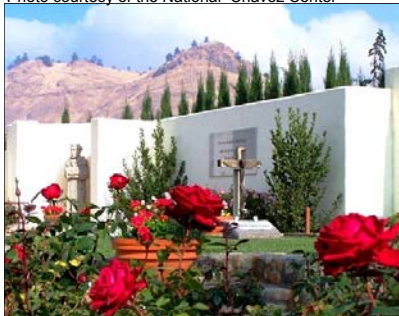


President Obama Establishes César E. Chávez National Monument

By Virginia Nesmith

Photo courtesy of the National Chavez Center



The hills of Nuestra Señora Reina de la Paz in California's Tehachapi mountains emit a profound sense of peace. It is a peace that attracted César Chávez to move the United Farm Workers offices

there from Delano, CA in 1971, as a place to strategize and plan, to renew himself with the morning sunrise, and to create a community that built a movement.

La Paz still serves as the headquarters of the UFW; of the health and pension funds that became a landmark component of UFW contracts; and of the César Chávez Foundation, whose programs include housing, education, service and communications. La Paz's 186 acres also include Cesar's gravesite and memorial garden, a museum, conference center, as well as César and Helen Chávez's home where Helen continues to reside.

On October 8th, President Barak Obama designated many of these sites at La Paz a national monument. It will be administered by the National Park Service in partnership with the César Chávez Foundation and supervised by park superintendent Ruben Andrade, the son of farm workers who worked in the fields himself growing up.

This monument honors the life and work of César Chávez. It is also an honor to his family, to Ruben and his family and to all farm workers. And to you and me. César's many gifts included his ability to get thousands

of people throughout the country to commit their time, talents and hearts to a movement to empower farm workers to improve their workplaces and communities. I thought of all of you who made that commitment as I listened to the President's speech at La Paz along with NFWM founder, Chris Hartmire, his wife Jane, and several of NFWM's board members.

César's grave site includes five fountains that flow in remembrance of the martyrs who were killed by those who opposed their right to justice, a poignant reminder that the union was built with much sacrifice and struggle. As I listened to the President, I was moved to tears of sorrow in recalling that struggle and those that continue around the country; and to tears of joy for the magnitude of that moment.

Photo courtesy of CC NC SA Sam Garcia
The City Project www.cityprojectca.org

But mostly I just felt so grateful; grateful to be in a place where people lived a life that was true to their values; grateful to have the nation's eye drawn that day and into the future to the importance of the workers whose labor fills our tables; grateful to have the memory uplifted by the President, who said he wants generations to come to learn "of a small man, guided by an enormous faith – a righteous cause, a loving God, and the dignity of every human being."



President Obama concluded with the last few lines from the UFW Prayer, (below) and this mandate; "*Our world is a better place because César Chávez decided to change it. Let us honor his memory. But most importantly let's live up to his example.... Si Se Puede!*"



Photo courtesy of Jocelyn Sherman, UFW

Mark Schroeder, OFM, Rodney Sandman, Olga Sierra Sandman, Virginia Nesmith, Suzanne Darweesh

***.....Let the Spirit flourish and grow;
So that we will never tire of the struggle.
Let us remember those who have died for justice;
For they have given us life.
Help us love even those who hate us;
So we can change the world. Amen.***

Farm Worker Progress around the Country



Justice for Tobacco Farm Workers

Tobacco is not just bad for smokers. It's even worse for the people who harvest it. It is estimated that a farm worker absorbs the equivalent of smoking 36 cigarettes in one day of harvesting. The worker also suffers the effects of toxic pesticides used on the plants and is often housed in squalid labor camps. A report released recently by Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center reveals that unsanitary drinking water is a threat to the workers' health in 1/3 of the 180 camps tested!

The National Farm Worker Ministry has been supporting the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) since 2007 in their efforts to get tobacco giant Reynolds American (RAI) to work with them to change these conditions. NFWM has seen the benefits of a union contract won by FLOC which covers some 7000 cucumber and tobacco pickers who enter through the H2A guest worker program run by the North Carolina Grower's Association. But there are thousands of tobacco farm workers not covered by that collective bargaining agreement and who deserve the protections it provides.

In recent months, NFWM supporters, including religious leaders from throughout the country and Florida's Youth and Young Adult members (YAYA) have brought that message to the RAI shareholder meeting, to Kangaroo and WAWA convenience stores selling Reynolds products, and to members of the RAI Board of Directors in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom.

Photo by Lori Fernald Khamala



Nataly Azcurra of NFWM YAYA listens to FLOC Pres. Velasquez.

Now, for the first time, tobacco industry giants are meeting with farm worker representatives about the problems in their supply chain. Three meetings have been held since the RAI CEO's announcement at the May shareholder meeting that they would meet with FLOC; RAI and FLOC are also part of a larger group of industry stakeholders who are discussing the issues in another set of meetings facilitated by the Keystone group.

"We have traction in moving the agenda forward," said FLOC President Baldemar Velasquez, "but we can't let up until we have an agreement that guarantees the right to bargain collectively for all farm workers in Reynolds supply chain. Workers need to be able to solve the problems they face at work."

Eleven companies now participating in CIW Fair Food Agreements!



CIW's Oscar Otzoy, Chipotle's Chris Arnold, and CIW's Gerardo Reyes, joined by student & faith allies, at the agreement signing.

Trader Joe's and Chipotle are the latest food industry corporations to sign the Fair Food Agreement with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers. NFWM staff member Lucy Boutte had organized fifty people to attend a CIW

march to Trader Joe's headquarters in Monrovia, CA early this year and had the happy task of telling them they were no longer needed – the company had signed the agreement! This October, NFWM responded to Interfaith Action's call for prayer at the Chipotle festival in the company's headquarter town of Denver, only to hear the good news that they too had chosen to sign.

With every company that signs the agreement, the penny per pound premium paid for their purchase yields higher wages for Florida's tomato workers. CIW is educating Florida tomato workers about their rights under the code. The Fair Food Standards Council, under the direction of former New York State Supreme Court Judge Laura Safer Espinoza, oversees implementation of the program.

Meanwhile, NFWM Florida supporters and YAYA members are among those who regularly appear at Florida's Publix supermarkets to urge them to add their purchasing power to further justice in Florida's tomato fields, and become the 12th company to sign the Fair Food agreement. A Thanksgiving day week of action will include actions at Publix and other supermarkets around the country.



Photo by YAYA

For more information about Farm Worker Organizations and their Campaigns ... Visit:

www.nfwm.org

www.floc.com

www.ufw.org

www.ciw-online.org

www.pcun.org

www.floridafarmworkers.org

www.equitablefood.net

Farm Worker Progress around the Country

New UFW Contracts for California Farm Workers

NFWM staff member Lucy Boutte worked in California's Central Coast area last summer outreaching to churches to allow farm workers to speak about UFW activity in the area. On one weekend, workers spoke at 36 masses held at ten different churches. While Lucy was there, 422 vegetable workers at Amaral Ranches voted for UFW representation; as did nearly 250 fresh tomato workers at Gargiulo, Inc. near Firebaugh. The workers at both companies have elected committees to take part in negotiations with the companies.

In June, the UFW signed a first time union contract with Pacific Triple E Tomato Company, making its 800 fresh tomato workers in the Stockton area the highest paid tomato workers in the country. "The new relationship establishes a precedent in local agriculture. The families will be compensated what they deserve," said UFW President, Arturo Rodriguez. Other highlights of the contract include a pension plan, grievance procedure, seniority and job security. And an agreement was signed in the Fall with San Joaquin Tomato Growers covering 300 tomato workers in their first three year union contract; that agreement was the result of the binding mediation law won by the UFW and respected and implemented by the company. **Si se Puede!**

NFWM's History Lauded at UFW 50th Anniversary Convention



Ushered in with flags and music, National Farm Worker Ministry Board members who became involved with the UFW in its formative days, along with current Board president, staff and YAYA members, marched to the stage of the UFW 50th Anniversary Convention. NFWM's founder Chris Hartmire shared the history of the development of the California Migrant Ministry and NFWM with the hundreds of farm worker delegates present, and Executive Director Virginia Nesmith introduced those on the stage. UFW delegates passed a resolution which thanks the Ministry for its many years of commitment and work for farmworker justice.



Equitable Food Initiative Moves Forward

National Farm Worker Ministry's August Board meeting included a visit to Sierra Berry Farm, owned by Andrew and Williamson Fresh Produce International. Sierra Farm is a pilot project of the Equitable Food Initiative (EFI). The EFI is developing certifiable standards in the area of farm labor conditions, pesticide use and food safety.

Photo by Alberto Moreno



Strawberry fields at Sierra Farm

NFWM was among the founding organizations of EFI and has representation on the multi-stakeholder steering committee, along with: Andrew & Williamson Fresh Produce International, Bon Appetit Management Company, Calvert Investments, Center for Science in the Public Interest, Consumer Federation of America, Costco, Farmworker Justice, Farm Labor Organizing Committee, Oxfam America, Pesticide Action Network of North America, Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noreste (PCUN) and the United Farm Workers.

An essential component of the EFI is AgLEADR – a program to train workers and growers in implementation of the standards and in communication, conflict resolution and team building skills. AgLEADR Leadership Teams will be in place on certified farms. Board members were able to speak with Sierra Farms President, Ernie Farley, and with members of the Leadership Team there. The team is made up of representatives of employees of the company – including packers, pickers, punchers, tractor drivers and others. The workers spoke highly of the skills they were learning, as well as the input they were being asked to provide on company business matters.

As Suzanne Darweesh, board member representing the Orange County Inter-faith Committee to Aid Farm Workers, said after the visit, "It was exciting because this has been needed for a long time, and because we had a chance to speak with the President of Sierra Farm and even more to speak with the leadership team of the workers and understand what a giant step this is for them to figure out how to improve the handling of the product and what working conditions are needed to achieve this. After several years of talking and planning, we rejoice in this operation and look forward to its expansion."

NFWM's constituents are excited about this opportunity to be pro-active in supporting a more just and healthy agricultural system. Learn more at equitablefood.net.



YAYA Adventures

National Farm Worker Ministry's amazing Youth & Young Adult Network (YAYA) have been having some great adventures in support of justice for farm workers. Here are just a few of the many activities the young activists are up to.



Fellsmere Community Garden

Photo by Laudi Ocampo



YAYAs Jon Hohensee & Miguel Rodriguez harvest sweet potatoes in the Fellsmere Community Gar-

This year, the YAYAs will travel five times to the community garden of the Farm Worker Association of Florida (FWAF) in Fellsmere to help provide sustainable food for the families of that community. This project and others like it provide YAYAs the opportunity to learn first-hand about issues

facing farm workers in the fields and in their communities and form relationships within the community.

Homestead Immersion Trip

In the hottest part of July, seven YAYAs spent three days in Homestead, FL with FWAF. The trip included touring nurseries and the local farm worker community, assisting with a public forum and with voter registration, and engaging in a number of organizing and leadership building workshops.

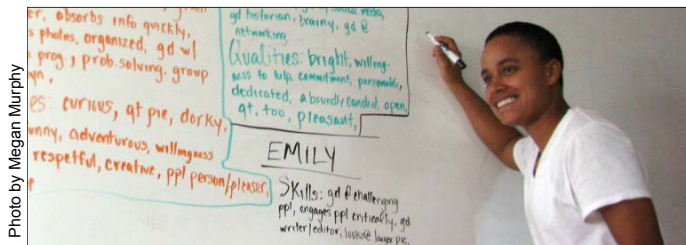


Photo by Megan Murphy

Florida YAYA Organizer Nico Gumbs leads an organizing workshop during the July immersion trip.

And More In support of FLOC, YAYAs traveled to North Carolina in May for the Reynolds Shareholder meeting and organized actions at Kangaroo and WAWA stores in Florida. In March, thirty five YAYA's participated in the march to Publix headquarters in Lakeland, FL for the end CIW's Fast for Fair Food; and they have organized other actions in support of CIW. YAYA members do presentations and tabling on farm worker issues & YAYA on campuses and at community events, collaborate with various coalitions, and participate in the Pinellas Support Committee activities....and more!



Photo by YAYA

NFWM Board Meeting

Two delegates from the Orlando chapter of YAYA, Cole Lee and Abigail Ruiz attended the NFWM board meeting in California this past August. They met board members and reported on YAYA activities; traveled to the Salina area to support the United Farm Workers at D'Arrigo Brothers headquarters, and visited the EFI pilot project at Sierra Farms. Cole and Abi worked throughout the weekend to help the meeting run smoothly.



YAYAs Cole Lee & Abigail Ruiz with NFWM Board Episcopal representative Hector Rodriguez

NFWM board members were so delighted to have YAYAs with them that they decided to join YAYA in Florida for the next board meeting in January 2013.

YAYAs Meet \$5,000 Fundraising Match !!!

January through June, YAYAs, especially the Orlando chapter, worked diligently to reach the goal of raising \$5,000 to meet a matching grant opportunity from the Fund for Democratic Communities. AND THEY DID IT!!



Photo by YAYA

They held the second annual Hit the Fields for Farm Worker Justice Soccer game with Alianza de Mujeres Activas in January. They held yard sales, a phone-a-thon, and took donation collections at various events. In June, YAYAs held their second annual benefit show, which is one of their biggest events of the year. The show was organized by the Orlando chapter of YAYAs and featured musicians, spoken word artists, rappers, and even a silk performer. Way to go YAYAs!

Visit YAYA's website for all the news ...and sign up to receive their E-News. <http://nfwm-yaya.org/>

Memorials - Farm Worker Supporters



Joan Preiss

On June 1, 2012, Joan Papert Preiss, Board member of NFWM for many years, passed away.

In 1973 during the nation-wide grape and lettuce boycotts, Joan and students from Duke University in Joan's beloved hometown Durham, NC formed the Triangle Friends of the United Farm Workers. For 35 years Joan led that group's active involvement on behalf of justice for farm workers. No one celebrated more enthusiastically, or deservedly, when FLOC won the Mt. Olive Pickle boycott.

Joan's fearlessness and creativity were renown, whether wearing the "Boycott Mt. Olive" tiara she created while grocery shopping, standing up to police for her right to picket, or writing a company CEO a "Shame on You" letter. Joan's humor and dedication are missed by many.

We thank Joan's husband Jack Preiss and brother Fred Papert for establishing the Joan Preiss Memorial Fund to support NFWM's Youth & Young Adult Network, thus continuing the energy, creativity and tenacity which Joan dedicated to the farm worker movement. Gifts to the Fund can be made to NFWM with the designation Joan Preiss Memorial Fund.

Dorothy Rom Long time supporter Dorothy Rom of West Palm Beach, FL passed away on February 24, 2012. We are grateful to the Irving and Dorothy Rom Charitable Trust for the generous \$5,000 bequest to NFWM.



Bob & Olga Sandman

Bob Sandman

Rev. Robert Sandman, husband of NFWM Board member Olga Sierra Sandman, passed away on January 16, 2012. Bob was a United Church of Christ minister who, after his ordination, went

to work as state director for the Illinois Migrant Ministry. This began his life-long commitment to justice for farm workers. Bob was a tireless advocate for many social justice issues.

"Bob was a hero to me," said IL State Sen. David Koehler, a UCC minister and state director for NFWM in California during the 1970s. "He was on the forefront of some of the biggest social issues of our time. He was inspirational, in that he truly lived what he believed."

We were blessed to get to know Bob when, in later years, he frequently traveled with Olga to NFWM Board meetings. A very moving memorial service to celebrate Bob's life was held at First Congregational UCC in Downers Grove, IL on February 25. We are grateful for the generous bequest made to NFWM.

Julie Shannon Julie Shannon, who wrote the music and lyrics for the play, *Let the Eagle Fly*, the story of César Chávez, passed away September 12. The musical is performed regularly around the US. Arturo Rodriguez and Paul Chavez wrote of Julie, "For those of us in the movement, *Let the Eagle Fly* will remain an enduring legacy to this courageous and talented woman who gave so much of herself to our cause. It will continue inspiring people for generations to come."

47th Annual OCIC Fundraiser

The Orange County Interfaith Committee (OCIC) held its annual fundraising event for NFWM on September 30th at the Church of the Foothills in Santa Ana, CA. Over 100 attendees dined, bid on silent auction items, and listened as Rev. Chris Hartmire, director of the California Migrant Ministry and later NFWM during the 1960-70s, gave a brief history of the movement and recounted stories of that period. NFWM staff Lucy Boutte also spoke about current farm worker struggles and victories.

The event raised nearly \$4,000. Thank you to Rev. Mike Holland and the church's Peace and Justice Committee who helped prepare and serve the dinner. And thank you to OCIC for their commitment to farm workers and for another very successful fundraiser for NFWM!

Pinellas Support Committee Annual Soup Supper

Join the Pinellas Support Committee for their Annual Soup Supper and silent auction. The fundraiser for NFWM will take place at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Clearwater, FL on Saturday, November 17th beginning at 5:30pm.

The keynote speaker will be Raymond Arsenault, historian and professor at the University of South Florida, St. Petersburg, and author of *Freedom Riders: 1961 and the Struggle for Racial Justice*. Dr. Arsenault will speak about journalist Edward R. Murrow's "Harvest of Shame".

For more information, call Maria McCourt at 813-961-8777, or email nfwmtampa@hotmail.com or visit NFWM's website to view the flyer.

Remember Farm Workers this Thanksgiving

- Lift up farm workers with your congregation with prayer, a message in the bulletin, or a mission moment
- Host a Harvest of Justice Event - simple soup supper and informational event
- Include farm workers in your Thanksgiving Day meal blessing
- Purchase Thank a Farm Worker shopping bags to give as holiday gifts
- Make a contribution to NFWM to support our work on behalf of justice for farm workers

Visit www.nfwm.org
for prayers, resources, to order shopping bags, or make a donation

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

National Farm Worker Ministry (NFWM) is a faith based organization committed to justice for and empowerment of farm workers. NFWM educates, equips and mobilizes member organizations and other faith communities, groups and individuals to support farm worker led efforts to improve their living and working conditions.

Celebrating 90 years of solidarity with farm workers & 40 years as a national organization.

JOIN US !

NFWM has state offices in Florida & California. Visit our web site for state contact information or contact our national office:
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