

Orange County Interfaith Committee To Aid Farm Workers



OCTOBER 2019

JOIN US ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10th FOR OUR FUNDRAISER BENEFITING THE NATIONAL FARM WORKER MINISTRY

This year's National Farm Worker Ministry fundraiser features a musical treat!!! COLIBRÍ a phenomenal, all female Mariachi band!!!

COLIBRÍ or "The Hummingbirds," have a passion for music, beauty, and girl power. They are one of the most unique ensembles of its genre by returning to the all-string instrumentation of the early 20th century mariachi tradition and the colorful, feminine costumes of the Mexican cinematic divas of the 40's and 50's.

The mission of the band is to acknowledge and celebrate the historical background and traditions of Mexican, Mexican-Americans, and Chicanos and embrace our cultural future: to find the point at which our past and future intersect.

The event will also include a catered dinner, a silent auction (always a highlight of our fundraisers) and a short educational video:

Maricela's Story. We are honored to have some 4th grade students from Glenn Martin School in Santa Ana perform a short skit on Cesar Chavez at 5:30pm, which you won't want to miss!



**SUNDAY
NOVEMBER 10, 2019**
St. Mark Presbyterian Church
2200 San Joaquin Hills Road
Newport Beach, CA 92660

Pre-paid reservations by November 6th please:

Make your check out to **NFWM**

\$25 per person (\$10 students)
and \$30 at the door

Send to:

Pam Presnall
c/o First Presbyterian Church of Orange
191 N. Orange Street
Orange, CA 92866

Contributions to the silent auction are welcome.

Please contact

Gerri McNenny at mcnenny@chapman.edu to donate

Contact Suzanne Darweesh at sdarweesh@aol.com for
more information about the event



In Memoriam

On a sad note, we report that **Al White**, longtime member of our farm worker support committee, died recently.

We participated in the Quaker service commemorating his life.

5:00 p.m. Silent Auction/Social Hour

5:30 p.m. Program

6 p.m. Dinner

7 p.m. Concert

8 p.m. Pick Up Auction Items

Orange County Interfaith Committee to Aid Farm Workers

Chair:

Suzanne Darweesh

Treasurer:

Gayle Blume

Fundraising:

Gerri McNenny

Church Liaison:

Barbara Johnson

Newsletter:

Pam Presnall

Labor Liaison:

Marti Schrank

Others: Irene Arellano, Chuck Buck, Mike Clements, Sara Halverson-Cano, Bill Steiner, Henry Weil



**BOYCOTT
WENDY'S!**

Remember the campaign with Taco Bell with headquarters in Orange County about ten years ago? Many of you participated in the effort to get Taco Bell to agree to pay tomato workers a penny a pound more and equally important, to sign the Fair Food Program established by the Coalition of Immokalee Workers based in Florida. It took about three years of protest before Taco Bell agreed to sign but since then, fourteen multi-billion dollar food retailers have also signed on including McDonalds, Burger King, Subway, and several large catering services. Only Wendy's among the large fast food outlets has not signed. Why is the Fair Food Code of Conduct important to us? It stipulates protection against verbal and physical abuse, rights to shade and rest breaks, and zero tolerance for sexual harassment and human trafficking. An enforcement mechanism is also built into the Code of Conduct. For three years Wendy's has resisted signing this agreement. You will find a copy of a letter to Wendy's store managers on the CIW and the NFWM web sites which we encourage you to sign and drop off at your nearest Wendy's.

THANK YOU TINA LAINE

Thank you, Tina Laine, assisted by husband, Van Ryujin, for your many years of service heading up our silent auctions, sometimes serving as bar tenders, participating in Bill Steiner's Justice Band, set-ups and clean-ups! You have always been ready to help where needed! We appreciate you!

NEWS SHORTS

Earlier this year the **Agricultural Worker Program Act of 2019** was introduced in the Senate by Senator Dianne Feinstein (S.175) and in the House by Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren,(HR 641) both of California. Commonly known as the "blue card" bill, it provides a means for farm workers to earn lawful permanent residence by continuing to work in the fields. It would provide a stable, legal, skilled work force and would benefit farm workers, employers, and consumers alike. Please contact your local congressperson to indicate your support for this measure.

By contrast the administration supports **expansion of the H-2A program** which would slash wages for both domestic and foreign farm workers and would devastate existing protections for farm workers, according to the United Farm Workers union. The administration seeks to guarantee employers "unlimited access to a captive workforce of indentured servants." (UFW website) A change in rules would enable growers to deny work to U.S. farm workers so that they could hire more temporary foreign workers at lower pay. In turn, this would also depress wages for domestic labor and allow housing abuses by avoiding regular inspections by the Department of Labor.

The **Environmental Protection Agency** continues to refuse to ban the **pesticide, chlorpyrifos**, known to be toxic for farm workers and also linked to irreversible neurodevelopment (brain damage), of children. Earth Justice, representing eleven different farm worker support groups, has filed a petition for review in the US Court of Appeals of the Ninth Circuit challenging EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler's decision to reject a call from environmental groups for a ban on chlorpyrifos. A second suit has also been filed by the Attorneys-General of the states of New York, California, Washington, Massachusetts, Maryland, and Vermont. The UFW maintains that the administration has placed the profits of Dow Chemical, the primary manufacturer of this pesticide before public health concerns.

Equitable Food Initiative

Two years ago Peter O'Driscoll, Executive Director of the EFI, spoke to our fundraiser about the goals and accomplishments of the Equitable Food Initiative. They have certified farms in 31 locations in the U.S., Mexico and Canada. The EFI has focused on the training of farm workers, food safety, and environmental stewardship.

Its board members include representatives from the United Farm Workers, Costco, Farmworker Justice, FLOC, Oxfam, Whole Foods, Bon Appetit, and Andrew and Williamson, one of the largest farms extending from Mexico to Salinas.

Look for strawberries and other fruits in Costco with the EFI label and know that these products were picked with care under good working conditions and protections. Thank you, Costco, for your support!



Harvest of Justice

The National Farm Worker Ministry, the beneficiary of our next dinner/fundraiser, has announced awareness of gender based violence as its theme for the Fall of 2019. A disturbingly high number of farm worker women have reported sexual harassment at work. It is not difficult to understand why; women, particularly those who are undocumented, are vulnerable to both threats of loss of job and/or deportation. "Farm worker women and women's organizations are fighting back... affirming their rights, speaking out, working with allies to change laws, and using consumer actions to address corporate power that acts as a silent sanction to harassment."

