



WILPF Northern California Cluster Meeting Notes: Santa Cruz – November 16, 2019

Special thanks to Randa Solick and the Santa Cruz Branch for hosting and organizing the Cluster and to Santa Cruz Branch member Cheryl Van De Veer for her work on the notes.

Branches in Attendance

☞ (Host) Santa Cruz	☞ East Bay	☞ Fresno	☞ Monterey County
☞ Peninsula/Palo Alto	☞ Sacramento	☞ San Francisco	☞ San Jose

International Connections

☞ **International WILPF:** Int'l program areas: Disarmament; Women, Peace, and Security; Human Rights; and Crisis Response. To learn more about Int'l, use your web browser to go to <https://www.wilpf.org/>. If you haven't signed up as a WILPF member, go to "MYWILPF" at the upper right corner to sign up to gain access to members-only content. If you have any difficulty, contact Int'l WILPF staffer Elena Cason <elena.cason@wilpf.org>.

US WILPFer, Dawn Nelson, was named a convener of international's WILPF's standing Environmental Working Group. She has brought new leadership to the activity of the group and its work.

☞ Jane "Cricket" Doyle reported on changes in International WILPF structure and other aspects of International WILPF. Cricket is our US WILPF Liaison to the International WILPF Americas Region Representative. (Each Region Representative is an International Board (IB) member.)

Before reorganization, each WILPF member country, called a section, had a representative on International WILPF's IB. The 2018 International Congress, held in Accra, Ghana, approved a new Constitution and By-Laws (over many US Section delegates' objections), which made major changes in the International structure. Now member countries are represented on the IB only through the representatives of each Region, which are far fewer in number: Africa, the Americas (our Region, encompassing all of the Western Hemisphere), Asia-Pacific, Europe, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), and South Asia. So the US no longer has our own IB Rep.

The sections in the Americas Region are Mexico, US, Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Canada. See <https://www.wilpf.org/our-members/> for a list and maps of regions and their sections. The Americas Region Representative is Beatriz Schulthess, of Costa Rica, and the Americas Region Alternate is WILPF USA member Janet Slagter of the Fresno branch. Each section is expected to designate a liaison to their Region Rep; our liaison is "Cricket" Doyle (cricket.wilpf@gmail.com). Cricket's role is to inform our US members about Int'l and provide information about our section (and branch) activities to the Region Rep. and the Alternate Region Rep.

☞ Darien De Lu, US WILPF president, reported on Venezuela sanctions and on Bolivia's "election irregularities." In March, Darien visited Venezuela with leaders from other peace and progressive organizations (Veterans for Peace, Popular Resistance, and others). She expressed that there is abundant hypocrisy in US sanctions on Venezuela, which violate international law and treaties. WILPF US's Cuba and the Bolivarian Alliance Issue Committee opposes the illegal and unilateral US sanctions against Cuba and Venezuela.

In discussing Bolivia, Darien described the conservative (and US-backed) overthrow of Evo Morales in a military coup and touched on the role of the (heavily US-influenced) Organization of American States.

Post-Cluster Updates – The US Section joined the Argentina and Costa Rica Sections in a statement objecting to the Bolivia military coup and to "speak out against the extreme violence, deadly threats to women and children, and the kidnappings and burning of homes to achieve political ends" in the course of the change of government. However, International WILPF declined to support that statement, wishing to remain neutral in such matters.

National WILPF Information and Reports

🦋 **U.S. Section National Issue Committees:** The Cluster heard updates about two of the issue committees; see details below. The following are the current issue committees: 🦋 Cuba and the Bolivarian Alliance (Leni Reeves of Fresno is newly a co-chair.) 🦋 Disarm/End Wars 🦋 Middle East 🦋 Advancing Human Rights (Barbara Nielsen of SF is chair.) 🦋 Corporations v. Democracy [newly-renamed Women, Money & Democracy] 🦋 Earth Democracy 🦋 See more info on these and other WILPF program components at <https://wilpfus.org/our-work>.

🦋 **Nancy Price**, national Board member and Chair of the Earth Democracy Issue Comm., told us about the new Earth Democracy **The Pentagon: Exposing the Hidden Polluter of Water project** in California. The project consists of a branches speaking tour by Pat Elder plus other activities. Pat created the Military Poisons website (www.militarypoisons.org) so people can search by zip code or the base name to find the type and extent of contamination where they live and link it to a potential military source. The tour is from March 7 to March 20, with two public forums, one on March 21 in Berkeley, and the other on March 22, World Water Day, in San Francisco. This year's World Water Day theme is, fittingly, water and climate. Watch <https://wilpfus.org/our-work/earth-democracy-0> for more details of the tour and events schedule in early January.

Over the past 2-3 years, we've discovered we are facing an extensive nation-wide drinking water crisis as a result of a group of synthetic PFAS chemicals, a class of almost 4,700 varieties, few of which have been tested for toxicity. These chemicals were produced by DuPont and 3M corporations for a variety of consumer products to make them water, stain, grease and heat resistant. (PFAS from consumer products ends up in our landfills, from which PFAS can get into surface or groundwater.) PFAS is also in a special fire-fighting foam, for intense jet fuel and oil and gas fires, used at military bases for routine fire-fighting training and actual fires.

When you go to see the movie, *Dark Waters* (preview at <https://www.focusfeatures.com/dark-waters>), you can print and give out our handout (<https://files.constantcontact.com/3275cbb2501/e9ae520e-92be-4efd-a647-7015c50f0d1c.pdf>) to those going in or out of the theaters.

Also, here are some other films on water contamination and the human right to water:

Living Along the Fenceline (<http://www.twn.org/catalog/pages/cpage.aspx?rec=1437&card=price>), produced by members of the organization Women for Genuine Security, founded by WILPF Life Member, Gwyn Kirk and others. and others.

Thirst (<http://www.bullfrogfilms.com/catalog/thirst.html>)

Thirsty for Justice, about the passage of the Human Right to Water Bill in 2012.

Tour Branch Contacts in addition to Nancy P, for overall information at info@WILPFUS.org. (For branch contact information, see <https://wilpfus.org/contact/branch-directory>.)

Fresno – Jean Hays

Peninsula-P.A. Branch may arrange a potluck dinner for WILPF members, with other branches invited to attend.

Monterey – Joyce Vandever

San Jose – Paula Rochelle

San Francisco – Lily Remoundos

Palo Alto – Cherrill Spencer *Post-Cluster Update* – The

Sacramento – Sabreena Britt

East Bay – Anne Henny

Santa Cruz – Lynda Francis, “Cricket” Doyle, Randa Solick

🦋 The **UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) annual meetings, the Practicum in Advocacy** is sponsored by WILPF US, offering college students a UN experience of women in international activism. This coming March they'll participate in the 64th annual CSW (“CSW64”). **Please reach out to colleges and universities in your communities to encourage college students to apply for the Practicum!** Since the Practicum has reorganized this year, it is particularly seeking applicants in communities where there are WILPF branches. **The application deadline is Dec. 20**, see **Practicum in Advocacy** at <https://wilpfus.org/our-work/wilpf-us-programs-un-commission-status-women> for more details!

Qualifying **WILPF members can apply for the similar, simultaneous, and heavily subsidized Local to Global program!** **The application deadline is Dec. 20, see *Local to Global* at <https://wilpfus.org/our-work/wilpf-us-programs-un-commission-status-women> for more details!**

✈ **Cherrill Spencer on International Treaties** – one of our national Solidarity Actions themes. See the Treaty Toolkit on the WILPF website: <https://wilpfus.org/news/latest-news/plan-your-october-treaties-solidarity-action>. It's time women are involved in making treaties; when women are involved, the treaties are less punitive and longer-lasting (and this is what UNSCR 1325 and the Women, Peace & Security agenda is all about – women at every peace table!). Sample letters included in the Treaty Toolkit.

✈ **Marybeth Gardam** sent us a page on the **Corporations v Democracy (newly renamed: Women, Money & Democracy) committee Relaunch**. They've updated their website, gathered a good number of new people, and have plans to update the Corporate Study Course. Already they have a Feminist Economic Toolkit, and they may do more. Still promoting Move to Amend and addressing the connection between debt and war. See their webpage on national WILPF site: <https://wilpfus.org/our-work/women-money-democracy> and the joint Cvd/Earth Democracy toolkit at <https://wilpfus.org/news/latest-news/take-action-tool-kit>.

California Projects and Branches

✈ **Anti-recruitment Program: Contact Sandy Thacker** of the East Bay Branch for more about this program. No Child Left Behind Act *requires* schools to allow military recruiters in high schools or else lose their funding; also requires 'alternatives' to be allowed into high schools. Film (AFSC): *Before You Enlist*. Look at <https://www.beforeenlisting.org/>. Also see book, *Breaking Cadence* – by Rosa del Duca, who was in the military.

✈ **Anne Henny, East Bay branch: Feminist Agenda for a Green New Deal** – You can sign up for their mailing list at <http://feministgreennewdeal.com/>, and read their Principles and Values statement.

✈ **Public Banking** – Access a 3-5-minute video (www.publicbankinginstitute.org). Now (with WILPF help!) the California Legislature has passed a bill, A.B. 857, that allows for the establishment of public banks. The California Public Banking Alliance is getting ready to write business plans. SF, LA, Oakland likely first, others later.

Branches Reports

✈ **Monterey** Branch held its 15th annual Remembering Hiroshima Day and Lantern Ceremony, a widely attended community event. With the Peace Coalition of Monterey County, they celebrated International Peace Day with a picnic and music. The year's events began with a talk by Gilad Atzman speaking on We Are All Palestinians Now!. Their steering committee meets quarterly and they have films and discussion during the year, many in collaboration with other peace and justice groups. They meet with Rep. Jimmy Panetta 2 x/ year.

✈ **San Jose** reports the branch meets at the San Jose Peace and Justice Center. They've been involved with the Venezuela Protectors, Poor People's Campaign.

✈ **Peninsula/Palo Alto** Branch may be facilitating **"how to do" workshops** – ex., how to do resolutions. They provided a five-page report on their numerous branch activities.

✈ **San Francisco** Branch works with the **East Bay** Branch, via monthly planning meetings for joint program actions, in addition to work each branch is doing separately.

✈ **Sacramento** is making plans for film showings and is involved with the Poor People's Campaign. They market on Facebook and gained a new member from a Women's Studies course.

✈ **Fresno** Branch meets every month. Bureau of Land Management is opening acres for oil exploration; the branch will examine its report. Legislative committee writes model letters on issues each month. Library

committee goes to schools to read to kids. Bought a house for homeless people. Supports No More Deaths, a humanitarian organization in southern Arizona. Has a craft fair that has been going on for 50 years.

🦋 **Santa Cruz** Branch collaborates with multiple local groups and events, as well as local radio and TV stations. Branch members organized a radio program on KSQD called "Good News Santa Cruz". A member created Readers Theater, Voices from Solitary Confinement. They're connected with the Golden Rule, an anti-nuke ship and published a book, *Endurance Activism*. Involved with Public Banking and the Raging Grannies.

Other California Events and Cluster Items

🦋 **We watched a Jane Fonda video (done with/by Code Pink)** on Green New Deal, economy, peace, climate change: Fire Drill Fridays, in DC every week. (7 mins.) <https://www.janefonda.com/2019/11/fire-drill-fridays/>.

🦋 **Ann Fagan Ginger commemorative event** – East Bay and SF branches jointly celebrated Ann, a long-time peace, human rights, and justice activist; see recent eNews article: <https://wilpfus.org/news/updates/ann-fagan-ginger-celebrated-bay-area-wilpf-branches>. Ann is 94 and founded the Meiklejohn Civil Liberties Institute (MCLI) and was its Executive Director for many years. Contact the branch (<https://wilpfus.org/contact/branch-directory>) for details about a possible Spring 2020 celebration of her

🦋 **Our Children's Trust: Juliana v. U.S.**, Youth Climate lawsuit. This federal Oregon case is now being heard in the SF 9th Circuit Court of Appeals, about SECURING THE LEGAL RIGHT TO A SAFE CLIMATE AND A HEALTHY ATMOSPHERE FOR ALL PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS. WILPF will file an amicus brief. The Oregon non-profit organization, Our Children's Trust was established by attorney Julia Olson to help formulate legal cases that could be taken against states and the federal government that would charge them with mitigating climate change under the public trust doctrine. <https://www.ourchildrenstrust.org/juliana-v-us>.

🦋 **Terrific Cluster, everyone – thank you all! Randa, for the Santa Cruz Branch**