)

Meet Elizabeth Wathuti: A Climate Activist to Know!
(pg. 6-7)

Student Climate Justice Summit 2020—April 18th
(pg. 8)

AND MORE!

Actions of the Month!

Join us at the Social Justice Fair at Rossmoor on March 12th

Familiarize yourself with the events/actions taking place during Earth Week! (April 18th—26th)

Information on local actions can be found here: www.earthday.org/take-action-now
Is “Socialism” still the “Kiss of Death”?
By Bob Maxwell, Opinion and Philosophy

Around 1960, I watched an interview with perennial Socialist candidate for President, Norman Thomas. He was asked if he had any endorsements for the upcoming Presidential Campaign. He laughed and said “that would be the kiss of death” then went on to say that we could manage one or two cheers for Kennedy, but that Johnson was just “a gas and oil Democrat”. This exchange seemed to imply that even an endorsement from a socialist would be fatal to the candidate receiving it!

This same concern appears to be reflected in the growing angst of many pundits over the prospect of Bernie Sanders winning the Democratic nomination. Typical of these is John McCain’s former campaign manager and now, “never-Trumper” - who opined, on a recent news program that, given the choice between a “sociopath” and a “socialist”, Americans will pick the sociopath. Now this particular pundit gives the impression that we would very much like to vote Democrat this time and understandably, wants the Democratic Party to make this easier for him—and those like him—by nominating someone as much like a Republican as possible. But more Democratic-leaning pundits publicly agonize over the prospect of a Sanders candidacy guaranteeing Donald Trump a second term and taking a large chunk of the Democratic Party down with him!

There is polling that shows that, among voters old enough to remember the Cold War, there is a slight plurality for whom “socialism” still has a negative connotation. But this is difficult to reconcile with other polling that seems to show that (as of right now) the only candidate that polls better than Sanders against Trump is Bloomberg—and then only by a single percentage point! What is going on here?

Part of the explanation may lie in the fact that Republicans, by denouncing every Democratic candidate for President as a “socialist” now find themselves in the same position as “the boy who cried wolf”. But there seems to be something deeper going on here. For example, Sanders describes himself as a “Democratic Socialist” while Warren claims that she is “capitalist to the bone”. Yet their policy positions are virtually indistinguishable.

As hard as it is for a life-long Democratic Socialist like myself to admit, I can’t help but wonder if labels like “capitalist” and “socialist” have become meaningless in the 21st Century.

Director’s Note:
Moving into March it is hard not to feel overwhelmed! The dust is still settling from the primaries and it feels like the whole world is struggling to find its footing in the face of media chaos around threats of a new global pandemic, devastation brought about by climate change, and an increasingly unstable economy. That being said— young people across the planet continue to give me hope. It seems that each day I wake up and see news that scares me to death—I also am waking up each day to witness young people actively working to plant the necessary seeds for the future they want to cultivate. Young people are saying no to racism, ignorance, and hatred! Young people are moving away from an individualized mindset and are thinking more collectively and collaboratively than ever before. It is up to the older generations to not instinctually just get out of the way and think that the younger people can handle it all. Nor can we overrun them with our noise. We have to be there right alongside them. We have to be mindful of the space we take up and LISTEN. Never forget that justice is an intergenerational fight that requires us all!

-E.D Andrew Kodama
Join us on **March 12th** for a Community Collaboration Meeting hosted by the Friends of Scott & Taun Hall and the Mt. Diablo Peace and Justice Center!

Last December, the Peace Center honored the community group *Friends of Scott, Alexis and Taun Hall* (FOSATH) at our Annual Awards Dinner for their inspiring community-based work and dedication to ensuring justice for all. If you are unfamiliar, FOSATH is a community-based, grassroots group that was formed in Walnut Creek this past summer in response to the police killing of Miles Hall, a young Black member of our community.

The group is demanding accountability from the Walnut Creek Police Department who needlessly escalated to lethal force in a non-lethal situation. FOSATH is also working to ensure that resources and education around mental health become more prominent in our community to destigmatize mental illness and prevent further tragedies from occurring.

Since the awards dinner we have been meeting regularly with their organizing team to see how the Center can best support their goals as a group. FOSATH has been working hard to think of ways they can mobilize folks to support their efforts to implement structural changes in our community. Their efforts could use you!

**On the evening of March 12th, FOSATH and the Peace Center will host a Community Collaboration Meeting with the intention of connecting Peace Center members and the public to the important and vital work FOSATH is engaged in right in our own community.**

- Our goal is to combine the connections, depth of experience, and visibility of the Center with FOSATH’s passion and multiple opportunities to get involved.
  - How might we join forces to create change and protect families?
  - How can FOSATH broaden and deepen our reach?

*During the evening, we’ll learn more about each others’ work, separate into break-out discussion groups that correlate with FOSATH’s current subcommittees, and map out next steps!*
22nd Annual Dennis Thomas
ART AND WRITING CHALLENGE

2020 Topic: “Our Connected Planet”

In the past year, the Peace Center has been proud to see momentum build in the climate justice movement, led by student activists. They have mobilized huge numbers of people to stand up for our planet and demand change from world leaders and policymakers. These students, among many other inspiring activists and grassroots organizations, advocate that climate justice must be addressed using an intersectional approach, connecting the health of our planet with various forms of systemic marginalization that disproportionately affect low-income folks of color, immigrants, and indigenous communities.

For this year’s art and writing challenge, we take inspiration from these activists and ask:

• What role has your connection to our planet played in your life?
• How have you been impacted by threats to our climate?
• How does race, socioeconomic status, or position in society affect the extent to which people are affected by threats to our climate?
• In what ways do you see climate justice connected to other forms of social justice?
• In what ways do you see our planet threatened by dangers such as nuclear energy, the military-industrial complex, and capitalism?
• What would your vision of a just and healthy world look like?

We are looking for submissions in three categories:


The theme is intentionally broad to allow students the freedom to convey their vision.

OPEN TO ALL MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN CONTRA COSTA COUNTY!

PRIZES RANGE FROM $25 - $500 !!!

CONTEST RULES, NOMINATION FORMS and INFO: www.tinyurl.com/mdpjc-artandwriting2020

SUBMISSIONS DUE: APRIL 24th
2ND ANNUAL YOUTH ACTIVIST GRANT

In 2019, the Center established our Youth Activist Grant Award as a way to recognize and honor young people in our community organizing around peace and justice. We have been inspired by the number of the dedicated and brave students we see taking change into their own hands and speaking truth to power. Youth are showing us the way! We want students to know that they can be powerful instruments of change and that the actions they take can have a huge impact in creating a more just and equitable world for all. Nominated students can be engaged in activism work in any category, awards are not limited to those working strictly around climate justice.

Please nominate a youth organization, individual or group of young people (grades 6-12) who have shown a remarkable commitment to engaging in the struggle for climate justice, human rights, world peace, social justice, and/or youth empowerment.

CONTESTS OPEN TO ALL MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN CONTRA COSTA COUNTY!

THREE $100 GRANTS AWARDED!
Details & nomination forms available online:
www.tinyurl.com/mdpjc-artandwriting2020

2019 First Prize Winner: Sydney Tatsumi

2019 Youth Activist Grant Awardee, Lucy Siale

NOMINATION DEADLINE:
APRIL 24th
In this issue leading up to Earth Day and our Student Climate Justice Summit, we would like to highlight the work and words of Elizabeth Wathuti, a 23-year-old climate justice activist from Keyna. I came across Wathuti through an article published on The Guardian I found while doing research on the topic of climate anxiety—an issue that many of the students I have been working with have brought up in discussions around the state of our planet.

Climate anxiety refers to when we experience significant stress, fear, and worry about the environment and the climate. The Guardian reported that there are growing numbers of people overwhelmed by the scientific reality of ecological breakdown, especially among young people and those who have lived through traumatic climate events, often in the global south.

For Elizabeth Wathuti, her experience of climate anxiety is not so much about the future but what is happening now. “People in African countries experience eco-anxiety differently because climate change for us is about the impacts that we are already experiencing now and the possibilities of the situation getting worse,” she said. Wathuti regularly works with young people and sees the effects of eco-anxiety first-hand. A common worry she hears among students is:

“We won’t die of old age, we’ll die from climate change.”

Extreme climate events can create poverty, which exacerbates mental health problems, and Wathuti says she has seen stress, depression and alcohol and drug abuse as some of the side-effects of climate anxiety and trauma in her country of Kenya.
Fortunately, Wathuti is a solution-based thinker and says that, “when trying to make any positive change, you will encounter obstacles, challenges and hardships along the way, but at the end of it all the efforts will pay off. Nothing good comes easy.”

Even in her young age, Wathuti brings powerful experience, perspective, and insight to the climate justice movement. With a background in sustainability, conservation, and community development, Wathuti co-founded the Green Generation Initiative which aims to address global environmental challenges such as deforestation, pollution and environmental injustices. Her interest stems from her childhood and witnessing these threats to our planet devastate her home country.

Wathuti says that she often used to think to herself, “Why not nurture and raise more young people to be conscious of the environment so that their collective action will help to address global environmental challenges?” Wathuti’s resilience, positive outlook, and commitment to action should serve as an inspiration to all of us.

In an feature with the Queens Commonwealth Trust, Wathuti outlined three tips she has for people who are concerned about climate justice and want to get involved to make a difference!

1) **Know your goals.** One of the most practical tips towards the start-up of any idea is to always have a clear goal and an objective of exactly what it is that you want to do. For instance, there may be a challenge in the community that you want to provide a solution for, and you should always remain true to what you want to achieve.

2) **Feel inspired and be supported.** Another practical tip for me was having a role model, getting a mentor and having a driving force towards implementing an initial idea.

3) **Start small and scale up.** One also needs to identify the needed resources based on the activities involved in the implementation of the idea. It is always good to start with existing assets, especially if there are no readily available funds. I always believe in starting small and working towards scaling up your idea as you move!

To learn more about Wathuti and stay updated on her work, please visit: www.lizmazingira.com

To read the rest of the feature and view the sources cited in this article, please visit:


Join us for an all-day, student-led summit on Climate Justice!

Workshops and Discussions led by students, activists, and educators on...

- Climate Justice 101
- The Power of Your Voice: Youth Groups on the frontlines of local activism
- Managing Eco-Anxiety
- Sustainable Choices: Food, consumerism, travel, energy
- Schools Together: Climate Resolutions, Green Programs, School Strikes
- Community Climate Action:
  - Building a student and community network of climate activists.

Includes breakout sessions for college, high school, and middle grade students.

Teachers, Parents, and Community Members are Welcome.
Lunch and Refreshments Included

Registration is Required! Seating is limited.

tinyurl.com/climatesummitregistration

For the past few months, we have been meeting with a steering committee of local activists and students from various schools in the area. The students on our steering committee represent a number of different places within Contra Costa, including local college students at DVC and St. Mary’s along with high school students from the Mt. Diablo, Acalanes, and San Ramon school districts!

These students have been working closely with us to lead the planning of this summit! They have worked with us to identify workshop topics most important to them, set the agenda for the day, choose proper facilitators, and create stimulating discussion questions and material for attendees of the summit! We see this summit as a unique opportunity for students, activists, educators, and the local community to come together to mobilize and build a cohesive and connected network around our climate.

We want to use this conference as an opportunity to address some of the following questions:

- What are students experiencing and how do adults best support young people in this movement?
- How do we leverage our own experiences, strengths, and connections to help add to the movement?

- What part can we do at home, locally, and on a larger scale to actually make a difference?
- How can we take the ideas, learnings, and energy of the conference beyond the ‘day of’ to exist as an ongoing, coordinated, organizing force?
Over the years, the Peace Center has been privileged to meet, learn from, and collaborate with a number of local grassroots groups dedicated to fighting for our planet. We are excited to work alongside 350 Contra Costa and the Contra Costa Climate Action Network in developing this conference and would love to connect with other local individuals, groups and organizations who are interested in getting involved!

If you would like to learn more, please contact the Center.
Mt. Diablo Peace and Justice Center

DONATION or MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL/APPLICATION FORM

Name: ____________________________
Address: ____________________________
Phone: ____________________________ Email address: ____________________________

I request an Annual Membership in the following category:

☐ $50 Basic Membership / ☐ $75 Family Membership (two or more) / ☐ $20 - $50 Student or Sliding Scale
☐ $250 - $500 Supporting Member / ☐ $500 - $1,000 Sustaining Member / ☐ $1,000 - $2,000 Peace Giver
☐ $2,000+ Visionary / ☐ $500+ Businesses / Organizations

I would like to pledge my donation as follows: ☐ Monthly OR ☐ Quarterly, in the amount of $__________.

Checks payable to Mt. Diablo Peace and Justice Center and mail to 1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette, CA 94549

We also accept all credit cards: ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ AMEX ☐ Discover

Card Number: ____________________________ Expiration Date: ____________________________
Security Code: ____________________________ Signature: ____________________________

If you would like us to automatically handle the processing of your pledges please so indicate below.

☐ I hereby authorize the Mt. Diablo Peace and Justice Center to charge my credit card for the pledge indicated above.

Or, you can donate any amount online at ourpeacecenter.org

A Huge THANK YOU to our generous local sponsors!

SECURITY...etc.
PANDA’S DECALS & SIGNS
OSLC.NET
Dreamcatcher Events
March—April—May 2020
All events are at 1035 Carol Lane, Lafayette unless otherwise indicated.; info: 925-933-7850.

Thursday, March 12th  Social Justice Fair @ Rossmoor—1-3PM
Friends of Scott, Alexis, & Taun Hall + Peace Center Community Collaboration Meeting/Event @ the Peace Center—6:30-8:30PM

Saturday, April 18th  Student Climate Justice Summit 2020 @ First Presbyterian Church Concord—9AM-3:30PM, Registration Required

Friday, April 24th  Submission Deadline for Art & Writing Challenge + Youth Activist Grant Nomination Forms

Saturday, May 16th  Awards Dinner for Art & Writing Challenge Winners + Youth Activist Grant Awardees, Registration Required

Like us: www.facebook.com/MDPJCC  Hear us tweet: www.twitter.com/MountDiabloPJC
Sign up for weekly online Activist Alert: www.ourpeacecenter.org

WE’VE REORGANIZED OUR COMMITTEES—JOIN US!

• Advocacy
  International Issues
  Forums
  Environment/Climate Change

• Development
  Fundraising
  Membership
  Bequests/Grants
  Merchandise Sales

• Communications
  Peace Gazette
  ourpeacecenter.org
  Social Media
  Weekly Calendar
  Activist Alerts

• Education—youth focused
  Peaceful Schools Conference
  Art & Writing/Activist Grant
  Diablo For Peace
  Facebook/Twitter

MORE INFO: 925-933-7850

WORKING TOGETHER MAKES US STRONGER!

JOIN MOUNT DIABLO PEACE & JUSTICE CENTER

and FRIENDS OF SCOTT, ALEXIS & TAUN HALL (FOSATH)

COMMUNITY & COLLABORATION MEETING

THURSDAY, MARCH 12
6:30 - 9 PM
1035 CAROL LN, LAFAYETTE, CA

WWW.OURPEACECENTER.ORG
WWW.JUSTICEFORMILESHALL.ORG
M T. DIABLO PEACE AND JUSTICE CENTER

JUSTICE FOR MILES HALL
JUSTICEFORMILESHALL

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/MDPJCC
WWW.TWITTER.COM/MOUNTDIABLOPJC
WWW.OURPEACECENTER.ORG
WWW.JUSTICEFORMILESHALL.ORG

PEACE GAZETTE — March/April 2020
UPCOMING EVENTS!

Thursday, March 12th, 1-4PM
Rossmoor Social Justice Fair
@ the Fireside Room at Gateway

Mt. Diablo Friends of Peace and Justice Center presents their annual Social Justice Fair at Rossmoor!
Everyone is welcome. Looking for volunteer opportunities? Want to learn about organizations that serve the community? Like to try some homemade baked goods? Find all this and more!
Refreshments and conversation to follow!
FREE and open to the public

Thursday, March 12th, 6:30-8:30PM
Friends of Scott and Taun Hall + Peace Center Community Collaboration Event
@ the Fellowship Hall, Our Saviors Lutheran Church
1035 Carol Lane—Lafayette

FOSATH and the Peace Center will host an event with the intention of connecting Peace Center members and the public to the important and vital work FOSATH is engaged in right in our own community.
Food and Drinks provided!
FREE and open to the public