



Migration from El Salvador 1  
Center receives foundation grant 2  
Legislative action on Bath Iron Works 2  
In honor/memory 2  
Notices 3  
April film 4  
Calendar 4



## Students speak out for sensible gun laws

*Students' press conference March 12 by  
Olivia Baldacci, Bangor High School  
McKenna Baker, Hermon High School  
Emma O'Connor, John Bapst Memorial*

Students from Bangor, Hermon and Hampden High Schools gather in solidarity with the victims from the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting in Parkland, Florida. The week of March 14 Bangor High School students will join with students all across the country to honor the 17 Parkland students who were killed on Valentines' Day and to remember all students whose lives have been lost to senseless gun violence.

The students at John Bapst Memorial High School will walk out of our classrooms for 17 minutes to protest gun violence and raise awareness of our community's collective belief that schools need to be a safe place where children can learn and teachers can teach without fear. We say, "Enough is enough." Our government's inaction on the issue of gun violence is unacceptable and we will be relentless in our efforts until meaningful changes have been made to ensure our safety.

Students at Hermon High School will walk out of classes at 10 a.m. and gather in the gymnasium. For the next 17 minutes we will sign letters to Members of Congress, make phone calls to local legislators, and write condolence cards to families of victims. These letters will call for a change toward safer school environments, reform to gun laws, and real action on the issue of youth violence. We hope that by showing youth the power of their voices, they will continue to speak out. While our event will begin with a moment of silence, we show that we will be silent no longer. This age of ignoring the problem of gun violence ends with us.

*~ see photo on page 4*



## Forced Migration from El Salvador

*by Dennis Chinoy, Power in CommunityAlliances*

A PICA sister-city delegation focused on the issues of forced migration recently returned from El Salvador.

Here's a glimpse of what we learned: The demographics of forced migration are changing. Emigration due to simple economic duress is now more the exception than the rule. Due to the epidemic of gang-related violence, thousands are fleeing not for their livelihoods but for their lives.

The origins of these gangs date back 30 years to the Salvadoran Civil War's displacement of youth to the poorest areas of Los Angeles. Threatened by the gangs they encountered, expatriated Salvadorans formed a gang of their own: the MS 13, or Mara Salvatrucha. Twenty years later, thousands of Salvadoran gang members were deported back to El Salvador. This virulent seed of organized violence landed on fertile ground: a post-war country with uprooted communities, weak and corrupt local governments, no safety net, and easy availability of weapons.

Today, large swaths of the population are threatened by the violent consequences of refusing gangs' extortion demands, caught in the crossfire between rival gangs, or simply in the wrong place at the wrong time. These conditions have caused widespread internal displacement, but in a small country there is often no place to hide from a gang's reach. Many of those threatened conclude they have no choice but to leave. The fastest growing profile of people apprehended at the border are unaccompanied children or parents with children asking for asylum. Refugees, not "illegals," are what they are. Human rights agencies concur that most of these émigrés have a credible fear of persecution as defined by international law.

Many Salvadorans with DACA or TPS may be at heightened risk of being extorted by gangs on their return. The dangers they would face are the very same that continue to impel forced migration to the U.S. The sooner those of us in the U.S. understand the changed realities currently impelling migration from Central America, the more effectively we can press for a just and humane immigration policy.



## P&J Center awarded A.J. Muste Memorial Grant

by Amy Hughes

We are pleased to announce that the P&J Center of Eastern Maine has been awarded a \$5,000 grant by the A.J. Muste Memorial Institute to be used for a project focused on centering racial justice in our movements and to allow us to bring together organizers working on diverse projects in the greater Bangor area for education and discussions to deepen our understanding of and commitment to racial justice. Amy Hughes, former Co-Coordinator, will be the Project Manager overseeing administration of the grant.

The A.J. Muste Memorial Institute, a national grant-making organization based in New York City, was established by members of the War Resisters League to offer safe space to radical organizations threatened by government surveillance and harassment. Both a shelter and a hub, the Institute has grown into a non-profit charitable foundation for innovative grassroots organizing across the nation and the globe. A.J. Muste was a central figure who helped introduce a young seminarian named Martin Luther King, Jr. to the notion of nonviolent activism. Muste was an indefatigable organizer who pioneered strategies for bringing together disparate groups to work in coalition. This is reflected in A.J. Muste Institute's support for diverse grassroots campaigns to oppose militarism, defend the environment, confront racism, and build social justice.

The grant from the A.J. Muste Social Justice Fund will help provide funds for a Peace and Justice Center organizer as well as stipends for two organizers of color to serve as consultants on the project. We look forward to holding our first meetings in the coming months and will keep our membership updated on community meetings and other ways to get involved. For more information on the A.J. Muste Memorial Institute check out their website at: [ajmuste.org](http://ajmuste.org)



## State of Maine bows to corporate greed

by Bob Klotz

General Dynamics (parent company of Bath Iron Works) is obscenely profitable. They are again asking for \$60 million in tax rebates over 20 years. This particularly corrupt form of corporate welfare includes details that many Maine state politicians seem insistent on ignoring. You should be opposed to L.D. 1781 if you are:

- Opposed to Citizens United, concerned about climate change and fearful of the military-industrial complex and recent tax "reform."

- Sickened by the will of the people being ignored and the lack of health care and other services for the most vulnerable.
- Concerned with the continued decline of our outdated and dangerous infrastructure and the lack of progressive policies and mechanisms for a truly sustainable society
- Heartened by the prominence of many unity gatherings and efforts related to immigration and race, the environment, women's and other gender issues, etc., including successful legal wins (Aegis 9, Moral Movement Maine).

If you are a supporter of any "liberal" organizations in the state, you should be insisting that they take action with you in opposition to L.D. 1781. Contact your state legislators and insist that they oppose L.D. 1781. Stand with the many justice protectors across the state who are holding vigils and protests, showing up at the State House and speaking truth to power. Do we have an opportunity for true unity, insistence on genuine representative government and an inclusive democracy, and a reversal of the clear movement toward an oligarchy? YES! Please join us in opposing L.D. 1781.

*Excerpted from a Letter to the Editor published in the Portland Press Herald on March 14, 2018. As this newsletter goes to print: Bruce Gagnon is on day 34 of a hunger strike in protest. The Joint Standing Committee on Taxation has amended LD 1781 to give GD/BIW \$45 million over 15 years, so public outcry is having an effect.*



## In honor, in memory

Many thanks for the following donations in memory and honor of loved ones:

In honor of **Silas Brogunier**, from **Michele Brogunier**

In honor and memory of **Jessie Bidol**, from **Betty Wilkinson**

In memory of **Olga Barbara Dehlinger**, from **Jane & Bill Dopheide**

# notices

## EARTH DAY!

**April 21, Noon- 2 p.m. Pickering Square, Bangor**  
UMaine's Office of Sustainability, UMA-Bangor's Office of Student Life, and Transportation for All are throwing an Earth Day Festival as part of Earth Week! This zero-waste event will feature fun and educational activities for everyone from kids to adults. Activities include: electric vehicle test rides, make-your-own seed bombs, a clothing exchange, and tons of local treats.

Experts in the energy field will be present to teach participants about energy efficiency and clean energy in Maine. Bus ticket reimbursements will be available upon request! FMI: <https://umaine.edu/sustainability/initiatives/mpes/mpes-upcoming-events/>.

**Youth Activism Gathering Pine Tree Camp, Rome, ME April 14-16, 2018**

The Youth Activism Gathering is a youth-led (teens to mid-twenties) three-day meeting of politically conscious youth, organizers, and activists who come together for workshops, music, and great food in an affirming and supportive space! In addition to fun icebreakers, dance parties, punk shows and more, there are more than a dozen confirmed workshops with more to be listed soon! If you have a workshop topic you'd like to suggest or lead, contact Sass at [sass.rosco@gmail.com](mailto:sass.rosco@gmail.com), or Alyssa at [alysasptyo@riseup.net](mailto:alysasptyo@riseup.net). We ask people to pay 0-\$100 for each day of the YAG, but all are welcome regardless of ability to pay. Pay what you can but most importantly come! To register, go to [www.tinyurl.com/2018YAG](http://www.tinyurl.com/2018YAG). FMI: [www.maine-yag.org](http://www.maine-yag.org). YAG is organized by Pine Tree Youth Organizing (PTYO) and Resources for Organizing and Social Change (ROSC).

**War Tax Resistance Day (4/17/18)** is a perfect time to call attention to the connection between our tax dollars, the war machine, and the depletion of our resources for healthcare, education, and a social safety net both on state and federal levels. Please stop by the actions. We have information on our Youth & Militarism Project, peace jobs for youth, truth in military recruiting, and war tax resistance resources. To volunteer with the Maine WTR Resource Center and/or the Youth & Militarism Project, call 558-5758. FMI: <http://mainewtr.nwtrcc.org>

**April events include:**

- 4/2/18 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Southern Maine Community College Campus Center
  - 4/7/18 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Belfast Co-op
  - 4/10/18 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Bates College Commons
  - 4/11/18 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. University of Southern Maine, Portland, Student Union with a polar bear
  - 4/14 - 4/16/18 WTR table and workshop on Organizing Against Militarism in your Community at ROSC Youth Activism Gathering, Pine Tree Camp, Rome, ME
  - 4/14/18 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Blue Hill Co-op
  - 4/14/18 & 4/17/2018 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Damariscotta Post Office
  - 4/17/18 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Unity College Student Union
  - 4/17/18 Table (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.), noon to 1 p.m. Downeast Band Fire in the Commons and speakers, Lobsterman Park (outside the Nickelodeon Movie Theater), Portland
  - 4/17/18 11a.m. to 2 p.m. UMaine, Orono, Student Union
- Dates TBA:** College of the Atlantic; Ellsworth, ME; Norway Co-op; USM, Lewiston; Bethel or Augusta

**PEACE & JUSTICE CENTER *Newsletter***

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**Mission Statement**

...to support as well as link individuals and groups concerned with peace, social justice, and environmental issues. Center services promote cooperation, expand awareness, explore connections, and encourage community involvement in working toward a peaceful and just society. The Center also develops programs in response to those community concerns not being adequately addressed by existing social change organizations.

To support the work of the P&J Center of Eastern Maine, my check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed.

The Center is a non-profit membership organization registered in the state of Maine, but donations are not tax-exempt. To make a tax-exempt donation, make your check payable to ROSC and write "P&J" in the memo line. You can make a donation online at [www.peacectr.org](http://www.peacectr.org). Donations made online are automatically paid through ROSC and are tax deductible.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

This gift is in **memory of** \_\_\_\_ in **honor of** \_\_\_\_  
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*Newsletter  
April 2018*



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PEACE & JUSTICE CENTER FILM SERIES: **Sunday, April 22, 6:00 p.m.**  
**AWAKE, A DREAM FROM STANDING ROCK**

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The Water Protectors at Standing Rock captured world attention through their peaceful resistance. While many may know the details, **AWAKE, A Dream from Standing Rock** captures the story of Native-led defiance that forever changed the fight for clean water, our environment and the future of our planet. The film is a collaboration between Indigenous filmmakers, Director Myron Dewey, Executive Producer Doug Good Feather and environmental Oscar Nominated filmmakers Josh Fox and James Spione. It is a labor of love to support the peaceful movement of the water protectors. <https://awakethefilm.org/>



# c a l e n d a r

**March 29:** Film, "Saving Snow" re: the effects of climate change on winter sports with panel discussion to follow, 7:30 p.m., Gracie Theater, Husson University, Bangor. FMI: [connieapotvin@gmail.com](mailto:connieapotvin@gmail.com)

**April 2:** Gun Violence Prevention Education and Advocacy day, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., Hall of Flags, State House, Augusta. FMI: [josephinaellis@gmail.com](mailto:josephinaellis@gmail.com) or 207-573-0144

**April 3:** Film, "BirthRight: A War Story," re: attacks on reproductive rights for women, 6 p.m., Neville Hall, University of Maine. FMI: [info@mabelwadsworth.org](mailto:info@mabelwadsworth.org)

**April 6:** Songs & stories with Darryl Tonemah, 6 to 8 p.m., Sockalexis Arena, Indian Island. FMI: [sacredhomelands@gmail.com](mailto:sacredhomelands@gmail.com)

**April 6:** "Honoring Women in a Dishonoring World," lecture by Dr. Saadia Mian, 5 to 7 p.m., Bangor Room, Memorial Union, University of Maine. FMI: [icmoweb@hotmail.com](mailto:icmoweb@hotmail.com)

**April 14:** Bangor Green Jobs Forum, 12 noon to 3 p.m., Bangor Public Library. FMI: [alicia.oberholzer@maine.edu](mailto:alicia.oberholzer@maine.edu)

**April 14-16:** Youth Activism Gathering, Pine Tree Camp, Rome, ME. FMI: [MaineYAG@gmail.com](mailto:MaineYAG@gmail.com) or 207-440-0268

**April 17 (and other days in April):** Tax Day actions around the state. FMI: [MaineWTR@gmail.com](mailto:MaineWTR@gmail.com)

**April 21:** Downtown Bangor Earth Day Festival, 12 noon to 2 p.m., Pickering Square, Bangor. FMI: [alicia.oberholzer@maine.edu](mailto:alicia.oberholzer@maine.edu)

**April 22:** "Walk for Mother Earth," 14 mile walk from Sears Island to the Belfast Boat House. FMI: [dscampc321@gmail.com](mailto:dscampc321@gmail.com)

**April 22:** P&J Education Committee meeting (open to all!) 4 p.m., followed by the film "Awake, A Dream from Standing Rock," 6 p.m., P&J Center, Bangor.

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