



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, and protection of the environment.

September 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

Israa, A young Iraqi girl, was injured in a US missile attack on her villa five years ago. She lost her right arm. Her image has been used at protests on every continent. After many months of negotiation, Cole Miller and Alan Pogue (whose photographs of Chiapas, Mexico and Iraq were exhibited in N. Andover a few years ago) were allowed to bring Israa and her father to Houston, Texas this month, where she will receive medical treatment. She soon will receive a prosthetic arm and go through surgery to remove shrapnel from her abdomen. It was Cole and Alan's commitment that saved her.

Many plaudits to Representative John Tierney, who consistently supports efforts to stop nuclear proliferation. He and other congressional colleagues sent President Bush a letter about the Administration's alarming rhetoric and policy that demonstrates a renewed commitment to nuclear weapons, noting that by developing usable "mini-nukes," and aiming nuclear weapons at non-nuclear states, the United States is inviting the rest of the world to begin a dangerous arms race. In addition, this letter urged the President not to resume underground testing of nuclear weapons. Tierney also worked tirelessly to try to defeat the new overtime regulations that went into effect on August 23, despite his best efforts. Thanks, John Tierney!

Swarthmore College, A year ago congratulated MVPP for its Newsletter, and after joining our organization, they now wish to add back issues to its Peace Collection of over 300 peace-related periodicals!

Pat Scanlon, an Andover activist in waste management and founder of the state's MassRecycle group, did the impossible. Daily mountains of paper trash from the Democratic National Convention were brought to Haverhill where it was turned to wet pulp, dried into cardboard and transformed into 20,000 commemorative posters within 24 hours to send to the conventioners. One more accomplishment for a life devoted to recycling. A musician as well, Pat was one of our wonderful entertainers at MVPP's 20th Anniversary Benefit Concert September 18. He also was a Clam Shell Alliance protester of the Seabrook nuclear plant while it was being built.

Doris "Granny D" Haddock: "If you want something done right, do it yourself." As she literally runs for the NH Senate seat, Haddock is an example to all of us who feel we are too busy, our lives too complicated and our time too short to become involved in a political campaign, whether as a candidate or campaign worker. She is not content to sit back and grumble about the state of the world; she is driven by her conscience to do something about it. This 94-year-old grandmother of 16 could have easily retired to her

rocker and foregone the aggravation inherent in a political campaign, but instead, she is an inspiration to us all.

Two important MVPP- member Wedding Anniversaries: Jacob and Winnie Zar just celebrated their 65th! Their daughter and son-in-law, Elinor and Art Elphick hosted a gala reception and dinner for family and friends. And **Marge and Arthur Brien** celebrated their 52nd wedding anniversary by attending a show.

The Marblehead Peace Pole Do you know there is a Peace Pole in Marblehead? It is located in Memorial Park,

MVPP Monthly Meeting – North Parish Church – Tuesday, September 28, 2004 7:30 PM *Printed on recycled paper*
<http://www.merrimackvalleypeopleforpeace.org>

beside the YMCA. On Memorial Day in 1990, a group of local peace advocates installed the Peace Pole in the park. There are more than 100,000 Peace Poles located all over the world. The six-foot poles are to focus the hearts and minds of people from every country on the real possibility of peace.

The Marblehead pole has “May Peace Prevail On Earth” inscribed in six languages: English, Hopi, Hebrew, Russian, Arabic and Spanish. At the rededication ceremony, held September 12, participants urged new legislation currently in motion in the US Congress, HR2459, to create a cabinet level Department of Peace. Weekly Peace Vigils are held at the pole Wednesday evenings from 7:00 – 7:45.

Tom Gale

Recent History

July 22. The Merrimack Valley Peace Chorus (MVPC) sang at the Veterans for Peace Boston Harbor Cruise (held just prior to the Democratic Convention) was a big hit. Mary Kate Small wishes to thank wholeheartedly all the MVPP members who participated. Special thanks go to Ralph Galen who provided the practice space and moral support and Brian Quirk who hauled his bagpipes into Boston! Not only did thirty-four individuals gather to sing for the veterans in Boston that evening, but many of them came to the three non-mandatory practices held in Andover with choral director Jim Scott (of Paul Winter Consort fame) to prepare for the event. Bravo! In M.K.'s estimation, the best time of the evening was the hour or so when many of the veterans gathered round to join in on wonderful, meaningful tunes.

Several MVPP members also were in a packed Fanueil Hall the next evening for “Veterans Address the Nation,” a program of unsurpassed inspiration voiced by a host of speakers and performers, including Iraq veterans, Daniel Ellsberg, Howard Zinn, Military Families Speak Out, and September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows

July 23-25 Tthe Boston Social Forum, held at UMass Boston. Several members participated. As we debriefed our individual experiences at different seminars, workshops, and plenary sessions, we universally affirmed that this was a “teach-in” with an extraordinary degree of expertise and usefulness, plus the kind of hope that was consistently grounded in practical alternatives. Many members expressed interest in attending other forums in this global series. There will be one in Seattle in October 2004 and another in Porto Allegre in Winter 2005.

August 6. MVPP held a vigil in honor of Hiroshima Day with about thirty people .

August 14. MVPP members joined Girl Scout Christen Mills' peace festival, called A Peace of August in Chelmsford. Over 50 people attended this successful festival. Five members of the Merrimack Valley Peace Chorus sang 4 songs, and Brian Quirk played his bagpipes and Becci set up her table of wares.

August 29 At least 12 of us went down to the protest in NYC, part of the over 500, 000 protesters. For the first time, we had a UJP bus pick-up in Andover, and 28 people boarded there.



September 6. The Bread and Roses festival in Lawrence on Labor Day. About a dozen members attended. Our table was very popular, and we sold over \$300 worth of buttons and bumper stickers to a very sympathetic crowd.

September 9. MVPP vigil to honor and remember the 1,000 US soldiers killed in Iraq. At Old Town Hall in Andover, thirty-five people attended; including some new faces interested in joining us for vigils, meetings, and events. MVPP members also participated in vigils in Newburyport where 45 people took part at Market Square, and in Marblehead, with 35 people. Reading and Lawrence members also held vigils that evening, joining over 1,000 vigils nationwide, that were organized with only twenty-four hours notice.

The Newburyport Daily News recently had a half page dedicated to MVPP member **Barbara Hildt's** workshop and summer training camp involving 200 Pentucket High School Project Peace students dedicated to making the high school” a more peaceable place to learn; a place where put-

downs and judgments based on stereotypes are considered uncool and 'the norm' is to be friendly and accepting." Barbara is Director of Youth Empowerment Services Inc., in Amesbury.

Faslane, Scotland.

From time to time MVPP covers news from other parts of the world. One is Faslane, Scotland, where the Campaign against Clyde Nuclear Bases continues. As the Trident Ploughshares camp at Coulport drew to a close in August, anti-Trident activists declared themselves well satisfied with the two-weeks of direct action against the Clyde WMD bases. In spite of intense police surveillance, protesters were able to blockade, break into and swim into Faslane and paint peace slogans on walls and buildings in order to expose the ugly nature of the business being conducted behind the security fences. Trident Ploughshares decided to continue its "Non-Stop Nuke-Stop" campaign that aims to cause disruption to Faslane and Coulport all year round through secret and unannounced blockades and intrusions. Ninety-five people were arrested during the Trident Ploughshares camp.

DU poisoning

At the July VFP (Veterans for Peace) convention in Boston, the host chapters committed to help returning Iraqi veterans with problems associated with depleted uranium poisoning. Testing, research and government admittance of the problem are first steps. Also, Jim McDermott, D-Washington, filed the McDermott Bill, H.R.1483, which calls for comprehensive testing of uranium in exposed veterans and their children.

Draft to be Reinstated in Spring 2005?

- Pending legislation in the House and Senate (twin bills S 89 and HR163) would time the program so the draft could begin as early as Spring 2005 -- conveniently just after the 2004 presidential election!
- \$28 million has been added to the 2004 Selective Service System (SSS) budget to prepare for a military draft that could start as early as June 15, 2005.
- 18-34 year olds will be drafted
- Women will be drafted.
- College students will be drafted. Seniors will be deferred only to the end of the academic year. Undergraduates would be deferred only to the end of the semester.
- Other countries will not be a haven due to new bi-lateral agreements. Canada and the US signed a "Smart Border Declaration," which would be used to keep would-be draft dodgers in.

- The Pentagon has quietly begun a public campaign to fill all 10,350 draft board positions and 11,070 appeals board slots nationwide.

- Though this is an unpopular election year topic, military experts and members of Congress are suggesting that if Rumsfeld's prediction of a "long, hard slog" in Iraq and Afghanistan and a permanent state of war on "terrorism" proves accurate, the U.S. may have no choice but to draft. For more information: Read: The Coming Draft. Read at: <http://www.alternet.org/story.html?StoryID=18225> Read the senate bill S89 and the house bill HR163 here: <http://thomas.loc.gov/home/c108query.html> These active bills currently sit in the house and senate Armed Services committees.

Vigil in Salem, NH

Lynne Edwards

For the past several months, MVPP members have been vigiling on Thursdays in Salem, New Hampshire. We stand on the corner of Main St. & Broadway, where Rts.97 & 28 cross. It is a busy intersection, right at the junction of S. Broadway and N. Broadway. It brings people who have just come from Rt. 93, as well as people from Haverhill, MA. It sees people going south to the Mall at Rockingham Park, and those going north to Super Walmart.

We have stood with our signs and our Peace flags, not quite knowing what to expect from this largely conservative state. But we have been pleasantly surprised by the reaction. Many people wave and honk horns. Many people smile and lift their arms with peace signs out of their car windows or through their open sun roofs. Yes, we do occasionally get thumbs down or yells of "Go Bush! and, of course, the proverbial "finger". But the positive reactions far outweigh the negative. We have even had (mostly young people) screaming with joy at seeing us, probably because a site like ours is pretty rare in New Hampshire.

All in all, it has been a rewarding experience, leaving us feeling energized, and hopeful that people are paying attention. Thank God we are still allowed to have these vigils on the street corners of America. I wonder how much longer this freedom will be open to us. It is imperative that we exercise this right for as long as we can, to express our disagreement with the policies of this administration and to inform the public.

For anyone who wishes to join us in Salem, NH, we vigil on Thursday evenings from 6:30pm to 7:30pm.

:*Some recent political, social, economic and environmental books of interest*

Among the many books to choose from, and with limited time, these books may help you better understand what is currently going on. Cynthia Riley, a H.H. librarian, with a passion for progressive politics, started the list, and MVPP members and their friends at vigils have added to it. We also thank sources such as "Peace Work."- September 2004

Ahmed, Nafeez	Behind the war on terror: strategy and the struggle for Iraq
Ahmed, Nafeez	The war on freedom: how and why America was attacked Sept. 11, 2001
Alterman, Eric	What liberal media?
Alterman, Eric	The book on Bush
Bakan, Joel	The corporation: the pathological pursuit of profit and power
Berman, Paul	Terror and liberalism
Blum, William	Killing hope: US military and CIA interventions since WWII
Brock, David	The Republican noise machine: right wing media & how it corrupts democracy
Brown, Lester R	Plan B: rescuing a planet under stress and a civilization in trouble
Byrd, Sen. Robert	Losing America: confronting a reckless & arrogant President
Caldicott, Helen	The new nuclear danger
Caroll, James	Chronicles of an unjust war
Chomsky, Noam	Media control: the spectacular achievements of propaganda
Clarke, Richard	Against all enemies: Inside America's war on terror
Coll, Steve	Ghost wars: the secret history of the CIA, Afghanistan & Bin Laden, from the Soviet invasion to Sept. 11, 2001
Conason, Joe	Big lies: the right wing propaganda machine & how it distorts the truth
Corn, David	The lies of George W. Bush: mastering the politics of deception
Dean, John	Worse than Watergate: the secret presidency of George W. Bush
Didion, Joan	Democracy
Dowd, Maureen	Bushworld; enter at your own risk
Ferguson, Niall	Colossus: the price of America's empire
Frank, Dr. Justin	Bush on the couch: inside the mind of the president
Frank, Thomas	What's the matter with Kansas? How conservatives won the heart of America
Franken, Al	Lies and the lying liars who tell them
Fritz, Ben	All the President's spin
Gladwell, Malcolm	The tipping point: How little things can make a big difference
Goodman, Amy	Exception to the rulers
Graham, Robert	Intelligence matters
Greider, William	The soul of Capitalism: opening paths to a moral economy
Griffin, David	The new Pearl Harbor: disturbing questions about the Bush Administration and 9/11
Hamill, Sam, ed	Poets against the war
Hass, Amira	Reporting from Ramallah: An Israeli journalist in an occupied land
Hedges, Chris	War is a force that gives us meaning
Heinberg, Richard	The party's over: oil, war, and the fate of industrial societies
Hightower, Jim	Thieves in high places
Humphreys, R. Stephen	Between memory and desire: the Middle East in a troubled age
Ivins, Molly & Dubose, Lou	Bushwhacked: life in George W. Bush's America
Johnson, Chalmers	The sorrows of empire: militarism, secrecy & the end of the republic
Klare, Michael T	Resource wars: the new landscape of global conflict
Kornbluh, Peter	The Pinochet file: a declassified dossier on atrocity and accountability
Krugman, Paul	The great unraveling: losing our way in the new century
Lance, Peter	1000 years for revenge
Lifton, Robert Jay	Superpower syndrome: America's apocalyptic confrontation with the world
Lifton, Robert Jay	Destroying the world to save it

Mamdani, Mahmood	Good Muslim, bad Muslim: America, the cold war, and the roots of Terror
Mann, Jim	Rise of the Vulcans: the history of Bush's war cabinet
McCain, John	Why courage matters
Mezlekia, Nega	Notes from the hyena's belly: memories of my Ethiopian childhood
Moore, Michael	Dude, where's my country?
National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States:	9/11 Commission Report
Nichols, John	Cheney, Dick: the man who is president
Osterman, Paul	Gathering power: the future of progressive politics in America
Philips, Kevin	American dynasty: aristocracy, fortune & the politics of deceit in the House of Bush
Powers, Thomas	Intelligence wars: American secret history from Hitler to Al-Qaeda
Rampton, Sheldon/Stauber	Weapons of mass deception
Ross, John	Murdered by capitalism
Ruppert, Michael C	Crossing the Rubicon: the decline of the American Empire & the end of the age of oil
Schechter, Danny	Embedded—weapons of mass deception; how the media failed to cover the war in Iraq
Schell, Jonathan	The unconquerable world
Singer, P.W.	Corporate warriors: the rise of the privatized military industry
Singh, Patwant	The world according to Washington – an Asian view
Soros, George	The bubble of American supremacy
Suskind, Ron	The price of loyalty: George W. Bush, the White House & the education of Paul O'Neill
Tarbell, Jim	Imperial overstretch: G.W.Bush and the hubris of empire
Tashiro, Akira	Discounted casualties: the human cost of depleted uranium
Trippi, Joe	The revolution will not be televised
Unger, Craig	House of Bush; House of Saud: the secret relationship between the world's two most powerful dynasties
Vidal, Gore	Imperial America
Waldman, Paul	Fraud: the strategy behind the Bush lies & why the media didn't tell you
Wilson, Joseph	The cult that's running the country
Zinn, Howard	The power of non-violence

We invite comments from our readers regarding this list and any other articles in the MVPP newsletter.



Weekly Vigils

Amesbury, First Sunday each month, 11:30-12:30 corner of Main & School St. Barbara Hildt, 978 388-3647

Amesbury Saturdays 9:30-11 a.m. in Market Sq. downtown Chris Hyde, 978 834-0862

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.

Newburyport, Sunday, 12 noon - 1 p.m in Market Square, Niki Rosen, 978 463-3208

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

Salem NH, Thursdays at 7pm, corner of rts. 28 and 97. Henry Misserville, 918 470-0663.

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

North Shore groups' vigils

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)

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

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

Marblehead, Wednesday 5-7, at the Peace Pole, Memorial Park (by the YMCA), Tom Gale 631-1218

Coming events

Saturday, Sep 25 – Oct 2.

Keep Space for Peace Week: International Days of Protest to Stop the Militarization of Space. For the past several years, Keep Space for Peace Week of local actions has taken this issue into classrooms, libraries, TV and radio programs, churches, military bases, aerospace corporation facilities, and the offices of political leaders. Organize a local activity during the week in solidarity with groups all over the world. Working together we must create opposition to the Administration's dangerous and destabilizing Star Wars deployments. Other Contact Information: (207) 729-0517.

Saturday, Oct. 2, 10-4:30.

Agape's 15th Annual St. Francis Day: One People-One Planet. Elizabeth Petersen will pay tribute to Dave Dellinger, followed by Tom Jackson, Jane Berhardt, Sr. William Julie, Sisters of the Earth, Bruce Davidson founder, Sirius Community; Lara Hoke of Mass Interfaith Power and Light; NESEA Solar Site; demos on solar energy; vegetable-oil run cars; Music-- Mt. Holyoke High School and Fran Reagan. Bring a lunch; enjoy the Quabbin Reservoir,

straw bale solar house. Mass Pike to Exit 8 Palmer-- 32north to North St. Left on North to Greenwich Rd. Right on Greenwich-6.5 miles. Agape, 2062 Greenwich Rd. Ware, MA 01082 413-967-9369

Monday, Oct. 4, 7pm.

Kathy Kelly speaks on "**Other Lands Have Dreams.**" Kathy, long time peace and justice activist and co-cordinator of Voices in the Wilderness, will talk about the affects of war, sanctions and occupation in Iraq. She was in Iraq throughout the "Shock and Awe" bombing and returned for two shorter visits during the U.S. occupation. At the Paulist Center, Boston. Pax Christi Boston and Haley House are the co-sponsors of this event. Doors will be locked at 7:30; event will be held in the lower level assembly room.

For info: bgf@copydesk.org, 617/262-9461.

Oct. 5 and Oct. 19, 7-9pm. Reading and discussion program,

"Understanding the Modern Middle East." Based on R.Stephen Humphrey's Between Memory and Desire: The Middle East in a Troubled Age. At the Senior Center on

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

\$20.00 Individual
\$10.00 Student/Senior
\$30.00 Family

Circle One

\$50.00 Supporting
\$75.00 Sustaining
\$100.00 Peacemaker

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ E-Mail _____ Date _____

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 rate.

School St., Amesbury. Call Jen Haven 978-388-8148 or
www.amesburylibrary.org

Tuesday, Oct. 12, 6:30-8pm.

On Reconciliation Leadership for Community, Institutional and Global Challenges With Virginia Swain, Director of The Institute for Global Leadership, who provides new leadership and development models to the United Nations and helped implement the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World (2001-2010), at the Winchester Public Library, 80 Washington St. Free and open to the public. Call Annette Farrington Kramer, 781-721-2993.

Tuesday, Oct. 19, 7-9pm.

MVPP Economic Forum: Economic Justice? War and the Economy. Presented by Mike Prokosch (formerly with United for a Fair Economy). Co-Sponsors: Ethical Society of Boston, North Bridge Alliance for Democracy, North Shore Coalition for Peace and Justice, Reading People for Peace, WAND (Women's Actions for New Directions). Memorial Hall Library, Andover.

Tuesday, Nov. 2.

Please remember to vote at this very crucial election. The dates for the presidential debates are as follows:
First presidential debate: Thurs., September 30. University of Miami, Coral Gables
Vice presidential debate: Tues., October 5. Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland
Second presidential debate: Fri., October 8. Washington University, St. Louis

Third presidential debate: Wed., October 13 Arizona State University, Tempe

Nov. 12 & 13.

After The Elections: Creating Vision For Change?

Learn to weave our stories from facts, wrap them in emotion that compels action and together we will transform the world. A weekend with Witness for Peace to gather, share and energize, to explore the challenges in the upcoming year, to learn the art of story telling, to participate in community drum circles drumming for peace. Join Avi Chomsky, professor of history and Latin American Studies at Salem State College, and author of many books, and Andy Davis, storyteller and political activist, now co-director of the World Fellowship Center, NH. At Notre Dame Mission Center, 30 Jeffreys Neck Road; Ipswich, MA 01938. For retreat information contact Joanne Ranney wfpne@witnessforpeace.org, 802-434-323. Retreat Fee \$100.00 or \$115.00.

Friday-Sunday, November 19-21.

SOA Watch has again called for a mass vigil protest at the school's home in Fort Benning, Georgia. The School of the Americas (SOA), renamed the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation or WHINSEC, is a combat training school for Latin American security personnel, providing courses in counterinsurgency techniques, sniper training, commando and psychological warfare, and interrogation tactics. This "School of Assassins," in the guise of promoting democracy, has graduated eleven Latin American dictators, including Manuel Noriega of Panama and Efraim Rios Montt of Guatemala. Graduates of the school have been consistently linked to human rights viola-

tions and to the suppression of popular movements in Central and South America of people demanding access to land, safer working conditions and control of their own natural resources.

Proxy Vote

A reminder that all MVVP members are requested to send in their proxy votes on the limited subjects of authorizing the legal name change from North Andover People for Peace to Merrimack Valley People for Peace, and clarifying the statement of our purpose. These votes must be returned in time for the September 28 meeting.

Minutes

Excerpted Minutes of MVPP Meeting, July 27, 2004
Don Abbott, Clerk
(Complete minutes are posted on the MVPP web site)

Minutes of MVPP Meeting, August 24, 2004

The following were in attendance: Don Abbott, Becci Backman, Michael Bleiweiss, Arthur Brien, Peter Cameron, Lynne Edwards, Ralph Galen, Bobbie Goldman, Barbara Haack, Brian Quirk, Kathie Robinson, Masood Sheikh, Boryana Tacconi, Jacob Zar, and Winnie Zar. We were joined by a reporter and a photographer from the Lawrence Eagle-Tribune, who were helping prepare an article about Merrimack Valley residents who intend to participate in the upcoming August 29th demonstration in New York: "The World Says No to the Bush Agenda."

Treasurer's Report: Peter and Becky reported a current balance of \$3,738.95, including recent receipts from the Cuttyhunk Island community, secured by Jim and Mary Todd, and receipts from a very successful day on August 14 in Chelmsford, organized by Kristin Williams, as part of a peace event she designed in fulfillment of Girls Scout Merit Badge responsibilities.

By-laws Revision: Becci reported that a small group consisting of Kathy, Brenda, Don, and herself had met twice this month to consider revisions of the by-laws to reflect the name, purpose, and practice of MVPP, as they have evolved over recent years. Draft copies were circulated and discussed. Because a vote by the directors is required to make changes in the by-laws, we decided to call a directors' meeting for 6:30 PM on August 4, 2004. At that time, they also will be asked to approve a special proxy vote by members to approve the name and stated purpose of MVPP. We hope to have all voting finalized by the end of the regular monthly meeting in September. Kudos especially to Becci for her expert leadership of this process.

[Becci, Don, and Bobbie reported that a quorum of eight directors met on August 4 to discuss and vote on proposed by-laws revisions. They unanimously passed the version members had seen at the July 27th meeting, with one amendment: that all language be made "gender free." Directors also approved a procedure for members to vote by proxy with regard to the new name and stated purpose of MVPP, if members are unable to vote in person at the next monthly meeting on September 28, 2004.]

Membership: Becci informed us that a regular membership renewal will accompany the proxy vote mailing, scheduled for September 2. If everyone renews, the roster of individual members will total 111.

Newsletter: We reaffirmed our earlier decision to publish the next newsletter according to our normal September schedule, mailing it just prior to the regularly scheduled monthly meeting. Barbara reviewed topics and items to be covered, and she received several offers of volunteer help. There was particular interest in publishing a list of recommended readings for members.

Web Site Updates: Bobbie again expressed concern that our web site needs more regular attention. Boryana offered to be of assistance.

Recent Events: a.) Hiroshima Vigil in Andover on August 6; Don thanked all who participated in this moving vigil, attended by approximately 35 people; b.) UJP brunch; Ralph attended and gave rave reports about his experience there, which featured very positive reviews on the Boston Social Forum; Ralph urges other members to attend these valuable brunches each month (next one is 9/26).

Upcoming Events: a.) New York Demonstration, "The World Says No to the Bush Agenda," on August 29; at least 8-10 members will be attending. Bobbie asked us to consider officially endorsing the event. After considerable discussion, with a majority in favor but some opposed, we decided to table the idea. We agreed that we need to develop clearer understandings of limitations placed by our tax-exempt status on partisan political activity by MVPP; b.) Bread and Roses Festival in Lawrence on Labor Day; 9 members intend to attend, and Becci will be the point person for logistics and tabling activity; c.) Concert at Imagine Studios in Newburyport on September 11; Becci is coordinating the tabling and needs one more volunteer to make it work; d.) MVPP 20th Anniversary Benefit Concert on September 18; we reviewed logistics and publicity and ticket sales for this special event; Mary Kate is the point person and Don is handling press releases and fliers; e.) Economic Forum at Memorial Hall Library in Andover, at 7:00 PM on October 19, with guest speaker, Michael Prokosch; Northbridge Alliance will serve as a co-sponsor,

to be joined by other organizations we are also approaching.

Priority Action: Ralph and others voiced special concern that we give particular time, especially at the beginning of the new school year, to the issues surrounding military recruitment in our public schools. In the forefront is the work being undertaken by Jose Cruz and others in Lawrence to educate high school students and parents about how they may exercise their rights under section 9528 of the "No Child Left Behind" Act. Families have the option to request that no information about one's child be disclosed to any military recruiter, without prior written consent. We formally voted to adopt this initiative as a top priority in the coming weeks.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 28, 2004 at 7:30 PM. Given the high importance of many items on the agenda—especially the vote on the organization's name and stated purpose, the planning for the October 19th Economic Forum, and the issue of military recruitment in schools—we encourage maximum attendance.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Abbott, Clerk

To Think About

"Letter to a Young Activist during Troubled Times"

(an excerpt)

by Clarissa Pinkola Estes

"Ours is not the task of fixing the entire world all at once, but of stretching out to mend the part of the world that is within our reach. "Any small, calm thing that one soul can do to help another soul, to assist some portion of this poor suffering world, will help immensely.

It is not given to us to know which acts or by whom, will cause the critical mass to tip toward an enduring good. What is needed for dramatic change is an accumulation of acts, adding, adding to, adding more, continuing. We know that it does not take 'everyone on Earth' to bring justice and peace, but only a small, determined group who will not give up during the first, second, or hundredth gale.

"One of the most calming and powerful actions you can do to intervene in a stormy world is to stand up and show your soul. Soul on deck shines like gold in dark times. The light of the soul throws sparks, can send up flares, builds signal fires, causes proper matters to catch fire. To display the lantern of soul in shadowy times like these -- to be fierce

and to show mercy toward others, both, are acts of immense bravery and greatest necessity. Struggling souls catch light from other souls who are fully lit and willing to show it."

Read by Don Abbot at the end of the Hiroshima Vigil on August 6, Andover.

Palestinian Olive Oil

MVPP is purchasing a case of delicious, flavorful, and distinctive Palestinian olive oil, and will sell bottles at cost for \$12 each to members. We'll start with twelve bottles now, but if the item proves popular, we will order more for February delivery. The olive oil is distributed by the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees (P.A.R.C - www.pal-arc.org), a non-profit organization that develops and markets Palestinian agricultural products. This shipment comes from a small organic farmers union in Tulkarem in cooperation with PARC. Our purchase helps Palestinian farmers whose income has been devastated by Israeli policies of closure and war. The shipment of oil is expected in early October. If you are interested, please contact Becci Backman at raback@ix.netcom.com or 978 475-5679.

MVPP Officers 2004-2005

President: Bobbie Goldman

Vice-President: Kathie Robinson

Secretary: Don Abbott

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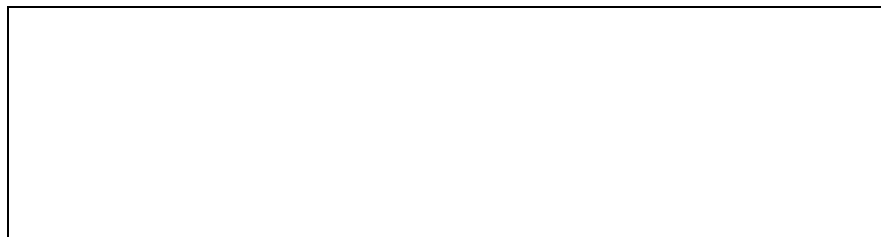
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Insets

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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 up to May 31, 2004)
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Every legislator knows one letter is worth a thousand votes.