

# Center for GLOBAL JUSTICE Centro para la JUSTICIA GLOBAL

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Newsletter #9

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*Our winter “community dialogues” between nearby rural villagers and foreign visitors, new links we are making between cooperatives - existing and planned – and expansion of our programs despite our meager resources, have together rooted the Center more deeply in its city and region, leading to some great surprises.*

*We operate on a shoe-string - with donated space and labor. But we’ve received new contributions to our loan fund and a second grant from the Reynolds Foundation for our internships and working groups. Volunteers now come long distances to advance our projects. Much credit for the progress is due to Atahualpa Caldera, Yolanda Millán, and Beatriz Sucar. These part-time staff members work more hours than the Center is able to pay them for. Here are some new developments at the Center.*

## NEW FOUNDATION TO AID MEXICAN WOMEN



In an act of exemplary generosity before his recent death, long-time *sanmiguelense* Bernie Weisman started the Bernard Weisman Foundation - with the Center in mind as one possible recipient. Bernie’s closest friend, Julie Durand, was named

Executive Director. Her husband Cliff, a founder of the Center, is on the board. In addition to rental units on Quebrada in San Miguel’s historic center, there is space in the Foundation’s complex for offices, a fair trade shop, seminars and movies.

## CUBAN, MEXICAN, US STUDENTS CONVERGE

‘07 is a banner year: interns will get credit from Berea College - a first - *and* have a unique 5-week intercultural academic experience with 4 classmates each from Cuba and Mexico and 10 from the US, thanks to a second Reynolds Foundation grant. Berea faculty, Peggy and Mike Rivage-Seul, will join other Research Associates Cliff Durand, David Stea, Arturo Yarish, and noted intellectual, Gustavo Esteva, to help the students process their real-world field studies. For more info: [www.globaljusticecenter.org/2007internship/2007internship.htm](http://www.globaljusticecenter.org/2007internship/2007internship.htm)

## OUR FIRST COURSE OFFERINGS

“Marxism Today” was taught by philosopher Karsten Struhl who came from New York City. Resident Research Associate Cliff DuRand offered “Mexico Under NAFTA.” Thanks to conferences, web publishing, and such courses, the Center is becoming known for its vibrant thinking as well as practice.

## SNOWBIRD SYMPOSIUM

For San Miguel’s expats and visitors (“snowbirds”) we offer some of the stimulation of a university. In January, February and March we sponsored 18 talks and 21 film screenings with discussions. Audiences totaled over 1700.

## SUMMER SYMPOSIUM

Last year we launched a *summer* symposium – a 2-month film and lecture series. Initial 2007 focus is on Argentina’s missing children (many more than Chile). Rosa Roisinblit, founder of the *Madres de la Plaza de Mayo*, will speak.

## COMMUNITY DIALOGUE

This past winter the Center organized 13 day-trips to six rural communities with which we have built relationships, thanks to Ata Caldera and Yolanda Millan. Village residents and foreign visitors have discussed, unscripted, North and South experiences of NAFTA, North/South experiences of emigration, and the like.



*Atahualpa Caldera with visitors to Peñon de los Baños*

## HALF-SUCCESSFUL CO-OP TOUR

Worker co-ops anchor solidarity economies. Such economies include, e.g. participatory budgeting, credit unions, community agriculture, local currencies. Mexico has no national grouping of worker co-ops despite lots of authentic cases.

On their April tour of a dozen co-ops, Tom Pierson, international liaison for the US Federation of Worker Co-ops, and Norma Suarez, noted San Miguel artist, found a strong but atomized movement. A livestock co-op in Hidalgo needs an organic feed mix recipe used daily in a Oaxaca co-op. A tomato co-op in Guanajuato needs the organic methods taught at a model co-op in Morelos. How to join them? Co-ops were found *separately* pondering how workforces in the US from the same Mexican villages might pool some remittances to build co-ops back home — obviating further trips.

Six stalwart member-donors funded the tour. But the job was only half-done: we now need more funds to produce a photo-essay and video to be shown in the co-ops visited - as parts of invitations to meet for mutual aid and “inter-cooperation.”



Members of the Peñon de los Baños co-op and the Center

## PEÑON DE LOS BAÑOS - A CO-OP ON THE MOVE

This impressive dairy co-op near San Miguel has elicited \$7,000 in targeted donations to our loan fund – an unexpected effect of *campo* visits in our Snow-bird Symposium. With Center help Penon is incorporating so it can sell without middlemen and apply for federal funds for a greenhouse. For a fuller account, see: [www.globaljusticecenter.org/articles/report\\_penon.htm](http://www.globaljusticecenter.org/articles/report_penon.htm)

## COFFEE FOR MUJERES PRODUCTORAS?

Since 2004, the Center has encouraged this local co-op founded by Yolanda Millan, now an outreach coordinator. Its members sell clothing, basketry, and soap in the fair trade shop in the Center. The co-op tour visited a Oaxaca organic coffee group that could be a supplier, so law-student Mayra Huerta who tends the shop may soon be offering coffee in the bean.

## SEWING CO-OP START-UPS

Anthropologist Luci Fernandes, who has worked with Ecuadorean indigenous groups, will take leave from the U. of Connecticut this fall to spend 6 weeks with us as Research Associate. She will mentor 2 students in 3 rural communities developing sewing co-ops. A design for a line of clothing has been donated, but help is needed to study feasibility and facilitate “inter-cooperation.” Luci is accepting a modest stipend from the Center – for which we must fundraise!



FOTO norma suárez

ABOVE: Pascual-Boing, soft-drink cooperative in Mexico City.

BELOW: TUYO (Trabajadores Unidos Y Organizados), a printing cooperative in Mexico City.



FOTO norma suárez



FOTO norma suárez

Women in Hidalgo planning to form a sewing coop.

## HOME CARE CO-OP

15 home care workers are preparing to form a co-op, if a study of the mostly ex-pat market justifies it. Ian Richard and Laura Gutane, co-op-minded University of Florida students, are doing the study with administrator Beatriz Sucar. The Center's support is overseen by Holly Yasui and Betsy Bowman. Health professional Icinda Siquieros-Darwin will take over in July.



*Women in San Miguel planning to form a caregivers coop meet in the Center for Global Justice patio.*

## A SOLAR STOVE CO-OP?

The Center and Gaia, a local environmental group headed by outreach coordinator Atahualpa Caldera, are considering producing solar cookers and teaching their use. Large parts of Mexico are denuded of wood, making such cookers a viable if slower alternative. Ata and his father Enrique are starting an eco-village nearby. The Center wants to help marry social to environmental sustainability.

## RESEARCH ASSISTANTS

A new kind of volunteer is asking to come and just help our programs and projects along. For 6 weeks Ian and Laura, University of Florida students mentioned above, will focus on the home care market study, with related grant researching. In the fall, University of Connecticut students Katie Gregory and Tara Kurland, also co-op activists, will work with the sewing co-ops for 6 weeks. Welcome aboard — all hands needed in changing the world!



*Laura Gutane and Ian Richard (right side) with Bob Stone, Betsy Bowman and Ousia Whitaker-DeVault.*

## FILM-MAKING

No less than 4 Center-related films are in production. Documentarist Jon Wetterau is editing tapings of conferences, trips and personalities. Norma Suarez and Tom Pierson's co-op tour videos are a potentially powerful organizing tool. Robin Arutt, with Ata Caldera and Yolanda Millan, is documenting what happens to families left behind when a bread-winner goes North. Atahualpa Caldera is editing a "how to start a co-op" interview with experienced co-op organizer Patricio Bravo of Hidalgo.



FOTO norma suárez

*ABOVE: Patricio Bravo in Hidalgo.*

*BELOW: Chocosol, a chocolate cooperative in Oaxaca that uses solar ovens to make their products.*



FOTO norma suárez

## WEB PUBLISHING

Please contribute to our popular **WEBSITE:** [www.globaljusticecenter.org](http://www.globaljusticecenter.org) With new subject and author indexes our large holdings are easily accessed. Our webmaster posts all Center-related research passed by our Publications Committee: on the dialectic between nation and state; on how new enemies are "invented"; and, forthcoming, a lively debate on whether typical use by people from the U.S. of the term "American" entails cultural imperialism. Please submit recent work!

**E-MAIL:** [info@globaljusticecenter.org](mailto:info@globaljusticecenter.org)

## WORKING GROUPS

Authors who met at last year's "Another World is Necessary" conference have finished essays on: nation-state, imperialism and democracy; worker control; and migration. In late July they'll edit results, aiming at bilingual publication.

## NORTH-SOUTH DIALOG ON SOLIDARITY ECONOMICS

What would a worker-occupied and cooperativized printer in Argentina talk about with a worker-owned printer in Montreal, Berkeley or Mexico City? Possibilities: mechanisms that pit them against each other; notions of "another world" that they see themselves as building; joint internet marketing; worker exchanges, etc. The Center, Grassroots Economic Organizing, and Latin American friends are discussing how to set up web exchanges with all postings in both Spanish and English. We need both your contribution to the dialog (under 300 words) and translating and editing skills. [info@globaljusticecenter.org](mailto:info@globaljusticecenter.org)

## NEEDED: GRANT WRITERS

The Center is not kept alive by money. Yet we need it too. Thanks to treasurer Gregory Diamant and donors who regularly re-affirm their solidarity, our nose is above water. But to make more programs self-sustaining, and to respond to pressing needs linked to our mission, we need more than one grant of over \$10,000, renewable for 3-4 years. Can you help?

## JOIN IN CHANGING THE WORLD!

Globalizing capitalism is losing its legitimacy as more alternatives appear. Even the elites are questioning it. The Center is increasingly a hemispheric network of creative opposition linked by a web-mediated solidarity. Thanks to our many members and friends, North and South, our message is eliciting insights into the present anti-human system and commitments to building alternatives to it. **We invite all friends to become active members. We need both your support and your ideas. JOIN TODAY!**

Join and Support the



Yes! I want to join the Center's network. Please send me the members' questionnaire so I can share my strengths with others to help change the world. I understand annual dues are \$1200 Mexican pesos or \$120 US dollars or a proportionate amount within my means.

- Here is a check for annual dues of \_\_\_\_\_, including a U.S. tax deductible donation of \_\_\_\_\_.
- I'll set up an automatic monthly withdrawal of \_\_\_\_\_. Please tell me how.
- I am making a U.S. tax-deductible donation of \_\_\_\_\_ to advance the Center's work.
- I'll pay dues and donate by credit card at [www.globaljusticecenter.org/donate.htm](http://www.globaljusticecenter.org/donate.htm)
- I cannot donate now, but please keep me informed.

**PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY** & mail/deliver this card with your membership dues/donation:

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

AFFILIATION \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS 1 \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS 2 \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE \_\_\_\_\_

POSTAL CODE, COUNTRY \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE / FAX \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

For membership dues in pesos, please make your check out to "Centro para la Justicia Global;" in dollars, to "Center for Global Justice." Membership dues and/or U.S. tax-deductible donations can be made out to "Research Associates Foundation," Center for Global Justice in the memo line.

**IN MEXICO:** Please leave your check or cash in our Border Crossings box, or mail your check to the Center: c/o Border Crossings, Mesones #57, San Miguel de Allende, Gto. C.P. 37700 Mexico.

**FROM THE U.S./CANADA:** please mail your check to Center for Global Justice BC-2323, 9902 Crystal Ct. #107, Laredo, TX 78045.



FOTO linda soberman

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