



The NorthStar Center

January 2010 Newsletter

Building A Culture Of Resistance Year 3 – Taking Root In 2009

The NorthStar Center is a radical community space and events venue committed to social justice and building a culture of resistance

In February's Issue:

- Report-Back on the NorthStar Retreat
- The U.S. Social Forum
- Lansing's Lesbian Herstory
- And More!

2009 was a wild year in Lansing, in Michigan and around the Globe. Fortunately for NorthStar, amidst all the ruckus our third year of existence was about taking root.

The NorthStar Collective has a healthy mix of members. Our experiences with the No Human Is Illegal Network have built relationships that we value and see as very important.

Our support for and collaboration with projects like the Lansing Workers' Center and Michigan Peoples Action are exciting and are the building blocks of long term organizing and transformative change. Each of these elements of this crazy little project called NorthStar act as our own root system. They root us to this community and this place of struggle. They grow deeper so that we can be healthier, more vibrant. The different directions that they take, the twists & turns, bumps & bruises all make building a culture of resistance a reality of daily life. We still have a lot of growing to do, but believe that our roots are up to the challenge. We look forward to knowing you and organizing alongside you in 2010, and look forward to a new year full of possibilities.



Solidarity,

- The NorthStar Collective

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NorthStar: A Year In Review

January 2009

NorthStar Members participated in nationwide pickets of Bank of America in Support of the Workers at Republic Windows in Chicago. The workers had occupied their factory after being let go without severance pay or notice.

NorthStar also represented at the North American Auto show protests in support of auto-workers who are organizing to fight back and win.

February 2009

Waltz With Bashir: Presented by NorthStar, this film documents the horrors of the 1982 war in Lebanon & the massacre of Palestinians in refugee camps. It is a disturbing film that still manages to offer the hope of someday healing from the ravages of war.

Occupied Palestine: Presented by Michael Vicente Perez. We talked in depth of the history of the Palestinian/Israeli conflict and discussed the Israeli siege on Gaza that took place in December 2008 and January 2009. This event was well attended and for many was their first in-depth discussion about Palestine.

Worker Organizing at Starbucks: Angel & Eric from Minneapolis, Minnesota and Cole from Grand Rapids, Michigan spoke about their efforts to organize unions at Starbucks with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). Their experiences highlighted the needs and possibilities of alternative models for organizing our workplaces.



Auto-show Protest



Presentation on Occupied Palestine



Bank of America Protest - In Support of Republic Windows Occupation



NorthStar: A Year In Review

The No Human Is Illegal Network (NHIIN)

During 2009, NorthStar was honored to participate in the No Human Is Illegal Network. The Network provided direct aid to families affected by the Immigration raids of November 2008 that resulted in the arrest of 65 people. Among other things the network worked on, it began a campaign to make Lansing a Sanctuary City. Having Sanctuary City status means that Lansing would agree not to participate in Federal Immigration Enforcement and that Lansing would not accept funds from the Department of Homeland Security to do Immigration Enforcement. For this to be implemented, the city council must pass a Sanctuary City Resolution, which has been drafted by the No Human Is Illegal Network. The Sanctuary City campaign has slowed in recent months but we are hopeful that it can still be realized. The network has been an important tool for building relationships beyond what is familiar and what is easy, and has challenged all involved to settle in for the long struggle for Immigrant rights

Networking with other activists

NorthStar Folks met with Detroit activists about the disconnect between organizing efforts in Lansing and Detroit. NorthStar is working with people in Detroit to kick of their own radical space there in the near future and revive communication throughout the great mitten state. We have created a new statewide listserve to keep each other updated and connected. If you'd like to be on this listserve email therebelliousmitten@googlegroups.com with "subscribe" in the subject line.



StarBucks Workers Union Presentation



Presentation on The Case of Efren Paredes



Just Seeds: The Role of Art In Social Movements



NorthStar: A Year In Review



Michigan Workers Centers In Action Presentation



Just Seeds: Art In Social Movements Presentation

Justseeds:

The Role of Art In Social Movements

This was an excellent presentation by the justseeds collective. They brought along much of their beautiful work and talked about the importance of art to people's struggles.

May Day March & Fiesta

May Day is the International Workers' Day and honors the Haymarket Martyr's of 1886. Recently May Day has emerged as a day of struggle for immigrant rights in the U.S. Despite the rain this year, there was a march to the capital building and then back to NorthStar for a fiesta. Thanks to MSU Movimiento Estudiantil Chicanos de Aztlan for organizing the March.

Workers' Centers In Action:

Panel Discussion including members of Centro Obrero de Detroit & the Community Workers' Center of Kalamazoo NorthStar hosted a fruitful discussion with two Michigan workers centers on May 27th, 2009. This discussion set the stage for the new Lansing Workers' Center that is housed at the NorthStar Center and had its grand opening on Labor Day of 2009.



NorthStar: A Year In Review

“The Take”: Outdoor Movie

On June 9th we screened our first outdoor movie of the summer. “The Take” is a documentary that takes place in the wake of Argentina’s economic collapse in 2001. This film follows unemployed auto-parts workers as they occupy their abandoned factory and turn it into a worker-run cooperative.

NorthStar Monthly Potlucks

During the summer, NorthStar hosted monthly potlucks that brought together members of the community, activists, and neighbors to eat together. We were lucky enough to be able to eat and cook from the NorthStar garden for these potlucks.

Punk Rock NorthStar Fundraiser

On June 19th, John Delano, a local musician, put together a lineup of bands to play at a NorthStar fundraiser. The event was a lot of fun, well attended, and a successful fundraiser. Thanks to John for putting this together!

In June, Michigan People’s Action started holding their weekly meetings at the NorthStar Center. This has been an important relationship and is a primary reason for the opening of the Lansing Workers Center. NorthStar looks forward to our continued support for and collaboration with Michigan People’s Action.



Stencil-Making Workshop



*MayDay March for Immigrant
& Workers’ Rights*



NorthStar Karaoke Fundraiser



NorthStar: A Year In Review

In Memoriam: NorthStar Remember Nadia Torres and Her Children

We were honored to get to know Nadia through her dedicated organizing efforts with the No Human is Illegal Network. Nadia and her two children, Fernando, and Fernanda, were killed as a result of an arson in their home. It is a tragic and unexpected loss and members of NorthStar wish to honor and remember Nadia, her children and her work in the No Human Is Illegal Network. Nadia Torres—Presente!



Honoring the Life of Nadia Torres & Her Children



NorthStar Karaoke Fundraiser



NorthStar Summer Potluck Series



NorthStar: A Year In Review

A Night of Karaoke: NorthStar Center Fundraiser

In mid-July, Members and supporters came together for a night of karaoke fun to celebrate and help raise some money for NorthStar. We all had a great time. Thanks to everyone who took part!

“Kicking It” Outdoor Movie

On July 16th, the NorthStar Center and Michigan People’s Action co-sponsored a documentary about the Homeless World Cup.

Silk Screen Workshop: Popular Education Series

Back by popular demand, NorthStar sponsored a silk screen workshop on July 25th. This workshop went over all the techniques and materials need to make their own prints. Folks also got a chance to use pre-made designs to make their own T-shirts and posters.

Cooking Class and Potluck

We combined our popular education series and our monthly potluck in July. Due to the large volume of tomatoes, tomatillos, and basil in our NorthStar Garden our cooking class was able to make heaps of salsa and pesto for the potluck. Everyone enjoyed the fresh produce and the lively spirit.



NorthStar Summer Potluck Series



No More Deaths Presentation



No More Deaths Presentation



NorthStar: A Year In Review

Lansing Workers' Center Gains Momentum

In August, 2009, NorthStar announced the collaboration with Michigan Peoples Action (MPA) in launching a workers' center housed out of NorthStar. This collaboration grew from the seeds of the Spring Michigan Workers' Center Discussion.

NorthStar Interns

NorthStar was lucky to have two interns this summer. Griselda and Garrett did archiving, library, facilitation, and outreach work. We appreciated all the work that they did and hope to have interns in the future.

9/7/09 Lansing Workers' Center Opens on Labor Day In collaboration with local labor activists and Michigan People's Action, the NorthStar Center started housing the Lansing Workers' Center on September 7, 2009. The LWS supports workers in fighting for back wages and respect on the job. The Lansing Workers' Center meets every Tuesday at 7pm at the NorthStar Center.

9/19/09 Solidarity and Defense Reading Group:

Discussion of the global justice movement in preparation for crew headed to the G20 Protest in Pittsburgh

9/23/09 Presentation by fired TRW Auto Parts Worker from Mexico

9/25/09 Hip Hop show featuring Testament, an artist from London, Ontario. Check out his music at www.myspace.com/testamenthiphop

9/30/09 Screening of rare labor movement documentary called *The Inheritance*



The Take: Outdoor Movie Screening



NorthStar Folks at the G-20 Protests



LANSING WORKER'S CENTER



NorthStar: A Year In Review



Protest at the G-20 in Pittsburgh



The Beehive Design Collective: The True Cost of Coal

**No More Deaths – No Mas Muertes
Presentation and Report-Back**

Sarah McDonald, former Lansing resident and current San Francisco resident, recently volunteered on the border with no More Deaths. On Sunday, October 4th she spoke about her experiences there and what you can do to support the work being done there. For more information go to www.nomoredeaths.org

**Beehive Design Collective presents: The
True Cost of Coal: Mountaintop
Removal and the Fight for Our Future**

The bees presented on Monday, October 26th at the Basement 414 in a collaborative event with Basement 414, Global Exchange, Great Issues – MSU, and the NorthStar Center.

Approximately 100 people came out to see and hear members of the Beehive Design Collective tell the story of Mountaintop Removal and its affect on the creatures and ecosystem of Appalachia and on the broader world.

For more info go to www.beehivecollective.org

**Michigan Peoples Action Update
Stall Tactics and Empty Promises
Continue in Oliver Towers Debate**

Oliver Towers is 100-unit complex that has been vacant since a fire in 2000. In 2007 a coalition of 22 churches formed to advocate for turning Oliver Towers into housing for the homeless. Michigan Peoples Action continues to fight for Oliver Towers to be turned into housing.



NorthStar: A Year In Review

Demonstrations Against the G20 Summit in Pittsburgh

Thousands of people came to Pittsburgh to protest the G20 summit that took place from September 24-25, 2009. The G20 is a forum of the 20 largest world economic powers and it convenes annually to discuss issues of free trade and to make decisions about the international financial system without listening to the input of the other 172 nations of the world.



Beehive Design Collective: The true cost of coal

Sanctuary City Campaign & The No Human is Illegal Network

The No Human is Illegal Network is working on a campaign to make Lansing, Michigan a Sanctuary City. This means that the city of Lansing and its police officers would not participate in immigration enforcement. The city and its police department would not accept money from the federal government under the 287g program, which currently subcontracts immigration enforcement to local municipalities.



Great Picture of the Just Seeds: Role of Art In Social Movements Event

Conference on Democracy and Direct Action: Self Determination, Self Reliance and Organizing

In early November, NorthStar Center presented “Building a Culture of Resistance: The Importance of Radical Space in Bottom-Up Community Organizing” at this conference. The conference was organized by the Xicano Development Center.



NorthStar's New Sign



NorthStar: A Year In Review

“Libertarias”: Film Screening and Political Discussion

On November 14th, people met at NorthStar Center to screen “Libertarias” a film set in the 1930’s during the Spanish Revolution and Spanish Civil War. The film focuses on the Mujeres Libres, an anarchist womens’ organization, and their struggle to be treated as equals in society and by their male comrades. Hosted by the Worker Solidarity Alliance & Solidarity and Defense



NorthStar Alternative Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving Rehearsal: Potluck and Fundraiser for NorthStar

On November 20th, members of NorthStar hosted a potluck and fundraiser at their house to celebrate our community and to ‘rehearse’ for the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday. The fundraiser honored major NorthStar donors and raised funds for NorthStar. Thanks to everyone who attended and donated!



The State Of The Labor Movement Hosted By the Lansing Workers Center

The Labor Movement: A Discussion & Reflection

On November 17th, the Lansing Workers’ Center hosted a frank discussion on the state of the Labor Movement at the NorthStar Center. The Lansing Workers’ Center meets every Tuesday at 7pm at the NorthStar Center.



Michigan Peoples Action Picket Against Homelessness



What Is NorthStar?

The NorthStar Center is a radical community space and events venue committed to social justice and building a culture of resistance.

Want to know more?

Drop us a line at northstarcenter@gmail.com or call 517.371.2001

NorthStar Collective Meetings
Every Wednesday
5:30pm
Everyone Is Welcome

NorthStar Hours
Monday-Thursday
4pm – 8pm
Or by appt.

NorthStar Email List

If you would like to join the NorthStar Announcements email list, drop an email to northstarcenter@gmail.com with subscribe in the subject line

I will support the

NorthStar Center

Name & Organization: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number & Email: _____

With a monthly pledge of

_____ \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$Other Amount

One-time donations are more than gladly accepted. Checks can be made out to NorthStar Center. Please send all mail to: NorthStar Center P.O. Box 4794 E. Lansing, MI 48826, and not to our street address.

Thank you for your solidarity and support.

The NorthStar Center - 106 Lathrop St. Lansing, MI 48912
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