

# MUTUAL AID MONTHLY

A Production of Des Moines Mutual Aid

May Day 2024



## Des Moines Third Annual May Day Celebration

*Local radicals eat pigs and light shit on fire*

Comrade Kerosene

The Des Moines May Day celebration took place on April 28th, 2024. Multiple area organizations came together to celebrate and mourn the Haymarket Martyrs. Members of the Des Moines Black Liberation Movement, Democratic Socialists of America, Teamsters Local 90, Party for Socialism and Liberation, the Industrial Workers of the World, and Des Moines Mutual Aid took part in the event, along with their families and members of the public.

The Third Annual May Day gathering and potluck took place under a light rainstorm, but was nevertheless the best-attended Mayday event so far. The organizations gave speeches and distributed literature which advocated not participating in the electoral process, bailing out prisoners, serving the people, unionizing workplaces, and supporting the cause of the Palestinian people. As in previous years, the gathering was not ideologically specific and was a display of left-wing ecumenicism and solidarity.

We gather on the first of May every year to honor the memory of the Haymarket Martyrs. On May 1, 1886 a rally in support of the eight-hour day in Haymarket Square in Chicago was attacked by police. The crowd responded by throwing a bomb at the line of police, killing seven pigs. Eight anarchist and communist organizers were charged and four were executed by the state in 1887 for their alleged participation in the bomb-throwing, despite a lack of evidence most were even there. Labor unions the world over celebrate Labor Day or International Worker's Day on May 1: only in the United States is Labor Day celebrated in September, an attempt to sever the labor movement from its radical roots. Our gathering on May Day every year is an attempt to counter this split; to honor the past and carry its legacy into the present.

## COVID Mitigation Steps Remain an Effective Way to Protect Our Community

Comrade Covid Cautious

With the ongoing pandemic becoming a mass-disabling event due to its effects on the respiratory system, other organs, and its HIV-like immuno-suppressant effects, COVID mitigation is vital protection for everyone. Even in asymptomatic infections of healthy immune systems, COVID has compounding severity with each reinfection. The danger to community members with disabilities and weakened immune systems cannot be overstated and there is no true movement for justice without our disabled comrades.

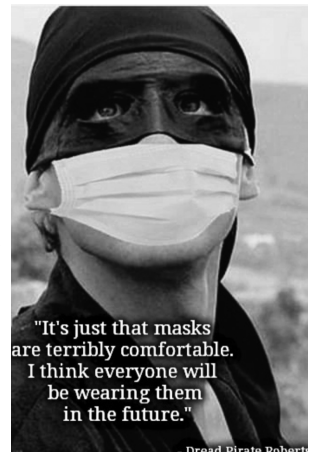
Wearing N95 masks helps prevent spread of all airborne pathogens and is a valuable tactic to fight the prevalence of surveillance culture. Nasal sprays like "Covixyl" may also be effective in protecting individuals from infection by coating cells to prevent viral attachment.

Using higher-rated filters in commercial HVAC and replacing filters regularly improves air quality. Recirculating filtered air reduces particles that carry pathogens and air purifiers throughout a space can help. A "Corsi-Rosenthal Box" is an effective DIY air purifier made from a box fan, cardboard, duct tape, and four filters.

Having events outdoors also prevents spread by allowing more air flow and people to spread out more. If it's crowded outdoors, masking remains an important precaution.

Frequent and regular PCR tests, which are more reliable than instant tests, can help with early or asymptomatic detection allowing individuals to quarantine to avoid spreading COVID. The Polk County Health Department has free PCR tests and a PCR test dropbox. Tests can also be mailed according to the included instructions.

It's impossible to apply every step perfectly all of the time. Every layer has a multiplicative effect for our community against COVID and all airborne pathogens.



- Dread Pirate Robert



## LEGAL DEPARTMENT

*A City For Everyone\**

\*actually just cops and landlords

### **Shitty Legal's Law is a Sham**

*Our commitment must be revolutionary love.*

J.

Last month, our community members huddled around a phone in the early spring chill to defend ourselves and our houseless neighbors against the city's vicious cruelty and unjust evictions.

We attended a sham phone hearing instigated by the pigs and clowns at the Des Moines City Legal Department (hereafter, Shitty Legal). While the judge seemed morally conflicted, he ultimately threw up his hands and pretended there was nothing he could do to stop the evictions.

As was expected, Shitty Legal defended their poorly-communicated eviction notices, backtracking on promises that certain encampments would be safe zones for those in need of shelter, warmth, and safety. They did so while pledging their allegiance to law and order and claiming legal consistency.

I will not dispute Shitty Legal's commitment to capitalist law and order. In the eviction hearings they've carried out over the years, they've actually demonstrated a very consistent commitment to the monstrous laws they are paid six-figure salaries to defend.

Our enemies, defenders of property and policing who hoard political power for themselves, are clearly and consistently committed to dis-ordered law. They are committed to wealth for themselves and their landlord friends, no matter who or what might be bulldozed in the process.

So, in response to Shitty Legal, our commitments must be equally consistent. We must be consistently committed to revolutionary love and consistently committed to community, through court support at evil hearings like these, through mutual aid, through radical care, and through community defense.

When they choose power for themselves, we must choose each other and build power for a better future.

This flyer is a production of Des Moines Mutual Aid, which is a local network of anarchists, communists, and socialists building community autonomy from capitalism and the state. Below are our points of unity - basically, the political and social outlook which binds us together.

**o. We believe in working shoulder to shoulder and standing in solidarity with all oppressed communities.** We ourselves are oppressed, and our mutual aid work is a fight for our collective liberation. We do not believe in a top-down model of charity. Instead, we contrast our efforts at horizontal mutual aid, the fostering of mutually beneficial relationships and communities, to dehumanizing and colonizing charity.

**1. We believe in community autonomy.** We believe that the communities we live and organize in have been largely excluded from state social services, but intensely surveilled and policed by the state repressive apparatus. Capitalism is fundamentally unable to meet people's needs. We want to build self-sustaining communities that are independent of the capitalist state, both materially and ideologically, and can resist its repression.

**2. We are police and prison abolitionists.** Abolition and the mutual aid that we practice are inextricably linked. We don't rely on capitalist institutions or the police to do our work. We believe in building strong and resilient communities which make police obsolete, including community systems of accountability and crisis intervention.

**3. We work to raise the political consciousness of our communities.** Part of political education is connecting people's lived experiences to a broader political perspective. Another component is working to ensure that people can meet their basic needs. It is difficult to organize for future liberation when someone is entrenched in day-to-day struggle.

**4. We have open disagreements with each other about ideas and practices.** We believe there is no formula for resolving our ideological differences other than working towards our common aims, engaging with each other in a comradely manner, and respecting one another, whether or not we can hash out disagreements in the process.

If you want to get involved, let a collective member know. For more information, including how to donate, visit [iowamutualaid.org](http://iowamutualaid.org).