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Thousands in Harlem rally against gun violence

By Jarvis Tyner

More than 2,000 predominantly Black and Latino working people gathered March 21 on Adam Clayton Powell Blvd. in Harlem in a militant protest against gun violence.

Organized by a broad coalition of labor and people's organizations, it was a powerful grassroots protest against the National Rifle Association and a warning to Congress that it must pass strong gun control legislation, including a ban on assault weapons.

George Gresham, president of Local 1199 of the Service Workers, captured the fighting spirit of the rally. In a message to all elected officials, Gresham said, "We are the people; do the right thing and we got your back. Do the wrong thing, we got your job."

MSNBC commentator, the Rev. Al Sharpton, addressing the NRA, declared: "We have the right to bear arms but we do not have the right to kill babies. The second amendment does not give you the right to have guns that can hold 30 rounds. We have to take back our streets here in New York and beyond."

There were signs from "Nurses and Caregivers United to Stop Gun Violence. Other signs included, "Moms demand action to protect our kids," and a contingent of youth wearing t-shirts



emblazoned with "I Am a Peace Movement" and "Youth Against Gun Violence."

Jackie Rowe Adams from Harlem Mothers S.A.V.E spoke with great passion about losing two of her children to gun violence. "I am in pain," she said tearfully. "Put the guns down and pick up the peace sign." There were several mothers who told heartfelt stories of how they lost their sons to gun violence.

There was also Darren Wagner, from Newton,

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Conn. expressing his community's full support to the people of New York in their fight for gun control.

Hazel Dukes, president of New York State's NAACP, spoke and called for the unity of black, brown and white, Jews, Gentiles, Protestants,

Not enough was said about the root causes of violence; the lack of jobs, education, and the presence of drugs.

and Muslims. "We all have to get ready for a real fight."

Shannon Watts, the founder of "Moms Demand Action," a national group of 80,000 advocating strong gun control, talked about her activities.

Michael Mulgrew, president of New York's UFT, told the crowd that his union was divesting from any stocks that have anything to do with guns.

The chair of the rally, the Rev. Jacque De Graff of the Cannan Baptist Church, aroused the crowd as he introduced speakers. He emphasized, as did many other speakers, that it was necessary to keep pushing to pass Gov. Cuomo's gun control bill and that it is necessary to carry the fight to Washington. "We are going to change America, starting right here in Harlem," he declared.

There were many elected officials at the rally including two running for mayor. None were allowed to speak but their names were mentioned, John Liu, the first Chinese American to run for mayor, received the loudest applause.

The department has come under heavy criti-

cism for carrying out a notorious "stop and frisk" program.

Estevan Nembhard, Manhattan organizer for the Communist Party, pointed out that "it is common knowledge in Harlem and in ghettos and barrios across the country; when the unemployment rate and drop-out rate goes up, so does desperation and violence. This rally is very important and will help but not enough was said about the root causes of violence; the lack of jobs, education, the presence of drugs and the absence of a real future for our youth."

Nembhard agreed that "Mayor Bloomberg is doing a good thing placing ads against the anti-gun control politicians across the country." But he took issue with the mayor on a host of what he considers related issues: "His (Bloomberg's) cut backs and policy of economic austerity for the working class, along with 'stop and frisk' and his sanction of brutality and high incarceration for youth instead of jobs and education, will continue to get the same negative results."



Jarvis Tyner writes for Peoplesworld.org.

Marriage equality promises "a more perfect union"

By PW Editorial Board

Monumental. That's how legal experts and human rights activists describe this week's two cases before the Supreme Court on same-sex marriage. Monumental indeed as the court's decisions promise to define the nation, which claims the mantle of democracy. Are all Americans equal regardless of who they love and choose to marry? Or are these inalienable rights of "life, liberty and pursuit of happiness" only for heterosexuals? This daily news website, joins with the majority of Americans who resoundingly say "Yes" to the first question and "No" to the second.

There are more than 1,000 protections and rights - financial, legal and otherwise such as making medical decisions - that go with marriage. Same-sex couples are denied these rights and protections. For working people, marriage equality matters. Like the motto of the labor movement: an injury to one is an injury to all!

The U.S. has a compact with its citizens that guarantees equal rights for all. Yet since its incep-

tion this compact has been a point of fierce class and social struggles to define who is considered a citizen, a point of fierce class and social struggles to define who is considered a citizen. The struggles to end slavery and pass the 13th, 14th and 15th amendments to the Constitution and the struggle for women's suffrage and to pass the 19th amendment are just two often-cited examples. But history is filled with many more from immigration reform to marriage equality.

Gay and lesbian couples have helped to expand democracy, which should be seen as a positive for all people. Yet in that struggle - invested ruling powers are threatened. Long held ideologies, gender and cultural constructs, which help keep those powers ruling, may go the way of the belief in a flat Earth. Because of massive shift in public opinion in favor of marriage equality, the court may rule (narrowly) that both California's Proposition 8 and the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act are unconstitutional. That would be a great victory for democracy.

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“Five day, no way,” postal workers say!

By John Rummel

The chant came loud and clear: “Five day, no way.” At the Post Office here in Detroit, and all across the nation, postal worker unions turned out in huge numbers on Sunday giving notice to the nation’s elected officials that six-day mail delivery is here to stay and that the dismantling of the nation’s postal service will not begin on their watch.

“It’s a manufactured crisis” said Michael Sheridan, president of the South Macomb Letter Carriers Branch 4374, one of the nearly 800 people present at the very lively rally. He explained that over 80 percent of the Postal Service’s red ink the last four years came from being forced to pre-fund retiree health care for 75 years. The extreme pre-funding was mandated by the Postal Accountability and Enhancement act of 2006.

The act requires the Postal Service to pay \$5.5 billion a year into retiree health care, said Sheridan. “We currently have \$46 billion dollars sitting in that fund, unusable until 2016.”

Sandra Laemmel, president of Branch 1 NALC in Detroit, said the Postal Service is the “only organization that has to do that.” We have to pre-fund for people who “aren’t even born yet,” she noted.

She also stated six-day delivery is every “American’s tie to the world,” saying many people do not have internet access and rely on critical Saturday deliveries like medical prescriptions.



and said he was “proud to stand” against Republican efforts to go after the labor movement both in Washington and Lansing.

Peters said we are going to send a “very clear message” that it was wrong for Republicans to turn Michigan into a right-to-work (for less) state. He also said though Governor Snyder initially said right-to-work (for less) was not on his agenda, we are going to let him know “defeating him is number one on our agenda.” Snyder’s term will end in 2014.

Roscoe Woods, president of the American Postal Workers Union, Local 480-481, said the mail unions have been incredibly innovative in trying to save the Postal Service money.

He mentioned 80,000 jobs have been shed through attrition and the unions have agreed to work rule changes.

But Woods said “it’s just never enough. Once you do, it’s always more. There are so many “private forces” out to snatch the work postal employees do, he said.

Postal worker unions gave notice to the nation’s elected officials that six-day mail delivery is here to stay.

Texans fight for Saturday mail

By Jim Lane

Texans recently joined with many others states around the country in supporting the National Association of Letter Carriers in their fight to save Saturday delivery.

Over 200 people rallied at the Dallas main post office recently.

Most were postal workers but a few members of the Central Labor Council, Jobs with Justice, and the Texas Alliance for Retired Americans joined in. They were warmly welcomed and appreciated.

Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe has said publicly that he will end Saturday mail delivery beginning Aug. 5. Congress has not been clear as to whether or not they will prevent this from occurring. They may legislate instead in favor of delivery of certain priority items as an alternative.

On March 16, a leader of the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) announced over KNON radio that he expected layoffs of 20 percent if Donahoe's threats materialize.

One worker at the protest remarked, "Two hundred is a pretty big number for union actions in North Texas."

Local police made sure demonstrators couldn't park in convenient locations and most of the protesters had to park a half mile or so away. Fortunately, the letter carriers union provided shuttle service.

Cars passing by on the Highway 30 service road honked their approval. The entire event was as happy as a picnic, only more fun.

El aroma de los pimientos se hereda de una generación a la siguiente

Por Agenciasinc.es

Una investigación liderada por la Universidad Politécnica de Valencia ha descubierto que la clave del aroma de los pimientos reside en la "herencia" de los compuestos volátiles, componentes fundamentales en la percepción organoléptica del consumidor. Los investigadores han demostrado, por primera vez, que el perfil aromático de los pimientos se transmite de "padres a hijos". Los resultados de este trabajo se publican en la revista *Scientia Horticulturae*.

Este estudio es continuación de uno previo, en el que los investigadores analizaron hasta quince variedades de pimiento común (*Capsicum annuum*) y dos especies relacionadas (*C. chinense* y *C. frutescens*), con perfiles aromáticos muy diversos, estudiando con detalle la variabilidad y cantidad de compuestos volátiles presentes en cada uno de ellos. Los resultados fueron de gran trascendencia para el sector, ya que descubrieron más de 150 compuestos volátiles desconocidos hasta ese momento en el pimiento.

"Ahora, este trabajo ha permitido constatar un claro efecto parental en la composición de volátiles en los pimientos. De este modo, si cruzamos una variedad con un perfil de compuestos volátiles determinado, por ejemplo fundamentalmente frutal, con otra variedad dotada de un perfil complementario, el híbrido final aglutinará los patrones sensoriales de ambos padres", explica Adrián Rodríguez-Burruezo, investigador del Instituto de Conservación y Me-

jora de la Agrodiversidad Valenciana y responsable de esta línea de investigación.

En su trabajo, los investigadores han constatado que esta herencia se cumple tanto en fruto maduro como en fruto verde, los dos estados comerciales de esta hortaliza.

Rodríguez-Burruezo señala que este hallazgo resulta fundamental para el campo de la mejora genética, ya que desvela una de las claves para conseguir un producto que responda a las necesidades exactas que requiera un determinado sector.

"Imaginemos, por ejemplo, que queremos conseguir un pimiento verde, de un tamaño determinado y con un intenso aroma herbáceo. La forma de proceder consistiría en cruzar dos padres con frutos que, en estado inmaduro, son ricos en compuestos volátiles responsables de aromas herbáceos, como aldehídos y compuestos sulfurados (pirazinas del pimiento), a la vez que complementarios. Este trabajo demuestra que cruzando esos perfiles complementarios sería posible obtener el producto final deseado. Si no a la primera, en la forma del híbrido, más adelante mediante un programa de mejora genética hacia la forma de fruto deseada, seleccionando los individuos con la composición más adecuada de volátiles", afirma Rodríguez-Burruezo.

En este estudio, los investigadores han trabajado con pimientos del piquillo, guindillas y chiles serranos, pertenecientes a *C. annuum*, y habanero y aji dulce, de *C. chinense*, entre otros.