

# UPDATE on the AMERICAS

A bi-monthly publication of the Rochester Committee on Latin America

A Taskforce of Metro Justice

Winter 2011

## Henry Padron On The Cuban Five

ROCLA's February program (Wednesday, February 2, 7 PM, DUCP) will feature Henry Padron, who will show a new documentary about The Cuban Five, five Cuban men who are in US prison, serving four life sentences and 75 years collectively, after being wrongly convicted in US federal court in Miami on June 8, 2001. He also will bring us up to date on the case of Cuban-

born Luis Posada Carriles, who has been convicted in absentia of involvement in various terrorist attacks and plots in the Americas, including: involvement in the 1976 bombing of a Cuban airliner that killed seventy-three people. Posada has admitted involvement in a string of bombings in 1997 that targeted fashionable Cuban hotels and nightspots( Wikipedia). The caribbeannetnews/AFP reported that he was on the CIA payroll for at least ten years, according to documents made public May 10 by the National Security Archive at George Washington University in Washington.

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*ROCLA Programs and Actions every First Wednesday 7:00 PM Downtown Presbyterian Church 121 N. Fitzhugh St. Free and open to the public. Wheelchair accessible Free parking across the street in City Hall Parking Lot*

Metro Justice Education Fund  
THE ROCHESTER COMMITTEE  
ON LATIN AMERICA  
167 Flanders St.  
Rochester, NY 14619

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## **Bill Quigley, Legal Director of Center for Constitutional Rights To Receive National White Dove Award**

### **At Gala 2011 Rice and Beans/White Dove Award Dinner**

**MARCH 18** – Circle the date for an evening of camaraderie, fun, feasting, and celebration! To a background of Latin music you can bid for the remarkable Silent Auction items, savor rice and beans, salsa and salad from the incomparable Peg Gefell, enjoy a buffet of desserts, and celebrate the 2011 recipients the White Dove Awards.

This year's White Dove Awards are going to four people whose contributions to peace and justice in Latin America are remarkable: Bill Quigley, Nancy Sawyer-Molina and Jose Molina, and Roberto Resto (in memoriam). See articles about them elsewhere.

The Live and Silent Auctions are a highlight of the evening - for fun and for funding. Last year's contributions were spectacular! Dr. Lory Ghertner, pilot, has offered again this year his fabulous private plane ride over the Finger Lakes! And Bob Good's rustic cabin in a quiet beautiful setting on top of a hill near Honeoye Lake will be available in late August through the fall.

#### **A dinner?**

**Vacation cottage?**

**Theatre tickets?**

**Aunt Gertie's antimacassars?**

**A basket of homemade goodies?**

**Honorary membership in ROCLA?**



Please let Marilyn Anderson (271-4374 or manderson@igc.org) know what you would like to donate.

Another Important Feature is The Dessert Table – delectable offerings from ROCLA members. If you have an irresistible contribution please contact Marilyn or Bob Kaiser (293-3194 or rkaiser3@rochester.rr.com).

We look forward to seeing you at ROCLA's major fundraiser. Your presence and contributions will support ROCLA's work in solidarity with the people of Latin America.

**Please note:  
The Rice and Beans Dinner  
takes the place of a March program.**

## **Census: As Red States Grow, So Do Hispanic Populations Within**

An excerpt from Amy Goodman's December 22, 2010, Democracy Now, interview with Tim Storey, a senior fellow at the National Conference of Legislatures.

**TIM STOREY:** The Census Bureau has released data from the American Community Survey and demographic estimates. From that data we know that the Hispanic community in Texas and in Arizona, Nevada, is fueling the growth rate... They have higher birth rates, and so their population is growing at a much faster rate.

And it raises some interesting questions about the redistricting that will follow this reapportionment... All the districts have to be essentially even in population... Also the Voting Rights Act is a major influence on the redistricting... Minority communities are growing at a faster rate. And that could ultimately translate into political power... in the U.S. House of Representatives, the state legislature, city councils, county commissions.

## ABOUT BILL QUIGLEY AND HIS PIONEER WORK IN LATIN AMERICA

ROCLA is honored to present the National White Dove Award to Bill Quigley, currently the Legal Director at the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR), for his pioneer work in Latin America solidarity. He is a law professor and Director of the Law Clinic and the Gillis Long Poverty Law Center at Loyola University, and also has worked with the NAACP, ACLU, Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch. He is an active volunteer lawyer with the School of the Americas Watch and the Institute for Democracy and Justice in Haiti, and the author of *Ending Poverty As We Know It*. Quigley recently wrote for the Huffington Post, *What the Mainstream Media Will Not Tell You about Haiti: Part of the Suffering of Haiti is "Made in the USA: "The US has worked to break Haiti for over 200 years. We owe Haiti. Not charity. We owe Haiti as a matter of justice. Reparations. And not the \$100 million promised by President Obama either -- that is Powerball money. The US owes Haiti Billions -- with a big B... The US has used Haiti like a plantation. The US helped bleed the country economically since it freed itself, repeatedly invaded the country militarily, supported dictators who abused the people, used the country as a dumping ground for our own economic advantage, ruined their roads and agriculture, and toppled popularly elected officials..."*

In reporting CCR's progress in 2010 Quigley says, "We secured a major settlement for the families of Iraqis injured or killed by Blackwater. Our Guantanamo team secured the release of clients who had been unjustly detained for years. We challenged the Right-wing campaign to discredit and defund ACORN... Several cases confirmed our worst fears about current US courts, where we find too many conservative judges and an over-willingness to defer to government."



The Center for Constitutional Rights is a national legal and educational organization dedicated to advancing and defending the rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

### **Nancy Sawyer-Molina and Jose Molina Recipients of the Local White Dove Award**

In 1992, when the Fujimori government was in power, Nancy Sawyer, who was living in Peru, married Jose Molina. Their understanding and education about coffee started when they met the manager of a coffee cooperative who taught them all about coffee, including the intensive labor involved, working conditions of the laborers, labor practices, and fair trade.

Returning to Rochester Nancy went back to school for a degree in human development. With certification in drug and alcohol counseling, she worked with women in substance abuse recovery who had no on-the-job work experience. Gradually the counseling and the coffee came together. Women needed work experience. Jose and Nancy wanted to sell fair-trade coffee. The idea brewed. A coffee shop would take care of both things. Thus was born the Women's Coffee Connection (at 681 South Ave, now called simply "Coffee Connection"). Quoting the D&C 7/4/10, "Coffee Connection" has melded the seemingly incongruous goals of helping local women achieve financial independence and helping Peruvian farmers sell fair-market organic coffee instead of cocaine." What a significant achievement!

Jose and Nancy also bring handcrafted items from Peru, many made by people who were in substance abuse recovery, and it also has become their mission to sell these fair trade items, including sweaters and hand-made jewelry. They were among the first to make such items available online through their organization Ausangate, one of the first e-commerce sites which also educated by telling stories of the culture, the crafts and the people who make them.



## The Utah Compact Could be the New York Compact: Work for 2011

*New York Times* Editorial The Utah Compact, Published: December 4, 2010

Not all the political news this year involves the rise of partisan extremism and government by rage. There has been lots of that. But maybe there is a limit, a point when people of good sense and good will band together to say no. As they have just done in Utah. Political, business, law-enforcement and religious leaders there have endorsed what they call the Utah Compact. It is a statement of principles meant to address, with moderation and civility, “the complex challenges associated with a broken national immigration system.” What a welcome contrast it draws with the xenophobic radicalism of places like Arizona.

The signers, who hope to influence the shape of state immigration policy, include the mayors of Salt Lake City and Salt Lake County, the state attorney general, two Republican former governors, a former United States senator, and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake City, the Chamber of Commerce and a host of other civic groups and citizens. The prominent and powerful Mormon Church did not sign on but issued a “statement of support” calling the compact “a responsible approach to the urgent challenge of immigration reform.”

A clearer expression of good sense and sanity than Utah’s would be hard to find. It says immigration is an issue between the federal government and other countries — “not Utah and other countries.” It says local police agencies should focus on fighting crime, “not civil violations of federal code.” Because “strong families are the foundation of successful communities,” it opposes policies that unnecessarily separate them. It recognizes immigrants’ value as workers and taxpayers.

It ends by urging a humane approach to the reality of immigration: “Utah should always be a place that welcomes people of good will.” South of Utah in Arizona, the political establishment, top law-enforcement officers and voters have lined up behind a radical go-it-alone strategy to uproot and terrorize unwanted immigrants. That hard-line fever is spreading, with lawmakers in other states scrambling to pass their versions of the infamous Arizona

law that empowers the police to demand people’s papers.

Immigration hard-liners are used to using the harshest words possible for newcomers, and condemning calls for restraint and humane behavior — as the Utah Minutemen already have — as the same old liberal, pro-amnesty mush. But red-state Utah is

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## Thanks to Our Supporters at the Alternative Fair

— by Marilyn Anderson

Although our sales were significantly down this year with a gross of only \$851.00, we covered expenses and made a profit of about two hundred dollars. Shorter fair hours contributed to smaller sales. But we are very grateful to those who stopped by and purchased.

We love telling the fair-goers about our textile sources, the Maya women artists of Guatemala. The fact that so many of the Maya of Guatemala still have a deep sense of the value of their culture and practice arts that are an important part of it, is remarkable in itself.

Our support of the cultural resistance “personified” by these women— in their struggle to confront the forces of globalization and capitalism which inevitably



contribute to the loss of culture—is a meaningful act of solidarity on our part. Thank you. And more thanks to everyone who worked at the Alternative Fair table or sold ROCLA textiles in Batavia.

## Rochester Area Solidarity with Nicaragua: All Roads Lead to El Sauce

— by Arnie Matlin

In 1987, Max and Henrietta Levine visited the Nicaraguan Embassy in Washington, D.C. The U.S. was financing a war against Nicaragua and had imposed a severe economic embargo against this small Central American country. The U.S. goal was to overthrow the Sandinista revolution. It was in that context that Max and Henrietta asked, “How can we help?”

The Nicaraguan embassy officials told the Levines that Rochester could become another link in a chain of U.S.-Nicaraguan sister cities that stretched from coast to coast. The embassy suggested El Sauce, a rural community about a four-hour drive from Managua.

Henrietta and Max organized a Rochester-area delegation to El Sauce in January 1988. Six people participated, and every one of them became a Nicaragua solidarity activist. People gave lectures and workshops about Nicaragua, organized letter-writing campaigns, sent humanitarian aid donations, and recruited other like-minded people to work for a normalization of U.S. relations with Nicaragua. The El Sauce-Rochester Ciudad Hermana (“sister city”) Task Force was formed, and began to plan strategies and activities that would help maintain the Nicaraguan revolution.

In 1990, the U.S.-supported candidate, Doña Violeta Chamorro, defeated Sandinista Daniel Ortega, and became President of Nicaragua. Many U.S. solidarity organizations became disheartened, and disbanded. However, in Rochester, the Ciudad Hermana Task Force persisted and actually expanded. (Our attitude was that our sister may have married the wrong person, but she was still our sister!)

The Ciudad Hermana Task Force has continued its valuable work until the present day. The task force has sponsored delegations to El Sauce every other year, and countless water, livestock, and building projects.

A powerful solidarity tool of the Ciudad Hermana Task Force has been to bring the Sandinista mayors of El Sauce to Rochester for face-to-face meetings

with officials and with the public. (Except for 1990, Sandinistas have always won the mayoral elections in El Sauce.) The visits by El Sauce mayors have many tangible results. Mayor Nubia Luna went to the University of Rochester Medical Center. This visit led to a link between the University of Rochester School of Medicine and the Health Center in El Sauce. Two to four U of R medical students carry out clinical rotations in El Sauce every year. The University of Rochester has strongly supported this program, and it has been a great success.

When mayor Evertz Delgadillo visited the Rochester area, he came to SUNY Geneseo, and spoke to faculty and students at the College of Business. This meeting brought about a delegation of Geneseo business students to El Sauce, and, ultimately, led to a SUNY Geneseo-El Sauce connection. In fact, SUNY Geneseo now supports a full-time staff person and a permanent office in El Sauce.

The SUNY Geneseo-El Sauce link has expanded beyond the business sphere, to include Service Learning students, who study and work for several weeks in El Sauce. In addition, a faculty member at SUNY Geneseo took the unprecedented step of enabling students to take the Humanities II course in El Sauce. This was the first time that Humanities II has been taught in a developing country.

Mayor Rosa Valle Vargas came to Rochester recently, and she visited Noyes Memorial Hospital in Dansville. That visit led to the pairing of Noyes Memorial and the new hospital in El Sauce as sister hospitals. Ciudad Hermana will need to find ways to make this a symbiotic working link in the years to come.

Several other projects initiated by members of the Ciudad Hermana Task Force have arisen that link El Sauce to the Rochester area. The Four Walls project brings volunteers from the Rochester area to El Sauce to construct or repair substandard housing. An area family supported a preschool in El Sauce for 19 years, and now supports a casa materna, which provides care to women before and after they deliver

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## A NEW COMMITMENT FOR ROCLA IN 2011!

—by Bob Kaiser

At every regular meeting in 2011 people will be encouraged to sign Amnesty International alerts in support of human rights defenders in Latin America. This action follows an excellent program by Barb Deming in January regarding the work of Amnesty International on behalf of those who are being persecuted or unjustly incarcerated. January's action, on behalf of the women of Atenco, Mexico, is reprinted below. To join us in this month's initiative please copy the letter, sign it and send it to the address listed. Postage Mexico is 79 cents.

Dear Governor:

I am concerned at reports that police officers physically and sexually abused Bárbara Italia Méndez and dozens of other women in San Salvador Atenco in May 2006 following a public protest. Ms. Méndez was a 27-year-old student when police detained her without explanation and beat and raped her.

The National Human Rights Commission called for criminal investigations into the abuses, and the Supreme Court acknowledged the serious human rights violations that occurred in Atenco. In 2009, the Federal Attorney General's office named 34 state police officers as suspects in the attacks and recommended prosecution. Yet no action has been taken at the federal or state level.

The federal government must act now. I urge you to see to it that those responsible for the crimes against the women of Atenco are brought to justice.

Sincerely,

Name:

Street address, City, State:

Lic. Felipe de Jesús Calderón Hinojosa  
Presidente de la Republica  
Residencia Oficial de Los Pinos  
Casa Miguel Aleman  
Col. San Miguel Chapultepec  
C.P. 11850, México DF  
MÉXICO

[Ed. note: If you receive the postal version of the newsletter and have a computer, e-mail [interconnect\\_mott@frontiernet.net](mailto:interconnect_mott@frontiernet.net) and we'll send this letter for you to cut and paste right away.]

## Newsbites

There have been an unusually high number of newsworthy happenings in Latin America this year – unreported by most of the corporate media. However, the internet, conference calls, and newsletters can fill in where the New York Times fails us. Here are a few examples:

- The most recent of nine “leftist” presidents elected in Latin America is Dilma Rousseff of Brazil, a former Marxist rebel, later Chief of Staff for departing Lula da Silva, who was Brazil’s first working-class President. His reforms have resulted in 20 million people moving out of poverty; and unemployment is at a record low.
- The US signed an agreement with Colombia to place our troops in seven of their military bases (temporarily stopped by their Judiciary).
- We signed an agreement with Costa Rica to send 46 warships and 7000 Marines to help with the ‘drug war’ (also temporarily stopped by the Judiciary).
- Our 4th Fleet is out of mothballs – after 40 years – and patrolling South America (for drugs? Or for “leftist” movements in which the people want to control their own natural resources?).
- Wikileaks revealed documents showing Washington knew in advance about plans for the coup in Honduras.
- The FBI has raided and issued subpoenas at Latin America solidarity offices in Chicago, Minneapolis and Michigan.

Each of these items has been reported more fully in INTERCONNECT. To receive the free e-newsletter please send your name and e-address to us at [inerconnect\\_mott@frontiernet.net](mailto:inerconnect_mott@frontiernet.net) or go to [www.interconn.org](http://www.interconn.org).

## New PeaceWorks

### Website for Our Community:

ROCLA has responded to the invitation from PeaceWorks Rochester to join with like-minded people to create a future that works for everyone. You will find ROCLA listed in the Peace Directory, and already our first Wednesday meetings are on the Calendar, as well as the Rice and Beans Dinner on Friday, March 18.

Go to [PeaceWorksRochester.org](http://PeaceWorksRochester.org) to learn about and to use these free services:

- **PROGRESSIVE COMMUNITY CALENDAR.** This free calendar will help you find progressive events, allow you to advertise events, and help avoid conflicts in event scheduling.
- **ROCHESTER ANNOUNCE LIST.** This free email list allows groups to advertise upcoming events and to stay informed about what’s going on.
- **THE PEACE DIRECTORY** lists 100+ local groups working for Peace, Sustainability, Community, and/or Human rights. This listing can be browsed online, or printed.
- **CONNECTIONS.** This function helps you find groups in the Peace Directory with which you share interests. You are shown 70+ “key words.” Groups identified with the key words you select are listed, and can be emailed easily from the website.

Tell your friends about [PeaceWorksRochester.org](http://PeaceWorksRochester.org) so that our collective knowledge and efforts bear greater fruit.

### MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT

Many thanks to the 74 people who have responded to ROCLA’s request for membership contributions to support our efforts on behalf of Latin American concerns. Further gifts certainly would be appreciated. Send contributions to Marilyn Kaiser, 150 Attridge Rd. Churchville, NY 14428

## ROCLA WARMLY WELCOMES LEW MONTEMAGGI TO THE STEERING COMMITTEE

[*Ed. note: We are grateful to Lew for sending this bio that informs ROCLA members about his strong credentials and passion for the work of justice and solidarity in Latin America.*]

I am a 64 yr.old lawyer, married 42 years to Sandy, and we have three adult sons. My law practice, with 2 associates, concentrates on the representation of injured & occupationally diseased workers, many of whom are Hispanic, in their workers' compensation claims. See my firm website: [www.montemaggilaw.com](http://www.montemaggilaw.com) for my profile.

I enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1965 after attending college for only one semester and immediately became active in the anti-Vietnam War movement when I got out in 1968. I joined the Socialist Party, USA, in 1970 while attending law school in Boston. The Socialist Party ultimately morphed into Democratic Socialists of America of which I am still an (inactive) member. My politics are still democratic socialist but I am stuck with the "left wing" of the Democratic Party in the American political landscape. I come from a working-class background, my father was a union carpenter, and was the first person in my family to get an advanced degree. Neither of my parents graduated from high school. Despite my being a lawyer I have always supported & worked with organized labor.

I first became interested in Latin America during Salvador Allende's election as Socialist president only to be outraged by the American sponsored coup by Pinochet in 1973. This was followed by US support of the brutal anti-democratic actions in Nicaragua & El Salvador in the 1980's. It just goes on and on. I developed a particular interest in Guatemala when I worked for Habitat for Humanity Int'l in Guatemala for a week each in 2005, 2006 & 2007. We worked with the indigenous families in building their homes. Each year I would stay a little longer, traveling as a non-tourist and attending a Spanish language school in Quetzaltenango (Xela). I have spent 2 to 3 weeks in Guatemala since 2005. I learned of the "quiet" 36 yr armed conflict (1960 - 1996) and of the Guatemalan government's genocidal war against the indigenous people (Maya) which, of course, originated with the US-sponsored coup of Arbenz in 1954.

I have read many books on the history of exploitation of Latin American countries by the US. I want to do what I can to right these ongoing wrongs by educating the American public and by active participation in human rights activities in Central America. I am an active member of NISGUA (Network in Solidarity with the people of Guatemala) and have

been accepted into their accompaniment program in Guatemala as soon as I become more fluent in Spanish.

I have been an active member of Metro-Justice for many years and started attending ROCLA meetings in the last few years. These meetings are very informative and have broadened my knowledge of US actions in Latin America. ROCLA has been a natural fit for me in my preparation for a second career in human rights activities in Central America. It has been reinforcing to meet and work with like-minded people. I consider it a privilege and an honor to become a member of ROCLA's Steering Committee.

### **Roberto Resto White Dove Award in Memoriam**

Roberto Resto was a true *compañero* and we shall miss him and his work for justice for all peoples. He was always PRESENT - with a beaming smile and a warm and welcoming greeting. He carried on courageously even when he didn't feel well (and he never let us know that). Instead, he gave encouragement to all of us. He led by example - the very best kind of leadership.

One of his major passions was immigration reform and the rights of migrant workers. His witness at countless demonstrations was inspirational. Roberto must have stayed up long into the nights to gather and e-mail important information about migrant workers and immigration issues so that we would all be better informed.

He called for demonstrations at the Federal Bulding against US Navy presence in Vieques, Puerto Rico, where our Navy practiced bombardment. ROCLA members joined him in his brave stand on several occasions.

Roberto persevered and was passionate in his efforts to change our government's policies; and he was a faithful champion of people who were suffering unjustly because of them.



## **The Utah Compact Could be the New York Compact: Work for 2011**

*Continued*

architects of the compact are conservative Republicans who have simply decided not to toe the simplistic party line.

This page has always insisted that reform can be — must be — pro-immigrant, pro-business, pro-family, pro-law-enforcement, all at the same time. These values are complementary. Law enforcement is strengthened by bolstering immigrants' rights. Assimilation is more American than mass expulsion. It is also cheaper: a new study by the liberal Center for American Progress calculated that Arizona had lost hundreds of millions of dollars in convention and other business, thanks to the notoriety from its immigration crackdown.

### **ROCHESTER COMMITTEE ON LATIN AMERICA (ROCLA)**

*ROCLA for many years has sought to be a bridge between the Rochester community and the people of Latin America. Monthly meetings on the 1st Wednesday of each month at the Downtown United Presbyterian Church provide an opportunity to learn more about what is going on in that part of the world. In addition to providing information, ROCLA is committed to working for systemic justice and supports numerous organizations that are on the front line of this endeavor. School of the Americas Watch, the Mexico Solidarity Network, Rights Action and the Rochester Labor Film Festival are among the many groups that receive assistance and encouragement.*

#### **ROCLA Steering Committee**

Marilyn Anderson, Peg Gefell, Marilyn and Bob Kaiser, John Locke, Arnie Matlin, Lew Montemaggi Sandy Morales, Peter and Gail Mott, Vic Vinkey, Tom Ward, Callie Rabe

#### **Update on the Americas Publishing Team**

Editors: Gail and Peter Mott; Designer: John Locke

## **Henry Padron On The Cuban Five**

*Continued from first page*

Background, from the FreetheFive.org website: The Five were falsely accused by the U.S. government of committing espionage conspiracy against the United States, and other related charges.

But the Five pointed out vigorously in their defense that they were involved in monitoring the actions of Miami-based terrorist groups, in order to prevent terrorist attacks on their country of Cuba. The Five's actions were never directed at the US government. They never harmed anyone nor ever possessed nor used any weapons while in the United States.

For more than 40 years, anti-Cuba terrorist organizations based in Miami have engaged in countless terrorist activities against Cuba, and against anyone who advocates a normalization of relations between the US and Cuba. More than 3,000 Cubans have died as a result of these terrorists' attacks.

Terrorist Miami groups like Comandos F4 and Brothers to the Rescue operate with complete impunity from within the United States to attack Cuba — with the knowledge and support of the FBI and CIA.

## **Rochester Area Solidarity with Nicaragua**

*Continued*

their babies. Another family supports an excellent Catholic school. Geneseo Rotary is supplying solar panels for electric lights to women who are working at the traditional craft of basket weaving. The lights allow the women to carry out this craft after sundown

The Rochester Committee on Latin America has always been steadfast in opposing U.S. intervention in Nicaragua's foreign and domestic policy. Many CH members are also ROCLA members, and the groups work together on various projects.

It is a tribute to Henrietta and Max Levine that so much political and humanitarian support has taken place in El Sauce because they visited the Nicaraguan embassy in 1987 and asked, "How can we help?"