

by Sue Keller

On Thursday, May 21, George W. Bush, the "Connecticut Cowboy," came to the small town of Artesia NM, pop. approx. 10-11,000 people. This is an oil town run by ultra-conservative Republicans and the Christian right as is the rest of the region. Multi-millionaire oilman Mack Chase, owner and president of Mack Energy Corp., philanthropist and local hero did, in his capacity as founder of the Chase Foundation, invite (or hire?) Bush to attend the Artesia HS Class of 2009 commencement exercise to present the Mack Chase scholarships.

I contacted as many people as I could and alerted the local Democratic Club but received no response. I painted some phrases of protest on my car windows and drove around town all week, visibly carrying the message about 6 hrs a day. One man followed me in his pickup, tailgating me as I led him in circles on one of my drives.

The day of the commencement I parked near the entrance to the high school so my car window messages were visible. I was pleasantly surprised when a small band of children with their own handmade protest signs all showed up. They were all unknown to me but I invited them to join me and we all delivered the message.

The point is this: One female senior of frail health and a handful of Latino kids carried joined together to carry the nation's torch of outrage at the offense of hosting the titular head of the real "Axis of Evil!"