

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, April 25, 7:30 PM. Monthly Meeting. We meet at the Caltech Y, Tyson House, 505 S. Wilson Ave., Pasadena. (This is just south of the corner with San Pasqual. Signs will be posted.) We will be planning our activities for the coming months. Please join us! Refreshments provided.

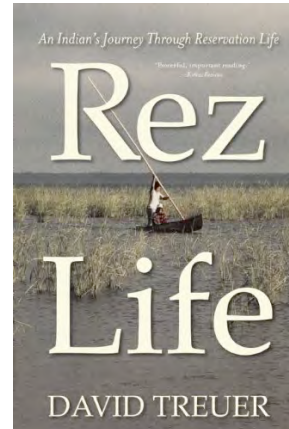
Tuesday, May 14, 7:30 PM. Letter writing meeting at Caltech Athenaeum, corner of Hill and California in Pasadena. This informal gathering is a great way for newcomers to get acquainted with Amnesty!

Sunday, May 19, 6:30 PM. Rights Readers Human Rights Book Discussion group. This month we read "Rez Life" by David Treuer.

RIGHTS READERS

Human Rights Book Discussion Group

Keep up with Rights Readers at <http://rightsreaders.blogspot.com>



Next Rights Readers meeting:

Sunday, May 19, 6:30 pm

Rez Life
by David Treuer

Vroman's Bookstore
695 E. Colorado,
Pasadena

COORDINATOR'S CORNER

[We'll look forward to Kathy's column in the next newsletter. Unfortunately she did not have time to write this month.]

Group 22 will be marching in the Doo Dah Parade this Saturday, April 27. The parade starts at 11 am in East Pasadena and goes along Colorado Boulevard between Altadena Drive and San Gabriel Blvd.

<http://pasadenadoodahparade.info/>

We're dusting off the giant letters we used in the 2005 Doo Dah, "Letters to the Rescue / Write for Human Rights." Here's a photo from 2005.



This year members of the Amnesty student group from Occidental College will be marching along with Group 22. Come watch us in the parade! Look for new parade photos on Group 22's website and facebook page.

BOOK REVIEW

"Novelist Treuer (Little) offers an ambitious, impressionistic study of life on Native American reservations. His blending in of the history of his Ojibwe tribe and his own family results in a nuanced view of personal and tribal identity. It's neither definitive nor a work of full personal disclosure, but it is 'the story of the paradoxically least and most American place in the twenty-first century. Welcome to the Rez.' Whether he's describing the central role of fishing walleye, the region's signature fish; the Ojibwe's treaty right fights; or the timeless method for harvesting wild rice, Treuer paints a picture of a vital if economically strained tribal life, deftly supplying historical context to explain how the Mille Lacs, Red Lake, and White Earth reservations came to be and survive. If the stand-alone chapters don't always flow smoothly into one another, the vignettes — of treaty rights fishing activists; of how casinos have changed economic life on the rez; how his mother, a tribal judge, dispensed justice; how an Ojibwe language teacher ensured the viability of the tribal language for another generation; and most powerfully, how Treuer's grandfather's suicide left the family reeling — bring the world and personalities of the rez to vivid, heartrending life."

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AUTHOR BIO (<http://www.davidtreuer.com>)



David Treuer is an Ojibwe Indian from Leech Lake Reservation in northern Minnesota. He is the recipient of a Pushcart Prize, the 1996 Minnesota Book Award, and fellowships from the NEH, Bush Foundation, and the Guggenheim Foundation. He divides his time between his

home on the Leech Lake Reservation and Minneapolis. He is the author of three novels and a book of criticism. His essays and stories have appeared in *Esquire*, *TriQuarterly*, *The Washington Post*, the *LA Times*, and *Slate.com*. The son of Robert Treuer, an Austrian Jew and holocaust survivor and Margaret Seelye Treuer, a tribal court judge, David Treuer grew up on Leech Lake Reservation. After graduating from high school he attended Princeton University where he wrote two senior theses--one in anthropology and one in creative writing--and where he worked with Toni Morrison, Paul Muldoon, and Joanna Scott. Treuer graduated in 1992 and published his first novel, *Little*, in 1995. He received his PhD in anthropology and published his second novel, *The Hiawatha*, in 1999. His third novel *The Translation of Dr Apelles* and a book of criticism, *Native American Fiction; A User's Manual* appeared in 2006. *The Translation of Dr Apelles* was named a Best Book of the Year by the *Washington Post*, *Time Out*, and *City Pages*.

**GROUP 22 AT THE
PASADENA EARTH FESTIVAL**

by Larry Romans

For Earth Day, our group participated in the Pasadena Earth & Arts Festival, one of our regular community events. It was a great day at Pasadena Memorial Park, and we had the chance to reach out to a nice cross section of local progressively inclined characters.

As usual, we chose an action to highlight with an environmental angle: the case of Yolanda Oqueli, an activist defending the environmental rights of her community of San Jose del Golfo, Guatemala, threatened by the nearby El Tambor gold mine.

She has been the target of numerous death threats, as well as an assassination attempt last June which nearly killed her.

We had two styles of petition concerning Yolanda for President Molina of Guatemala: a version on large sheets of paper for kids to decorate with crayons, markers and stamps, and a more standard version for adults. It was nice to hear a number of parents take the opportunity to start a discussion about environmental and human rights with their children.



Thanks to Joyce for helping to prepare the material, and Paula, Larry, Laura, Ted, Lucas, Stevi and Nikos for tabling!

[And many thanks to Larry!
Special thanks also to Stevi for her photos of this event, which you can see on Group 22's Facebook Page: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Amnesty-International-Pasadena-Group-22/159506047393747>
Ignore the login request and just scroll down until you see the Pasadena Earth Day photo. --Joyce]

**PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE
Gao Zhisheng**

by Joyce Wolf

Group 22's adopted prisoner of conscience Gao Zhisheng was one of the featured cases in the Amnesty Write-a-thon last December. I reported in a previous newsletter that Chinese authorities allowed family members a second prison visit with Gao on 12 January 2013, ten months after

the first visit in March 2012, and I wondered whether the authorities were motivated by an avalanche of Amnesty letters. Look at these numbers from a recently released report and see what you think!

From page 16 of [Letter Writing Marathon 2012: Final report](#),

"While it is difficult to know exactly what led to the prison visit being granted, the huge amount of action generated by the Letter Writing Marathon may have contributed, and has definitely provided a great deal of support and solidarity with his family. **A total of 167,748 actions were taken in 54 countries around the world.** "

Geng He, Gao Zhisheng's wife, sent the following message to AI when she learned the total number of actions for her husband: *"Wow! ... I found it unbelievable when I first saw the huge number; my friends helped me to take a look at this figure. After confirming the figure I have been immersed in this excitement. Thank you!"*

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AC.T30/022/2013/en>

On April 9, shortly before Secretary of State John Kerry visited China, a Congressional subcommittee held a hearing titled "Chen Guangchen and Gao Zhisheng: Human Rights in China." Following are excerpts from remarks that Rep. Christopher Smith (NJ) read into the Congressional Record:

Mr. Speaker, I recently held a hearing in which we listened and learned from brave men and women from China who have been and are at the forefront of advocating for freedom and human rights and against the tyranny and oppression of the state. We sought advice and counsel as to what can--and must--be done by Congress, the President, and the American people, and all people of goodwill worldwide, to mitigate the hate and gross mistreatment meted out by the government of China against its own citizens. We appealed to Beijing--ease up, respect fundamental human rights and the sanctity of human life and honor your commitments and the rule of law.

Ms. Geng He appeared in order to remind us, and the world, of another brave extraordinary hero, her husband Gao Zhisheng. With great love and a broken heart, this remarkable woman has worked unceasingly to secure the freedom of her husband.

... **To President Xi, we will not forget Gao Zhisheng. Not now, not ever. We appeal to you to release him.**

<http://thomas.loc.gov/home/LegislativeData.php?&n=Record>

At this same hearing, AIUSA International Advocacy Director T. Kumar gave testimony regarding Gao Zhisheng and included this message from Geng He to Amnesty activists:

"Following a Letter Writing Marathon organized by Amnesty International at the end of last year and actions from the international community, the family of the Gao Zhisheng was granted a second prison visit on 12 January of this year. It is a small improvement, but it could not be achieved without the international community's concerns and the effort and support from the membership of Amnesty International, for which my family and I feel most grateful. I hope Amnesty International will continue to promote this activity, allowing more people to come to know my husband's situation, until he gains his freedom."

Group 22 member Wen Chen sent an article about a human rights lawyer who fared considerably better than Gao. Wang Quanzhang went to court to defend a Falun Gong practitioner, but ended up in detention himself. His 10-day detention was cut short, however, after lawyers and citizens protested outside the court and detention center. Let's hope this is a start to improving human rights in China!

<http://www.theepochtimes.com/n3/10047-court-releases-rights-lawyer-detained-for-defending-falun-gong>

If you have not already sent birthday greetings to Gao Zhisheng (April 20 is his birthday), maybe you can send one of the beautiful cards printed especially for him by the daughter of Group 22 member Ido. (thank you, Alexa! thank you, Ido!) For our next letter-writing, we'll probably have an action (undoubtedly the first of many) to China's new president Xi Jinping.

DEATH PENALTY NEWS

By Stevi Carroll

Boston Marathon Bombings

The recent bombings at the Boston Marathon remind of us of the tenuous nature of life and security. The trauma and loss experienced by the people maimed and by their family and friends will stay with them for their entire lives. The family and friends of those killed will mourn for years. Because my daughter and son-in-law are both long-distance runners, I an

aware of sorrow, distrust and fear instilled by this bombing. I add my condolences to all involved.

Death Penalty in California

California State Senator Joel Anderson has introduced SB 779 to streamline the carrying out of executions. In addition to the bill, Senator Anderson's Senate Constitutional Amendment 13 would give a way to speed up death penalty reviews by having appellate courts to hear the appeals rather than having them go directly to the state Supreme Court. Another part of this process could be the rebirth of the gas chamber.

The SAFE California campaign has an online petition available at http://org.salsalabs.com/o/1265/p/dia/action/public/?action_KEY=13215.

Bud Welsh

Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, the surviving suspect in the Boston Marathon bombings, has been accused of use of a weapon of mass destruction among other charges. He will be tried in civilian Federal court. Because of this, he has the possibility of the death penalty. This case has caused me to think about Bud Welsh's story.

Bud Welsh's 23-year-old daughter, Julie Marie, was killed in the Murrah Federal Building bombing in Oklahoma City on April 19, 1995. For a while, death was what Bud wished for Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols. Bud realized that hate and desire for revenge were what prompted McVeigh and Nichols to act, and he wanted to invest his grief and anger in a different direction. Seeing McVeigh's father on a news report, Bud was aware of the pain the man carried, a pain like the one he, too, carried. Bud went on to meet Bill McVeigh. Both men cried during this visit.

Recently, I saw an interview with Arn Chorn-Pond, a survivor of the Khmer Rouge and a former child soldier. He said it was when he began to cry that his healing could begin. Perhaps, that was true for Bud Welsh and Bill McVeigh as well.

I have always wondered what we could have learned about the alienation experienced by Timothy McVeigh that led him to commit such a heinous crime had he not been executed.

And now I wonder what we can learn from Dzhokhar Tsarnaev.

Stays of Execution

March

21 Michael Gonzalez Texas

April 2013

23 Borgela Philistin Pennsylvania

24 Elroy Chester Texas

25 Michael Travaglia Pennsylvania

Executions

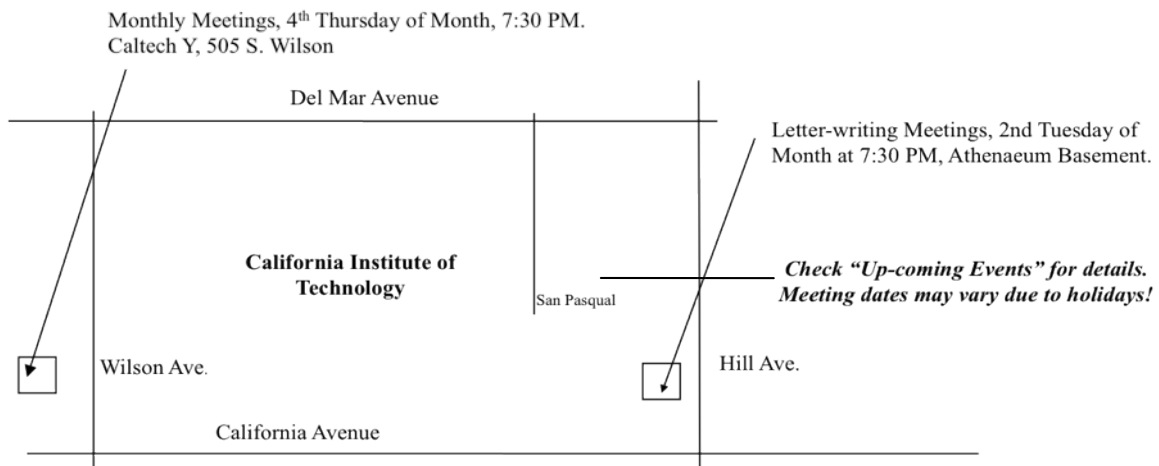
April 2013

9 Ricky Lynn Lewis Texas
1-drug Lethal Injection

10 Larry Mann Florida
3-drug Lethal Injection

16 Ronnie Paul Threadgill Texas
1-drug Lethal Injection

GROUP 22 MONTHLY LETTER COUNT	
UAs	12
POC	6
Get-on-the-Bus Cards	6
Total	24
To add your letters to the total contact lwkamp@gmail.com .	



From the 210 exit on Lake Avenue, head south, turn left on Del Mar
From the 110 continue on Arroyo Parkway north, turn right on California
Street parking is generally available.

Amnesty International Group 22
The Caltech Y
Mail Code C1-128
Pasadena, CA 91125
www.its.caltech.edu/~aigp22/
<http://rightsreaders.blogspot.com>



Amnesty International's mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination, within the context of its work to promote all human rights.