



Merrimack Valley People For Peace

Serving the communities of the Merrimack Valley

Merrimack Valley People for Peace, Inc. works for a sustainable future for all life on our planet. Our members commit themselves to the interrelated activities of education for peace and justice, the prevention of war, an end to arms sales, the abolition of nuclear weapons, economic diversification, and protection of the environment.

June 2004

Merrimack Valley People for Peace joins the United Nations and peacemakers around the world in proclaiming the years 2001-2010 to be the "International Decade for the Culture of Peace."

GOOD NEWS

Groton Civil Liberties Article PASSED at Town Meeting May 10: Groton joins the other 33 cities and towns in MA in supporting civil liberties and working to repeal portions of the USA PATRIOT Act. Visit the Bill of Rights Defense Committee website, <http://www.bordc.org> for more information on the future of this important work. Four States and 322 Local Governments in the US with a total population of 51,475,044 have passed resolutions. The other towns and cities in MA that have passed Civil Liberties Resolutions, Ordinances and Ballot Initiatives are, starting with the most recent towns: Swampscott, Weston. Chatham, Heath, Buckland, Dennis, Littleton, Colrain, Concord, Carlisle, Charlemont, Marblehead, Chilmark, Tisbury, Truro, Sudbury, Oak Bluffs, West Tisbury, Conway, Lexington, Acton, Manchester-by-the-Sea, Duxbury, Somerville, Aquinnah, Peabody North Adams, Brewster, Pittsfield, Newton, Ashfield, Arlington, Brookline, Wendell, Shutesbury, Orleans, Eastham, Wellfleet, Provincetown, Lincoln, Cambridge, Northampton, Leverett, and Amherst.

Fahrenheit 9/11 directed by Michael Moore, won the prestigious prize, the Palme d'Or (the Golden Palm) at the Cannes Film Festival last month. It was the first documentary to win the top prize since Jacques Cousteau's *The Silent World* in 1956. The film received a 15-minute standing ovation when it was screened. The release date in the U.S. is June 25. The well known film, "Bowling for Columbine", was also produced by Moore.

Brookline, MA PeaceWorks passed a successful referendum question asking if US tax dollars should be spent on military aid to Colombia or on healthcare here in the US. More than 6000 people in Brookline voted for healthcare.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday, June 25, 8pm Tommy Sands First Church in Ipswich, 1 Meeting House Green. One of Ireland's best, Tommy Sands, along with his acoustic guitar, will sing. This is a major concert for Peace. Suggested prices for tickets are \$10, general admission and \$5 for seniors and children. The Tommy Sands web page tells it all: www.tommysands.com

For more information call (978) 356-9395

Saturday, June 26, 1pm Rally and March, Copley Square Boston. Rally to Bring the Troops Home Now. No more deaths, no more torture, no more lies, no more billions for war. The June 30th "handover" in Iraq is one more lie! Sponsored by United for Justice with Peace. 617-491-4857 www.justicewithpeace.org

Saturday, June 26, 10am-6pm. The Greater Lawrence Community Boating Program offers kids a way to spend their summer days in a fun, healthy way, at an extremely affordable rate for their families. They learn how to sail, while learning about cooperation, responsibility and fair

MVPP Monthly Meeting – North Parish Church – Tuesday, June 22, 7:30 PM Annual Meeting: June 18, 6:30
<http://www.merrimackvalleypeopleforpeace.org> Printed on recycled paper

play. Please join them for this one-day community service project, where they will: Paint areas in dire need of a facelift, repair picnic tables, wash boats, clean up neglected parts of the building. Call 978-691-8675 for directions.

Saturday, June 26 nonviolence training Amy Antonucci of Seacoast Peace Response and Sean Donahue formerly of NH Peace Action are offering a nonviolence training in either Portsmouth or Dover. The training would be most of the day and would delve into: what is nonviolence?, affinity groups, group process & decision making, legal issues, etc. Talking about and role- plays dealing with hecklers, large protest situations and other volatile situations will be central. If you are thinking of going to the DNC and/or RNC protests, this training would be particularly timely. Nonviolence skills are incredibly helpful in many situations, however, even non-protest related! Please contact Amy at 603-750-7506; amyla44@juno.com

Tuesday, July 6, 7 pm Film: "Palestine is Still the Issue" by John Pilger at the UU Church, Portsmouth. In a series of extraordinary interviews with both Palestinians and Israelis, Pilger weaves together the issue of Palestine. "The fate and struggle of the Palestinians," says Pilger, "are not just critical to the overdue recognition of their basic human rights, but are also central to whether the region and the wider world are plunged into war." For more information contact Amy Antonucci at 603-750-7506. amyla44@juno.com.

July 22-24 Veterans For Peace National Convention "We the People: Defeating Militarism and the Politics of Fear". Opening Ceremony, Thursday, July 22, 9:30am, Boston Common, Gazebo near corner of Tremont and Boylston, across from Emerson College. The ceremony will be led by Jim Peters, Wampanoag Nation, Massachusetts Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Monks from the first Peace Pagoda in North America, Leverett, Massachusetts will also welcome VFP, joined by a Veterans Walk led by the Wally Nelson Chapter of VFP. Thursday evening, Boston Harbor Cruise 6-9:00pm, with our own Mary Kate Small among the folksingers! Friday, July 23 at 7pm. "Veterans Address the Nation", Faneuil Hall with historian, combat veteran Howard Zinn, Viet Nam combat veteran and Pentagon official Daniel Ellsberg whose moral courage awakened a nation, Hon. Barbara Lee ("Let us not become the evil we deplore!"), Hiroshima survivors/hibakusha, Chuck Turner, and Felix Arroyo, Military Families Speak out, September 11 Families for Peaceful Tomorrows, many veterans from WWII to the present crisis. Songs of justice by Charlie King, Karen Rovics. Special guest: Dennis Kucinich. Tickets available at massvfp.org or by mail from Boston Mobilization 617-782-2313 \$10-- \$15 at do or ---\$20 Solidarity Donation

Boston Social Forum



July 23-25, 2004
U. Mass - Boston

The BSF has been called to help progressive activists begin answering some very basic questions: What kind of future do we want for our region and for the world? What is our vision of a better society?



Through a series of workshops, cultural events, plenaries, and giant convocations of the entire forum, progressive organizations of all kinds will showcase their analysis of the present, and their ideas for the future, across the breadth of human knowledge politics, economics, science and technology, culture and faith in the context of corporate globalization.



for more info, call 617-338-9966
<http://www.bostonsocialforum.org>

Friday July 23 thru Sunday July 25. The Boston Social Forum: Invitation to an Amazing Global Conference. "Another Boston is possible. Another world is possible" at the University of Massachusetts at Boston, just before the Democratic National Convention. This is a three-day gathering of peace and progressive activists, hosted by a coalition of Boston area progressive community organizations, non-profits, and unions, with 451 workshops and forums as well as cultural events. This conference and the BSF as a whole will be unique, important, and timely opportunities for learning and building the popular movements we need to transform our nation. United for Justice with Peace (UJP) is playing a major part in planning the BSF, and is organizing a Peace track.

A World Working Together for Peace conference is one of five BSF "tracks" that AFSC staff is currently working on. And these are but five of the thirty-two tracks that will comprise the BSF as a whole! They have assembled an extraordinary range of speakers and resource people. Confirmed speakers include famous figures like Walden Bello from the Philippines, Phyllis Bennis of the Institute for Policy Studies, Dennis Brutus from South Africa, Leslie Cagan of United for Peace & Justice, Rep. Dennis Kucinich, Prof. Zia Mian from Princeton, Aichin Vanaik from India, and Hiroshima Atom Bomb survivors. The list goes on to include Rachael Amran (Israel,) Amal Basha

(Yemen,) Bruce Gagnon (U.S.) Elehah Koolae (Iran,) Tony Simpson (Britain,) Rae Street (Britain,) Agneta Norberg (Sweden,) the president of the British Transport and Maritime Union, and many many more.

Once you register for the Boston Social Forum, you can join any of the events at the BSF (from economic justice and the environment to the women's track and global justice) for free. Go on-line today to pre-register. This will help BSF meet its financial obligations and cover costs that need to be paid before the event takes place. If you pre-register you will not only help the BSF out, but you will get a less expensive rate for attending the BSF-- which you will surely want to do! Registration costs \$30, and for students, seniors, and low-income people who pre-register, the cost is \$15. You can also mail a check to: Boston Social Forum, 33 Harrison Ave. 4th Floor, Boston, MA 02111. Questions can also be directed to: 617-338-9966, or info@bostonsocialforum.org.

Peace Training

Graduate Class: Social Movements & Empowerment.

MVPP member John MacDougall is offering a graduate class at the University of Lowell this summer on Social Movements & Empowerment. Classes will be on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6-9PM, from **July 13-August 19**.

Topics will include how movements arise, why they choose particular strategies, and what effects they have. There is a major focus on the practical details of organizing campaigns and mobilizing supporters. Examples will be drawn from a wide variety of movements, concerned with civil rights, peace, the environment, labor, sexism, gay rights, neighborhood revitalization, etc., plus "new-right" movements. Students can do "hands-on" projects for course credit.

This class is one of five needed for the new **certificate in peace & conflict resolution** studies. This certificate is intended for interested people who wish to take individual courses before they commit to the whole certificate, or for those who wish to learn the PRACTICE of peace and conflict resolution, which is central to the certificate curriculum.

Register at <http://continuinged.uml.edu> or call 978-934-2700. For more information—on scheduling, assignments, etc.—contact Prof. John MacDougall, John_MacDougall@uml.edu, 978-934-4303

Summer Peace Camps - An opportunity for Palestinians and Jews who have never had an in-depth, sustained relationship, in the Middle East and worldwide. There are eight camp experiences that bring people together in North America. The decade-old pioneering efforts of "Seeds of Peace" in Maine and "Building Bridges for Peace" in Colorado are the premier summer camp youth experiences that usually come to mind right away.

Peace Camp Canada in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. This camp was initiated by an Israeli high school senior residing in Ottawa who met her very first Arabs and Muslims only in her junior year and was so transformed that she dedicated months to assure other youth would have that life-changing experience this summer.

<http://peacecampcanada.org/>

Peace It Together, in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada <http://www.creativepeacenetwork.ca>

Middle East Peace Camp for Children, in Seattle, Washington. <http://www.middleeastpeacecamp.org/>

Building Bridges for Peace, in Colorado. <http://s-c-g.org>

Face to Face - Faith to Faith in New York. <http://s-c-g.org>

Creativity for Peace, in New Mexico.

<http://www.creativityforpeace.com/>

Oseh Shalom ~ Sanea al-Salam, Palestinian-Jewish Family Peacemakers Camp at Camp Tawonga near Yosemite Valley, California. <http://traubman.igc.org/camp.htm> and http://www.tawonga.org/wf_nature.html

Seeds of Peace, in Maine. <http://www.seedsofpeace.org/>

Citizen Actions

Protests occur all over the world, and from time to time we select a few in solidarity with other protesters from afar. But first we have one close to home:

The Chicopee, MA, Trial A year ago, on March 22, 2003, three days after the United States invaded Iraq 2000 people came to Chicopee for a large demonstration at Westover Air Force Base, MA, organized by AFSC. Previously, this base was an enormous former strategic Air Command Center and nuclear air base, and then was converted to a logistical center of transport of troops to Iraq.

At first, forty people sat at the entrance to the base, winding a ball of yarn from one to the other, forming a large web of witness as they were being charged by the police for blocking the road. With the Venerable Kato-shonin in the lead, drummers of the Peace Pagoda started drumming and chanting and a second group of about 15 citizens, moved by the urgency and horror of the moment, spontaneously moved up and knelt and prayed. The police gave this group 15 minutes to leave the road or face a violation of the laws of the Commonwealth. At this point John Schuchardt got to his feet and gave an impassioned speech declaring that war was a violation of the laws of the Commonwealth and that an attack of a small defenseless country was a crime. John was charged with resisting arrest, was handcuffed and along with the remaining fourteen, taken away in a squad car to the Chicopee Police Station, where they were all booked and finger printed. Most were released on personal recognizance until their arraignment on March 24; however, several, including MVPP member Hattie Nestel and Venerable Kato-shonin refused to pay the \$40 bail fee and were held in jail.

Then began a long process, full of twists and turns with the court. Of the 40 who first sat on the road blocking the entrance, most were discharged because the police were not able to identify them. This was taken as a token of support by the Chicopee Police. In order to preserve the peoples' right to assembly, both the National Lawyers Guild and the ACLU offered pro-bono assistance to challenge the legality of a city ordinance passed in a special session and they won! However, John, Carrie and Sister Clare Carter (of the Peace Pagoda in Leverett, Buddhist order Nipponzan Myohoji) still faced charges.

On May 17, 2004, John and Carrie and Sister Clare appeared in court, discovering that they had a new judge and a new prosecutor, a Lt. Col. at Westover Air Force Base. They expressed their displeasure at a possible conflict of interest. The Chicopee Police Captain, with whom they had communicated previously, was also present. John spoke again about having spent over thirty years doing peace work and that he was protesting the Iraq invasion because, "It is a crime to occupy another country, to use depleted uranium, to torture any human being, to deny any human all the rights guaranteed by our Constitution and International Law."

Chicopee Police Captain Jebb (commander of the Tactical Unit that carried out all arrests) continued the amazing dialogue which had opened up in previous court appearances. He spoke in detail, in the court corridor, about his 21 years in the Air Force and about the Depleted Uranium

poisoning he had suffered from D.U. exposures in Iraq in 1991. He explained that his "immune system was destroyed" and he has a variety of health issues. Even more tragically, he explained that his daughter, now 11, was born with no thyroid, and with the two sides of her face growing at different rates, requiring extensive surgery at Children's Hospital, where doctors immediately recognized that she too was a victim of D.U. poisoning in the womb.

Capt. Jebb and the Air Force Lt. Col. prosecutor agreed to drop the fabricated charge of Resisting Arrest against John, and all entered nolo pleas, agreeing to 10 hours Community Service, 6 mos. unsupervised probation, and payment of \$50 Victim Assistance Fund, waived for Sr. Clare.

The Hearing ended with John addressing the judge, prosecutor, and Capt. Jebb, asking "Which side of the law were we on when the "Shock and Awe bombing" of Baghdad began? Which side of the law should you have been on? It is a crime to attack a defenseless, sovereign nation. It is a crime to occupy and carry out pacification of a sovereign nation. It is a crime to use Depleted Uranium that attacks and harms the innocent child in its mother's womb. It is a crime to torture any human being. It is criminal and illegal to deny any person rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and by the Geneva and Hague Conventions, which are the "supreme law" of this land and of this court. I ask you as judge to say publicly whether this court serves to prevent these crimes or to protect them."

The judge listened intently, as did all in the courtroom, but offered only a sincere "thank you" for John's statement.

Faslane, Scotland Protests. MVPP has reported on this group in previous newsletters. TP Disarmament Camp May 28, 2004. Women's Wake Up Call for Faslane Look-out! by Faslane Women's Swimming League.

This morning, Faslane Nuclear Submarine Base was infiltrated by two early morning swimmers. Yet again, the dire security arrangements at the base were shown up, as the peace camp women passed right under a lookout point - complete with sleeping security guard!

At 3.35am, Beth and Morag from Faslane Peace Camp were finally discovered by the MoD plod. They had swum into the area containing Vanguard submarines - the class of subs which fire Trident nuclear missiles. Peace camp sub spotters can confirm that a Vanguard sub is currently in Berth 9 at the base. Nice to know that a vessel carrying the equivalent of over 200 Hiroshima bombs is so well guarded.

Weekly Vigils

Andover, Sunday, Noon-1, Shawsheen Square, Route 133 and 28 Lawrence Friends Meeting/Shawsheen Peace Witness
asifferlen@sbra.com

Andover, Mon, Wed, Fri 7-8pm, Saturday 10:45-Noon (In good weather, 10-Noon),
Old Town Hall, Main St, - Lou Bernieri 978 475-6847, lberneri@andover.edu
Merrimack Valley People For Peace, Bobbie Goldman, bg@comcast.net

Andover, Tuesday, 5:45-6:45 AM, in front of Raytheon plant near Routes 133 and 93, Raytheon Peacemakers,
Arthur Brien, 978-686-4418.

Lawrence, Saturdays 12 - 1, Broadway and Essex Streets, Lawrence Peace Coalition, Martina Cruz, martina_m_cruz@yahoo.com.

Reading, 2nd. Saturday each month, 11-12, Reading Square, Reading People For Peace, Bob Connor, bobconnor1@yahoo.com.

You can buy a Rainbow Peace Flag, or a button or a bumper sticker at a Saturday Andover vigil.

North Shore groups' vigils

Amesbury, Saturday, 9:30-11:30 Market Square

Gloucester, Saturday, Noon-1, Grant Circle

Gloucester, Tuesday, 7-8pm, Fisherman's Wives Memorial

Ipswich, Saturday, 11-noon, at the bottom of Town Hill (junction of 133)

Newburyport, Sunday, noon - 1, Market Square

Rockport, Wednesday, noon-1, First Congregational Church (silent for peace)

Salem, MA, Saturday, 11-noon, Riley Plaza (by the Post Office)

The police handled the non-violent protesters with unnecessary force. One woman was pulled into a boat, bruising both her legs. The other, who had climbed a chain leading to the sea wall, was forced to release her handholds, causing her to fall onto the metal platform six feet below.

From the moment the women were spotted, the base's "Bandit Alarm" was sounded. This means that all personnel have to stop work and run to hideout shelters. It took just under an hour for police to confirm that there were no more intruders - that's an hour on a busy Faslane morning where no nuclear work could be done.

Email: faslanepeacecamp (nospam) hotmail.com
Address: Faslane Peace Camp, 81D Shandon, Helensburgh, Argyll and Bute, G84 8NT

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL Public Statement, June 4, 2004, USA: Staff Sergeant Camilo Mejia Castillo is a prisoner of conscience. On 21 May 2004, a US military court sentenced Staff Sergeant Camilo Mejia Castillo of the Florida National Guard to the maximum penalty of one year's imprisonment for desertion. He had refused to return to his unit in Iraq, citing moral reasons, the legality of the war, and the conduct of US troops towards Iraqi civilians and prisoners. Amnesty International considers him to be a prisoner of conscience, imprisoned for his conscientious opposition to participating in war.

The sentence was imposed despite a pending decision by the army on his application for conscientious objector sta-

tus. During the trial his lawyers were not permitted to present arguments relating to his conscientious objection, including describing the abuse he witnessed. He is currently detained in a military prison at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. The sentence is under appeal, but the appeal process is expected to be lengthy.

Camilo Mejia was deployed to Iraq in April 2003. He began developing doubts about the morality and legality of the war. In October 2003 he returned home for two weeks leave. He failed to return to duty in Iraq and filed for discharge as a conscientious objector on 16 March 2004 stating that he believed the war and occupation of Iraq to be "illegal and immoral".

In his conscientious objector application, Camilo Mejia described the conditions of detention and treatment of Iraqi prisoners, including instances where soldiers were directed to "break the detainees' resolve," and who took actions which included banging on metal walls with sledgehammers to enforce sleep deprivation and loading pistols near the ears of prisoners. He also described witnessing the killing of civilians, including children.

Camilo Mejia has described the evolution of his beliefs, what he witnessed and did in Iraq, all of which compelled him to take a stand on the basis of conscience. His objections to such abuse were made before the publication of photographs of US agents physically and mentally torturing and abusing Iraqi detainees in Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, but his trial came at a time of heightened media atten-

tion on this issue. A member of his defense team, former Attorney General Ramsey Clark, spoke of the "incredible irony that we're prosecuting soldiers in Iraq for violations of international law and we're prosecuting a soldier here because he refused to do the same things".

Amnesty International has adopted Camilo Mejia as a prisoner of conscience and calls for his immediate and unconditional release. He is the first US soldier known to be tried for "desertion" after service in combat in the current Iraq conflict. Amnesty International believes he has been imprisoned for his conscientious objection to the war in Iraq despite having taken reasonable steps to secure his discharge from the army.

Prior to his conviction, Camilo Mejia said "I have no regrets, not one... I will take it because I go there with my honor, knowing I have done the right thing".

14 People Arrested At The Bangor, WA, Trident Submarine Base In Honor Of Mother's Day In A Nonviolent Direct Action Against Nuclear Weapons And The Trident Nuclear Submarine System May 9. Demonstrators blocked the highway entrance into the base with a long banner that stated, "The Earth is Our Mother-Treat Her with Respect." Demonstrators read the Mother's Day Proclamation of 1870 by Julia Ward Howe that called for women around the world to put an end to war.

Those arrested by Kitsap County Sheriffs were quickly booked and released. If formally charged, it would be the first attempt to prosecute nonviolent demonstrators since February 2000. Kitsap County prosecutors have been unable to get convictions against nonviolent activists arrested at Bangor the last three times they have tried. Juries and judges have found that people arrested at Bangor protests have the legal right to redress grievances under International and US law with nonviolent direct action.

Each year at Seafair, the Navy has brought ships into Puget Sound used to fire depleted uranium bullets. The Close-In Weapons System, aboard almost every U.S. Navy vessel, must be test-fired twice a month for calibration. The depleted uranium rounds are fired off the Washington coast or wherever the Navy chooses to leave them.

Obituary: Dave Dillinger

Dave Dellinger, a nonviolent activist and long-time leader of peace and justice movements, died on May 25, 2004 in Berlin, Vermont due to pneumonia and heart failure.

A Yale University student who received a fellowship to study at Oxford in the 1930s, Dellinger took the less traveled path, choosing to live with the poor, studying at Union Theological Seminary, and refusing to register for the draft at the brink of World War II. Then and later, he went to jail for his beliefs.

Dellinger married Elizabeth Peterson in 1942; for several years he and his wife lived in an intentional community, while actively participating in campaigns for peace, disarmament, and civil rights. Dellinger also edited several magazines, including Liberation, an influential leftist publication for 20 years.

In the 1960s, Dellinger helped forge an alliance between antiwar activists and civil rights leaders. He was America's Gandhi, advancing the theory of pacifist resistance through his words and deeds. After leading protests at the Pentagon and the 1968 Democratic convention, he and seven other organizers, ultimately known as the Chicago Eight, were indicted for conspiracy and inciting a riot. Their conviction, after a flawed trial, was later overturned.

Dellinger moved to Vermont in the late 1970s, He was active with Native American and international solidarity movements, often joining in protests and hunger strikes. In 1993, Pantheon Books published his autobiography, From Yale to Jail: The Life Story of a Moral Dissenter. His other books include Revolutionary Nonviolence, More Power Than We Know, Beyond Survival, and Vietnam Revisited: Covert Action to Invasion.

Letter

The following letter calls attention to the damage certain words can do to human beings when used inappropriately. Stuart Leiderman not only criticizes NH Public Radio for unprofessional reporting: he highlights how pathetic most of our news is. We're bombarded with information but with few explanations of the significance, reasons or consequences of what we've been told. What would happen if we each gave some thought to what's missing in our news and wrote our own letter to a media outlet asking for better reporting?

May 13, 2004
Mark Bevis, News Director
New Hampshire Public Radio
Concord, New Hampshire mbevis@nhpr.org

Dear Mr. Bevis:

Good morning. A few moments ago, your woman announcer read a news item that the U.S. Secretary of Defense or another official had ordered the release of three hundred people held at Abu Ghraib prison, Iraq -- in the announcer's exact words, to "thin out" the prison population. I think this was a poor and disrespectful choice of words. If she were simply reading this off another news organization's text, then you have only yourselves to blame for unprofessional news broadcasting about life and death matters in Iraq. If it was a quote from the Secretary of Defense or another government official or military commander, the announcer should have read it as a quote, prefaced by "in his words", so that the listener knows how our public servants think about and articulate their responsibilities, locally, nationally and globally. If your announcer or someone else on your staff chose such an inappropriate and trite expression themselves, then again, you have only yourselves to blame for unprofessional news coverage.

"Thinning out" is what a gardener does to tomato seedlings or lettuce sprouts. It is not what one does to groups of humans. It would have been more important to tell the listener the significance of the number 300, compared to the more than 3,000 held in Abu-Ghraib, and whether these were criminals being released back into public life or innocents who were wrongly held. Using a vague, unjust and misleading phrase such as "thin out" does nothing to connect the act of releasing people from their status, the reasons for doing so, or the consequences of doing so. Again, it is unprofessional broadcasting and a disservice to New Hampshire listeners. You may think such language as "thinning out" is a folksy and familiar way to talk to your audience about life and death matters, but I think it is inappropriate and grossly misleading.

I would be glad to work with you and your staff on a professional basis to improve the quality and effectiveness of NHPR's news broadcasting.

Stuart Leiderman
leidermn@christa.unh.edu
603.776.0055

Poetry

The Song of Songs

There is one who sings the song of his soul,
discovering in his soul everything
utter spiritual fulfillment.

There is one who sings the song of his people.
Emerging from the private circle of his soul
not expansive enough, not yet tranquil
he strives for fierce heights,
clinging to the entire community of Israel
in tender love...

Then there is one whose soul expands
until it extends beyond the border of Israel,
singing the song of humanity... his spirit spreads,
aspiring to the goal of humankind,
envisioning its consummation...

Then there is one who expands even further
until he unites with all existence, with all creatures,
with all worlds,
singing a song with them all.

There is one who ascends with all these songs
in unison
the song of the soul, the song of the nation,
the song of humanity,
the song of the cosmos
resounding together, blending in harmony,
circulating the sap of life,
the sound of holy joy.

by *Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, Chief Rabbi of Palestine*
20th Century Kabbalist

Minutes of MVPP Meeting, May 25, 2004

The following were in attendance: Don Abbott, Becci Backman, Lou Bernieri, Arthur Brien, Jane Cadarette, Bill Callahan, Ralph Galen, Bobbie Goldman, Barbara Haack, Sue Imhoff, Brenda McCarthy, Henry Misserville, Brian Quirk, Kathie Robinson, Niki Rosen, Pat Scanlon, Masood Sheikh, Mary Kate Small, Boryana Tacconi, Mary Todd, Jim Todd, and Don Williamson.

Treasurer's Report: Becci reported for Peter Cameron that we have a current balance of \$4,004.52. New gifts include one at Mother's Day in honor of Mary Todd as a living example of the best in peacemaking and mother-

Palestine Links:

Get Informed:

www.palestineremembered.com
www.mideastfacts.com
www.palestinechronicle.com
www.electronicintifada.net
www.palestinemonitor.org
www.palestine-pmc.com
www.imemc.org
www.haaretz.com

Activism and Action:

Palestine Right to Return Coalition: www.al-awda.org
Middle East Children's Alliance: www.mecaforpeace.org
Grassroots Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign:
www.stophthewall.org
International Solidarity Movement: www.palsolidarity.org
Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions:
www.icahd.org
Citizens for Fair Legislation: www.clfweb.org
Boycott Israeli Goods: www.boycottisraeligoods.org
Academics for Justice: www.academicsforjustice.org
Palestine Media Watch: www.pmwatch.org
Islamic Association of Palestine: www.iap.org

Contact

www.al-awda.org/media
www.commondreams.org

Iraq:

Voices in the Wilderness: www.vitw.org
www.bringthemhomenow.org
www.iraqbodycount.net
www.occupationwatch.org
www.electroniciraq.net
9-11 Families for Peaceful Tomorrows:
www.peacefultomorrow.org
www.veteransforpeace.org
www.veteransforcommonsense.org
Military Families Speak Out: www.mfso.org
www.unitedforpeace.org
www.truthout.org
www.endthewar.org
www.globaexchange.org

Must Read News Sites:

www.counterpunch.org
www.commondreams.org
www.thenation.com
www.democracynow.org
www.alternet.org
www.utne.com

the Media:

www.fair.org/media-contact-list.html
www.pmwatch.org

hood. Membership now stands at 102. Counting couples, this figure would represent around 150 people. Becci also noted that a considerable number of members routinely make a contribution above and beyond their stated dues. We discussed various ways appropriately to acknowledge this kind of extra support.

Support for Effort to Demilitarize Our Schools: Becci also reported that she had advanced the free distribution of a quantity of buttons to Latinos for Justice in Lawrence, featuring the messages "Students Not Soldiers" and "Demilitarize Our Schools." We voted to reimburse her \$75.00 for the costs of these items. Latinos United for Justice are developing a campaign, under the direction of Jose Cruz, to educate parents, students, and school board members in Lawrence about registration requirements under current draft board regulations and to de-emphasize military service. For example, parents need to understand that school administrators are permitted to give the names and home addresses of their children to military recruiters, unless parents specifically deny such permission. We shall cover these issues in upcoming newsletters, and we may be able to do more to support this overall effort.

Peace Flags: The Peace Flags we use and sell (imported from "Peace from Every Balcony" in Italy) have been acquired through an individual in the Boston area who has decided no longer to provide this service. We voted to take on the responsibility of ordering and selling these flags, with the proviso that we make them accessible as a service to individuals and organizations, without taxing our financial or volunteer personal resources. While favoring this venture in concept, we delegated the task of implementation for the first round of orders and sales to a small group including Becci, Bobbie, and Peter. Masood and Jim also offered to help if needed.

Website: Bobbie asked for help in sending Brian up-to-date postings for recent events. Sue added that new visitors to the site want readily to learn about upcoming events and actions. We acknowledged and thanked Brian for his work on the overall website. Don suggested that a future agenda might provide broader discussion of website issues.

We Invite You to Join /Rejoin Us *To continue to receive this newsletter...*

\$20.00 Individual
\$10.00 Student/Senior
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\$50.00 Supporting
\$75.00 Sustaining
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Return to
MVPP
P.O. Box 573
North Andover, MA 01845-0573

MVPP is registered with the IRS as a non-profit organization
Contributions are tax deductible. **“2004” on your mailing label indicates that your membership is paid only through May 31, 2004. 2005 means you are paid till next year.** We currently have 123 members, counting the family members within a member group, and last year, approximately one third of those members joined/renewed at higher than the basic amount.

Petitions:We endorsed the “U. S. Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation”, and we asked Brian to provide a link to it on our website. We briefly discussed the most effective ways (both passive and active) to publicize and gather signatures for important petitions. We acknowledged that Saturday morning vigils may not be the best times since they already engage us fully in other functions.

New Vigil Suggestion:Henry proposed that, given the importance of New Hampshire in the upcoming presidential election, we might want to vigil from 5pm-6pm on a weekday in an area like Salem, at the Rte. 28 intersection near Rockingham Mall. The idea met with strong approval, so long as there are at least some New Hampshire people present, plus a commitment to bring more local residents. People like Lynn Edwards and the New Hampshire Peace Action should first be consulted. We voted to proceed accordingly with this action. There was one abstention.

Program:**1.)** ESL Instruction. Henry and Lou spoke of the critical need in Lawrence for the teaching of English as a second language. Several members expressed interest in responding to the call for volunteers to help with this activity, which can be of critical importance to empower the Latino community for advocacy work and citizenship preparation. Lou has volunteered to help with training, an area of his professional expertise within a teacher network in Lawrence. **2.)** Annual Meeting; June 18 at 6:30pm. Bobbie, Barbara, and Peter will act as the Nominating Committee. Becci, Barbara, Mary, and Ralph volunteered to come early to coordinate the set-up for the Pot Luck Dinner. We were encouraged to swell the attendance for the evening, which will feature entertainment by the Raging Grannies. **3.)** Boston Social Forum; July 23-25. Everyone is encouraged to register for this highly recommended, timely, and

well-planned forum. We decided to register for an MVPP table at the event, with details to be decided at the next meeting. **4.)** Benefit Concert; September 18. Mary Kate continues to coordinate the evening, which will feature Dean Stevens heading a list of other performers. Bill and Kathie volunteered to assist with logistics such as program, publicity, and fund raising details. **5.)** Confirmation of the presentation by Michael Prokosch, from United for a Fair Economy; October 13, 7pm-9pm, in Memorial Hall of the Andover Library. In addition to providing a critical pre-election forum for domestic issues, this evening is a prime event at which to promote membership in MVPP. **6.)** Don briefly advocated that we consider sponsoring a major, regional march to raise money for one or more critical causes of economic and social justice in Lawrence. Ralph and Henry volunteered to join him in developing a specific plan for the coming year, carefully coordinated so that it will complement and not interfere with other such efforts in the Greater Lawrence region.

Political Activity during this Election Year:Time permitted only a very brief discussion on the topic of what non-profit organizations can and cannot do in the area of political activity or advocacy. We hope to continue this discussion at the next meeting.

Next Meeting:Given the range of activities we are currently conducting, we decided to hold our next regularly scheduled monthly meeting on June 22, 2004 at 7:30pm, the Tuesday following the Annual Meeting on June 18.

Respectfully submitted,
Don Abbott, Secretary

Insets

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North Andover, MA 01845-0573

<http://www.merrimackvalleypeopleforpeace.org/>

**PEACE IS
PATRIOTIC**

The MVPP Newsletter is printed monthly and has a current mailing of 120. We are grateful for suggestions, comments, and help with publication. (2004 on your mailing label indicates that your 2003-2004 dues have been paid.)
MVPP President: Bobbie Goldman Vice President: Katherine Robinson
Newsletter Editors: Barbara Haack, Lou Bernieri, Bobbie Goldman, Brian Quirk, Arthur & Marguerite Brien

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