

Greetings!

What's Worth Fighting For?



Our Future. Our Earth. Our Democracy. There are many things worth fighting for, but first I want to say that I use the word *fighting* to convey a sense of urgency, determination and commitment to take *non-violent* action for a cause. I am particularly focussed now on the cause of saving our democracy and our freedoms embedded in the Constitution.

It is worth fighting for our many freedoms, like the freedom to vote, freedom to love whom you want, freedom to start a family when and if you want, freedom to be safe from gun violence, freedom to read what you want, freedom to peacefully dissent. These are just some of the freedoms that Donald Trump and right wing GOP extremists want to take away. As this article from the Editorial Board of the *NYTimes* says: "Re-electing Mr. Trump would present serious dangers to our Republic and to the world. Read "[This Election Year is Unlike Any Other.](#)" We must also keep in mind that voting for a third party candidate is a vote for Mr. Trump.

The topic for this newsletter is inspired by a recent post by Jessica Craven about her political resolutions for the new year. Excerpts and full text in [my monthly column.](#)



Stories, insights and action for a world that works for all of us

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Justice is what love looks like in public.

Jim Hightower

~ ~ ~

Favorite Resources

[Future Crunch](#)

[Reasons to be](#)

[Cheerful](#)

[Chop Wood, Carry](#)

[Water](#)

[350.org](#)

[Climate Reality](#)

[Project](#)

[Local Futures](#)

[Desert Rose Press](#)

[VirginiaMudd.com](#)

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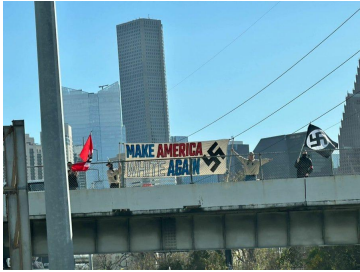
Being aware and taking action

Guardrails of Democracy

"Every American who is taking action to defend democracy is like Ruby Freeman and Shaye Moss." Freeman and Moss, you may



remember, were election workers in Georgia during the presidential election of 2020. They stood their ground to protect free and fair elections despite threats to their lives and ruined reputations. They were vindicated as they successfully sued Rudy Giuliani for defamation. As Robert Hubbell says, "We will never know which letter, text, door knock, or donation will become a tipping point. But some of them surely will. Indeed, because a tipping point always sits atop every action that preceded it, *every* letter, text, door knock, or donation contributes to the tipping point. Like Ruby Freeman and Shaye Moss, we are part of the guardrails of democracy." Read Jay Kuo's ["Trumpism and the Rise of Political Threats and Violence."](#)



What's Fascism? "13 New Year's Resolutions for Saving Democracy"

In this article the author, Steve Erickson, briefly discusses some basics we need to understand in order to save our democracy. One is to accurately describe what is threatening us: fascism. "Trump and his most

devout followers in Congress and the country aren't 'extreme conservatives.' They're not 'autocrats,' they're not 'right-wing.' They're fascists. I note this as someone coming not from a radical left-wing background but rather raised a Republican, and while I haven't been that for a while, I still have a certain respect for classic, conscientious conservatism. Trumpism checks off every fascist box: a cult of personality; rootedness in white male Christian supremacy; exaltation of power and strength not just over all other values but in lieu of them; calculated victimization of the powerless; a sense of self-martyrdom; impulses of violence stoked rather than suppressed; and more than anything else a contempt for and hostility to the notion of an empirical fact-based truth that's valuable by virtue of being true. An American fascism like we've never seen before is at hand and somewhere between a quarter and a third of the country is in its thrall. It needs to be engaged for what it is." [Read Erickson's article here.](#) (Photo taken in Houston, Texas, January 14, 2024)



Action Sites for Climate and Democracy

Given the threats to our democracy and our Earth, I am leaving this resource guide in until the election in November. Everyone is needed!

Cimate Action

[100 Things You Can Do to Help in the Climate Crisis](#)

[15 Actions to Make a Difference](#)

Protect Our Democracy

[Chop Wood, Carry Water](#): Provides daily actions for our democracy.

[thecivicscenter.org](#) : Mobilizing the youth vote in America.

[civicinfluencers.org](#): Also working to register young voters.

[vote.org](#): Everything you need to know to vote.

[steady.substack.com](#): Dan Rather's excellent commentary on current affairs.

[RobertHubbell.substack.com](#): Reflections on and summary of today's news.

[guides.vote](#): Non-partisan guide to how candidates stand on issues.

[commoncause.org](#): An organization working for all aspects of democracy.

[votefwd.org](#): Write letters to encourage folks to vote.

[postcardstovoters.org](#): Here you can write postcards to encourage voters.

[citizen.org](#): Public Citizen is another organization working for democracy.

[statesproject.org](#): A pro-democracy organization working at the state level.

[VoteRiders](#) will tell you what you need to know in order to ensure you can vote.

Good News & a poem



Deconstruct, Not Demolish

More than 600 million tons of debris from the

construction and demolition industry (known as C&D for short) was generated in the United States in 2018 alone. In recent decades, there's been a growing movement towards deconstruction instead of demolition. Rather than flattening an old building, deconstruction opts to carefully disassemble a building instead, saving what's salvageable from the landfill for reuse. This is exactly the mission of Minneapolis' The Birch Group demolition company and Scrapbox Salvage reuse store. "It's all a matter of, instead of filling our landfills, getting materials back on the market to be resold. [Read more here.](#)



The Power of Sewage Heat

Since 2010, an innovative energy program in Vancouver's False Creek has quietly transformed the city's energy landscape. This novel technology harnesses the latent heat in sewage effluent, converting it into a renewable heat source for nearly 6,000 apartments. The plant manager says, "There's a lot of heat in the world that we just throw away. There's enough heat in the sewerage system to literally heat up neighborhoods." [Read more here.](#)



Praise Wet Snow

Praise wet snow falling early.
Praise the shadow my neighbor's chimney casts on the tile roof even this gray October day that should, they say, have been golden.
Praise the invisible sun burning beyond the white cold sky, giving us light and the chimney's shadow.

Praise god or the gods, the unknown, that which imagined us, which stays our hand, our murderous hand, and gives us still, in the shadow of death, our daily life, and the dream still of goodwill, of peace on earth.

Praise flow and change, night and the pulse of day.

Denise Levertov, 1923 – 1997



Wisdom for Our Time



I think it's important that every institution in this country, every American, take the responsibility of upholding democracy seriously. And everyone needs to be doing everything that they can to ensure that a) Donald Trump does not succeed and b) the MAGA movement is extinguished. —Michael Fanone

(Michael Fanone was a Capitol Police Officer on January 6, 2021 when insurrectionists beat and tasered him, causing a heart attack, brain injuries and PTSD.)



This exuberant creature is a Snow Leopard.

One can only imagine what's on its mind!

[Here are twenty-eight more captivating photos](#)

*May the month of February find you warm
and energized for the new year's projects.*

Virginia / Gibi



My Column

Read an excerpt from
Jessica Craven's "New
Year's Political
Resolutions for Saving
Our Democracy."

