

San Diego Free Press

GRASSROOTS NEWS & PROGRESSIVE VIEWS

A Dozen Organizations Doing Good Deeds in San Diego

by D O U G O R D O E R C T E E M R B E g R C d G M, M E N I T 4 S
in A C T I, C V O I L S U M M D N S' O R P ' O S L J E T H I C K E S S T A R T I N G L I N E



By Doug Porter

As our daily newspaper demonstrated yesterday with a full section detailing the efforts of over forty individuals and organizations, there's no shortage of people in San Diego looking to do good things. What I'd like to do today is to cast a spotlight on some of the groups whose work in 2014 included advocacy for causes we hold near and dear.

Now is the time of year when many groups dependent on donations make their pleas, hoping to tap into the holiday feelings of goodwill and the promise of a tax deduction. While I'm sure that many of the groups mentioned today would be glad to accept donations, my intent here is to say thanks for their efforts.

This list represents only those organizations I am aware of or those that have reached out to SD Free Press in the past. I'm sure there are others, and please feel free to use the comments to enlighten our readers.

Inclusion in this list does not necessarily constitute an endorsement of all aspects of each group. (I've grown weary of waiting for perfection.) I've also not listed groups that appear to be inactive at the present time.

[350.org \(San Diego\)](#) They're an all volunteer organization dedicated to working on issues relating to Climate Change. Their priorities are working for a strong Climate Action Plan, community outreach and education, fighting the Keystone Pipeline, and working with the San Diego Energy District Foundation and other groups to create "Community Choice Aggregation" options in San Diego County that will allow electricity consumers to choose a non-profit provider instead of SDG&E. They have an active [Facebook page](#), a [newsletter](#) and are always looking for volunteers (volunteer@sandiego350.org).



[Alliance San Diego](#). They're involved with [voter education](#), [human rights](#), [education equity](#) and [tax reform](#) issues. In other words, they do a lot of things. And they usually do them by harnessing the power of coalition building with like-minded groups and individuals working in those areas. I worked with their voter engagement program back in the days when I had vocal chords and therefore am very biased about how good the work they do is. The Alliance sponsors the annual [All Peoples Celebration](#) on Jan. 19 honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the vision for change he inspired. Here's the Alliance [Facebook page](#).



[American Civil Liberties Union San Diego and Imperial Counties](#). The ACLU works in many ways on many issues. Their [issues](#) web page lists 22 different areas of concern. They research. They educate. They advocate. And, yes, they litigate. The work done by the local chapter on behalf of Immigrants has made a real difference. Their work in Escondido in fighting for the rights of Latinos in voter representation is outstanding. And then, of course, there's all the things about privacy they're involved in. The local chapter is always looking for [volunteers](#), and you can [support them](#) by becoming a card-carrying ACLU member.



Behold the Gilded Age

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R e c e n t C

John Lawrence on [Voice of San Diego's Intern 'Trony' is Just the Latest Insult](#)
Why doesn't the state just make measles and whooping cough vaccinations mandatory instead of wringing their hands over the irresponsible ...

Lori Saldaña on [Voice of San Diego's Intern 'Trony' is Just the Latest Insult](#)

I was a Dean at Mesa College, responsible for creating a new Service Learning program in 2002, which ...

Roger Cazares on [Andrea Skorepa, The Queen of San Ysidro](#)

I witnessed the growth and development of Casa Familiar under Andrea Skorepa's leadership during some trying and difficult years. Some ...

John Geary on [Voice of San Diego's Intern 'Trony' is Just the Latest Insult](#)

"Glendale a destination city"... seriously? .. I've been to Glendale before an after the stadium was built. The city has ...

Tweets from @SDFreePressorg/freeps

C o m m u n
C l i c k t
v i e w t h

Balboa Park Barrio Logan Carlsbad Chula Vista City Heights Coronado

Del Mar Downtown downtown San Diego El Cajon Encinitas Escondido Golden Hill Hillcrest Imperial Beach La Jolla La Mesa

Lem on Grove Logan Heights Mission Bay Mission Beach Mission Valley National City Normal Heights North County North Beach Ocean Beach Oceanside Old Town Otay Mesa Pacific Beach Point Loma

Poway Ramona San Diego at Large San Onofre Santee San Ysidro Sherman Heights Solana Beach Southeast San Diego South Park Temecula Tijuana UCSD

San Onofre Santee San Ysidro Sherman Heights Solana Beach Southeast San Diego South Park Temecula Tijuana UCSD

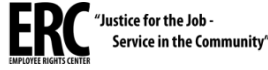
S i x M o n
o n S D F P

North Pacific Dispatches: Mercury, Cesium, Plankton and Whales

[Center on Policy Initiatives](#). You could say they are San Diego's "think tank" for progressives, but you would be only partially right. Their [research and analysis](#) on poverty, healthcare, affordable housing and local government represents an important contribution to the community. CPI goes beyond simply researching and defining problems by coming up with model policies and showing people the steps they need to take to make change happen. Their community workshops on the city budgeting process have made an incomprehensible process accessible to ordinary San Diegans. CPI is always looking for a few [good volunteers](#) and has an active [Facebook page](#).



[Employee Rights Center](#) They are the only organization in the San Diego area offering legal services regarding employment and labor law to any worker. Over the years they've collected millions of dollars in unpaid wage claims and benefits. ERC advocates for the rights of immigrant workers and holds workshops on issues ranging from disability rights to whistleblowing. They have an active [Facebook page](#).



[Environmental Health Coalition](#). EHC makes the connection between environmental activism and social justice, with a focus on public policies that improve the health of children, families, neighborhoods and the natural environment in the San Diego/Tijuana region. Their campaigns include [green energy and jobs](#), [healthy kids](#), [border environmental justice](#) and [toxic-free neighborhoods](#). The EHC were leaders in the fight to save the Barrio Logan Community Plan (Propositions B&C).



Reactionaries have mounted an attack on the tax exempt status of EHC, complete with [smear campaign](#) invoking names (Obama, Filner, Soros...Oh My!) designed to strike fear in the hearts of right wingers everywhere. Here's their [Facebook page](#).

[Interfaith Center for Worker Justice](#). (ICWJ) of San Diego County is a membership organization representing institutions and people of faith who feel called by their religious traditions to work for justice and stand up for the poor and marginalized. In other words, they are the conscience of the labor (organized or not) movement in San Diego.



They work in support of immigration reform, immigrant workers' rights, efforts to raise the minimum wage, sick days and other worker justice campaigns Here's the ICWJ [Facebook page](#).

[Mid-City Community Action Network](#) They've done an impressive job of organizing in City Heights, one of San Diego's most marginalized neighborhood. High school students have come together to advocate for free bus passes for economically struggling students. Residents from immigrant communities get access to health care resource. Kids fight for a skateboard park. All these projects and more have grown out of Mid-City CAN.



Stay up to date on their activism via their [Facebook page](#).

[Raise Up San Diego](#) This is the [coalition](#) that fought for (and continues to fight for) an increase in San Diego's minimum wage and paid sick days.



Although the Chamber of Commerce sponsored ballot initiative has delayed implementation of the City Council ordinance, this is merely Justice Delayed, Not Justice Denied. You can keep up with developments in this struggle via their [Facebook page](#).

[The San Diego LGBT Community Center](#). The only question I have about The Center is: "What don't they do?" They provide a large array of direct services, sponsor community activities, engage in educational campaigns and have helped organize San Diego's LGBT community into a powerful political force, all with the twin goals of promoting LGBT health and human rights in mind. They are [always looking](#) for people to work with their 800 people strong volunteer groups. And here's their [Facebook page](#).



[United Taxi Workers of San Diego](#) Despite membership in San Diego and Imperial Counties Labor Council, they're not exactly a union. Call it a

Debra on [Water Main Breaks Cause Major Problems in San Diego and Nationwide](#)
It's my understanding that the COUNTY is flush with cash from OUR property taxes and that's how they came up ...
[Arthur Salm](#) on [Voice of San Diego's Intern 'Irony' is Just the Latest Insult](#)

Good piece (as always), Doug. You like to say that you read the U-T so that we don't have to. Well, ...
Doug Porter on [Voice of San Diego's Intern 'Irony' is Just the Latest Insult](#)

I've touted VOSD's work 50 times for each time I've been critical, which I think is all of about ...
michael-leonard on [Voice of San Diego's Intern 'Irony' is Just the Latest Insult](#)

Mr. Porter, considering how often you refer to VoSD stories, I find your continued flogging of Scott Lewis rather ironic. ...

E d i t o r ' s

[Barrio Bits: Barrio Logan Planning Group Begins, SD Workers Center to Open, Break Down Borders Run, La Bodega's Anniversary y más!](#)

[The Passing of Chicano Warrior Reies López Tijerina](#)

[Change the World, Change Yourself](#)

[Despite Disappointing Turnout, 100 San Diegans March 4 Miles for Justice](#)

[As Measles Continues to Spread, It's Time to Hold the Anti-Vaccine People Accountable](#)

[We Need Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Fierce Urgency of Now": Beyond Our Current Failure of Imagination](#)

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O v e r a t

[Where to Watch the Super Bowl in Ocean Beach](#)
By Matthew Wood As OBceans decide who they'll root for in Sunday's decidedly non-SoCal Super Bowl, the bars of OB...

[Peninsula Community Planning Board: Cañon Street Pocket Park Controversy Continues](#)
By Tony de Garate Controversy continues over Cañon Street Pocket Park When board member Jon Linney heralded the details of...

[Community Relations Officer for Western Division Weighs In on Ocean Beach](#)
Editor: The following is by Community Relations Police Officer David Surwilo, who probably more than any other single officer, knows...

[Midway Community Planning Group Reports Sports Arena Black Angus to be demolished?](#)

By Tony de Garate The long-vacant Black Angus at 3340 Sports Arena Blvd. could have an appointment with the wrecking...

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voluntary workers association. Somehow these folks organized immigrant groups from sometimes warring countries into a cohesive organization, achieving recognition and accomplishing goals many people thought impossible. [This article](#) by Joshua Emerson Smith at [City Beat](#) tells their story which is, to say the least, inspirational.



[Veterans for Peace](#) This year the group handed out its 2300th sleeping bag sets (sleeping bag, waterproof nylon stuff-sack and poncho) to the homeless in downtown San Diego as part of its compassion campaign. They also organized a series of weekly protests outside the gates of General Atomics in Poway, seeking to where the Predator Drone is built. They sought to get people thinking about the [threat](#) drones present to American liberties. And Vets for Peace [serves as a conscience](#) for the community, reminding us of the terrible human cost of using force in the world. Here's their [Facebook](#) page.




At San Diego Free Press we see enabling groups like those mentioned in this article to communicate as part of our mission. We don't, however, make a practice of printing press releases. As an all volunteer enterprise we don't have reporters waiting to be dispatched. We believe in working collaboratively, and we welcome other groups who share our progressive vision to work with us.

On This Day: 1869 – The Knights of Labor was founded. The constitution barred “parasites,” including stockbrokers and lawyers from membership. **1944** – Tennessee Williams’ play “The Glass Menagerie” was first performed publicly, at the Civic Theatre in Chicago. **1982** - The Man of the Year in “TIME” magazine was a computer. It was the first time a non-human received the honors.

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Doug Porter

Doug Porter was active in the early days of the alternative press in San Diego, contributing to the OB Liberator, the print version of the OB Rag, the San Diego Door, and the San Diego Street Journal. He went on to have a 35 year career in the Hospitality business and decided to go back into raising hell when he retired. He won awards for 'Daily Reporting and Writing: Opinion/Editorial' from the Society of Professional Journalists in 2013 and 2014. Doug is a cancer survivor (sans vocal chords) and lives in North Park. NEW: Ello contact @dougbob

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Susan Duerksen December 26, 2014 at 2:26 pm 

Thank you, Doug, for another astute and informative list! On behalf of all of us at CPI, I'd like to emphasize your point about year-end donations. ANY amount will help us prepare for the battle ahead to make sure San Diego takes a crucial and overdue step toward fair wages with an increased minimum wage. Please go here, everybody: <http://onlinecpi.org/donate2014>

R E P L Y

Gil Field December 26, 2014 at 5:12 pm 

Thank you, Doug, for including the San Diego Veterans For Peace on your list of groups doing good things in San Diego.

We are honored to be included in such a list.

We encourage veterans and non-veterans who believe in our Statement of Purpose to join us in our ongoing work:

Statement of Purpose

We, having dutifully served our nation, do hereby affirm our greater responsibility to serve the cause of world peace. To this end we will work, with others

- (a) To increase public awareness of the costs of war
- (b) To restrain our government from intervening, overtly and covertly, in the internal affairs of other nations
- (c) To end the arms race and to reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons
- (d) To seek justice for veterans and victims of war
- (e) To abolish war as an instrument of national policy.

To achieve these goals, members of Veterans For Peace pledge to use non-violent means and to maintain an organization that is both democratic and open with the understanding that all members are trusted to act in the best interests of the group for the larger purpose of world peace.

858-342-1964.

R E P L Y

Mary December 26, 2014 at 7:15 pm



I wish the Alliance's "All People's Celebration" was free, so its title could make more sense. Tickets cost \$50 each – that will exclude many people who might be interested in attending what looks to be a very cool event. Low incomes are hurting our community – it's hard for those of us on tight/negative-flow budgets to support organizations that we believe in. Could the city do more to support free events put on by local organizations?

R E P L Y

Mary December 26, 2014 at 7:23 pm



Re the Alliance event on MLK Day (comment above):
Interesting info on Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Poor People Campaign" to urge government action to address poverty issues:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poor_People's_Campaign

R E P L Y

Mary December 26, 2014 at 7:27 pm



Thank you for this compilation. Another outstanding article, Doug.

R E P L Y

bob dorn December 27, 2014 at 8:49 am



Wow. Thank you to all these tough, strong organizations that make issues understandable and bring them into the political field so that our putative leaders must deal with the real.

R E P L Y

Simon Mayeski December 27, 2014 at 10:04 am



Add the SDFP itself to this list of those doing the good work! This is the first place I look each morning to get the important news analysis about my city. I support it each month with a small donation; I urge others who find the work done here compelling to do the same. Look for DONATE on the page above :)

R E P L Y

Anna Daniels December 27, 2014 at 11:14 am



Simon, thank so much! SDFP exists because of all of the unpaid contributors who have embraced the practice of citizen journalism and because of the readers who think citizen journalism provides perspectives and news that aren't available anywhere else. SDFP does very little outright fundraising. That means we are amazed and gratified by the financial support we receive. It has been enough to maintain the technology that enables

us to publish seven days a week. Thank you for helping us keep the lights on. Thank you for your readership.

R E P L Y

Martha Sullivan December 27, 2014 at 10:27 am



Thank You for this great list, Doug! I am grateful for each of these organizations, and proud to be an active volunteer for San Diego 350.org and San Diego Veterans for Peace (as an Associate and daughter, sister and aunt of veterans); and to partner with ACLU as a member of Women Occupy San Diego, working on policing reform. All of these organizations have worked in coalition on important missions to improve the lives and dignity of the poor and working class in San Diego.

R E P L Y

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