



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.

July-August 2005

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

by Boryana Tacconi

The World Tribunal on Iraq, held June 24-27 in Istanbul, condemned the Iraq War and those responsible for it. This assembly was the last of sixteen such hearings on Iraq held over the past two years, including ones in Barcelona, Tokyo, Brussels, Seoul, New York, London, Mumbai, and other cities. The gathering was inspired by the International War Crimes Tribunal that British philosopher Bertrand Russell formed in 1967 during the Vietnam War. The WTI does not pretend to be a legal body whose judgments could be implemented by state institutions such as police or prisons. It is, however, a strong expression of civic conscience and an organ of civil society with its own potential enforcement by way of economic boycotts, civil disobedience, and political campaigns.

The final session had by far the strongest international presence. It generated intense interest in Turkey, Europe, the Arab world and on the Internet, yet was ignored by the American mainstream media. Speakers included Indian writer/activist Arundhati Roy; two former UN Assistant Secretaries General, Dennis Halliday and Hans von Sponek, both of whom had resigned in the 1990s to protest the UN's role in Iraq; independent journalist Dahr Jamail; Tim Goodrich, co-founder of Iraq Veterans Against the War, and others.

The session consisted of three days of hearings investigating the legality of the war, war crimes, and the role of the media, as well as the destruction of cultural sites and the environment. A 15-member Jury of Conscience at the Tribunal heard testimonies from advocates and witnesses who came from across the world, including Iraq, the U.S., and the United Kingdom. After compromise and debate, the jury reached a unanimous verdict that combined findings with recommendations for action and relied on the guidelines of international law. It condemned the Iraq War as a war of aggression in violation with the UN Charter. It determined that those responsible for planning and waging it (listed in the verdict by name) should be held criminally responsible. It further specified that the U.S. media be held responsible for contributing to the war, that American companies doing business in Iraq be boycotted, and that peace movement activists around the world urge the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Iraq. As Arundhati Roy summarized at the culminating session:

"The World Tribunal on Iraq places its faith in the consciences of millions of people across the world who do not wish to stand by and watch while the people of Iraq are being slaughtered, subjugated and humiliated."

A new and growing wave of disillusionment with the war and its main perpetrators has been gaining momentum on several levels during the last couple of weeks. The word "impeachment" no longer represents heresy; it appears in polls, op-eds, and letters to the editor as well as officially released statements and petitions. A Zogby poll shows that by July 1st, 42 percent of the voters believed that Congress should impeach President Bush if it is found that he did not tell the truth about his reason for going to war with Iraq. The calls for impeachment have increased since the publication of what are now known as the "Downing Street Memos."

The national organization "Veterans for Peace" chose the 4th of July for issuing a "Declaration of Impeachment" and announcing that it is beginning an online petition to remove President Bush from office for crimes committed during the invasion and occupation of Iraq. With both wit and gravity, the declaration uses the same language as the original Declaration of Independence, including many of the reasons to remove George Bush that Jefferson cited to disavow the authority of King George of England. Both the declaration and the petition can be read at: www.veteransforpeace.org/impeachment/impeachment.htm.

And a CNN poll on July 12th reported that a majority of Americans now believe the war in Iraq has made the United States less safe from terrorism. The percentage of respondents who feel this way jumped from 39 to 54 percent following the bombings in London.

Now is the time to turn up the heat of resistance!

MVPP Monthly Meeting – North Parish Church – Tuesday, July 26, 2005, 7:30 PM *Printed on recycled paper*
<http://www.merrimackvalleypeopleforpeace.org>

Weekly Vigils

Andover: Sunday, noon-1 pm; Shawsheen Square, Junction of Routes 133 and 28; Lawrence Friends Meeting/ Shawsheen Peace Witness; Allan Sifferlen, asifferlen@sbra.com.

Andover: Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 7-8 pm; Saturday, 10:45 am-noon (in good weather, 10-noon); Old Town Hall, 20 Main St.; Merrimack Valley People for Peace; Lou Bernieri, lbernieri@andover.edu.

Andover: Tuesday, 6:30-7:30 am; in front of Raytheon plant near Routes 133 and 93; Raytheon Peacemakers; Arthur Brien, 978-686-4418.

Gloucester: Saturday, noon-1 pm; Grant Circle.

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

Ipswich: Saturday, 11-noon; at the bottom of Town Hill (Junction of Route 133).

Lawrence: Saturday, noon-1 pm; Broadway and Essex Streets; Lawrence Peace Coalition; Martina Cruz, martina_m_cruz@yahoo.com.

Marblehead: Wednesday, 5-7 pm; at the Peace Pole, Memorial Park (by the YMCA); Tom Gale, 781-631-1218.

Newburyport: Sunday, noon-1 pm; Market Square; Niki Rosen, 978-463-3208.

Reading: 2nd Saturday/each month, 11 am-noon; Reading Square; Reading People for Peace; Bob Connor, bobconnor1@yahoo.com.

Rockport: Wednesday, noon-1 pm; First Congregational Church (silent for peace).

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

Salem, NH: Saturday, 12:30-1:30 pm; at corner of Routes 28 and 97; Henry Misserville, 978-470-0663.

You can buy Rainbow Peace Flags, buttons, bumperstickers, etc. at Saturday vigils in Andover.

Honoring Sister Willie at Our Annual Meeting

by Arthur Brien, with Mary Kate Small

What a joy it was to honor Sister William Julie, S.N.D. at our recent Annual Meeting! We could say Sr. Willie has been a member of MVPP even before its inception, since she belonged to the North Andover People for Peace, as well as the Greater Lawrence Inter-Faith Council for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze (GLI-FC/NWF), groups which led to its formation.

It would take a book to fit all of Willie's mighty accomplishments and tell of how she has touched people since we have known her here in the Merrimack Valley. At the June event we invited several people who have long been friends with Sister Willie to share stories about one who is such a great storyteller herself. Mary Kate Small made opening remarks, remembering the day she met Sister in December of '77 at Saint Mary's High. She then invited Ann Eno, Jane Cadarette, and Arthur Brien to share their various accounts. In this small space we will make a feeble attempt to describe Sister's many activities over the years.

After an assignment in Zimbabwe and other parts of Africa, Sister William Julie Hurley became a soon-to-be-beloved Religion and Science teacher at Saint Mary High School in Lawrence. Back then, some members of MVPP first encountered Willie when Reverend Jim Keller of the Greater Lawrence Ecumenical Area Ministry was forming the GLI-FC/NWF movement. Before long, several of us were learning as well as vigiling together at Avco in Wilmington, where the nosecone for the M.X. Missile was being manufactured. This vigil (every Tuesday morning for many a year) was a community-building experience. It was from this group that we learned of Sr. Willie's compassion for humanity, respect for the dignity of human beings, love of family, and longing to work for peace, justice and the environment--all of which seemed to spring from her great love of God and neighbor. And time with Willie could not be adequately described without mentioning her sense of humor! How we have laughed together...and sung! Ann credits Willie for getting her involved with a most important facet of their lives, singing under Carolyn McDade with the O Beautiful Gaia chorus.

By her many actions and arrests from MA to NY to DC to the Nevada Test Site and the School of the Americas, she has wit-

nessed almost unceasingly. Her concerns led her to participate for two decades in the 20-mile Walk for Hunger and sent her to Nicaragua with Witness for Peace. Her daily work over the years has involved prisoners, troubled teens, and people with HIV/AIDS. She is the founder of Julie House in Lowell, a home for formerly homeless people with HIV. In recent years, her great love and respect for Mother Earth has made her a champion of the "New Cosmology." Her lectures in this important field have inspired and educated many of us to better understand and appreciate our interconnection and interdependence in relation to our planet and all of creation. How wonderful it has been for us to see Sister Willie at work in all these areas!

To you, dear Sister Willie, we again say, "THANK YOU!" You certainly have shared much with us over the years. May you continue to do so as God sees fit. We pray that that will happen in Good Health with us for many years to come.

President's Annual Report at Annual Meeting

Bobbie Goldman, June 17, 2005

This has been another busy and rewarding year for Merrimack Valley People for Peace, as we celebrated our 20th anniversary in so many ways. We're continuing to grow--at our vigils and monthly meetings, as well as our paid memberships, which now include about 100 people!

- We're much more connected with other peace groups in the greater Boston area through our increased participation in United for Justice with Peace activities...meetings, classes, and task forces as well as other area events.
- Other community peace groups know about us, invite us to join them in their activities, and are impressed with our frequent vigils.
- Newspapers are publishing letters to the editor and press releases written by our members, as well as articles about us.
- We've sponsored many peace and justice events (too many to list today), and we are being asked to co-sponsor or pro-

vide our ever-expanding table of goods and educational handouts at numerous events.

- We've participated in large numbers in peace rallies in Andover, Boston, and NYC.
- We helped launch Peace Vision Project, co-founded by our own Jane Cadarette, with a seed grant to try to bring a blinded Iraqi woman to the States for medical care.
- We've been getting involved with counter-recruitment work, working with Noble Larson from Arlington UJP on his DVD of Iraqi Veterans Speaking Out, and having our first big effort at the Hispanic Festival in Lawrence this weekend, both of which we'll share more about this evening.
- Many of us worked hard for a different outcome on Election Day, and though we were temporarily discouraged, we continued our work for peace and justice, encouraged by the tremendous support we bring to each other.
- As our current administration's policies became more and more outrageous, MVPP has become a beacon to many new members who want to join us in our efforts to make the world a better, more rational place.

Many people work hard to make MVPP such an active, productive organization. We have 4 officers and 15 board members who make decisions about endorsements and monetary decisions between our monthly meetings. All 19 members of the board are very active members of MVPP, and their input is invaluable.

This year two officers who have been long-time members of MVPP are passing the baton to some of our newer, active board members, but will continue to be on our board. Kathie Robinson has been a member of MVPP since we were founded 20 years ago as North Andover People for Peace. She has been president, vice president, treasurer, and (probably!) secretary. Kathie, I have always appreciated your values and thoughtful opinions about how and why we should proceed in a certain direction, as well as your commitment to peace and justice issues over the years. Becci Backman will be stepping in as vice-president. Becci has been in charge of our table for a few years now, which involves ordering all our sales items and setting up the table at our Saturday vigils and many other events. She also is in charge of membership and is active with UJP's Israel-Palestine task force. Welcome aboard, Becci! And thanks for all the support you've already provided to me.

Peter Cameron has been a long-term member of MVPP and has been treasurer since I stepped down 5 years ago. Peter, I certainly have appreciated your doing those complicated annual reports for our non-profit status and keeping us informed about our finances. Sue Imhoff will be stepping in as treasurer. She brings a lot of expertise with computers and spreadsheets, which we greatly appreciate, since we have grown so much in scope and membership in the past few years.

A special thanks, also, for Don Abbott, our clerk and current editor of our newsletter, which just keeps getting better and better with each edition. Also, to Barbara Haack, who spent endless hours editing the newsletter for quite a few years before Don took over. Another special thanks to Brian Quirk, our webmaster and bagpiper, who has successfully brought us into the 21st

century, with a website that just keeps on including more and more information. Please check it out if you haven't done so yet. Thanks to Mary Kate Small and Boryana Tacconi for their musical input and to all of you who have been my sounding board these past two years. And finally, thanks to all the vigilers and letter-writers for your ongoing commitment to peace and justice and for the energy you bring to this organization. I'm really proud of us and of the work that we do.

MILITARY FAMILIES SPEAK OUT: Presentations by Nancy Lessin and Charley Richardson Highlight Annual Meeting

Editor's comment: Two of our country's most important peace and justice activists highlighted our Annual Meeting on June 17th with impassioned and reasoned voices of courage, resistance, and conscience. Nancy Lessin and Charley Richardson, co-founders in 2002 of Military Families Speak Out, spoke eloquently as leaders of a growing movement among the military and called for heightened citizen action against illegal, immoral wars, wars based on lies. The force of their stories and testimony demands the broadest possible hearing. We are grateful to them for providing the texts of their speeches so that we may share the extensive excerpts that follow. For further information about the work of MFSO, see www.mfso.org.

From NANCY LESSIN:

Background

"Thank you for inviting us to speak, and thank you for the amazing work you all have been doing to end this war. Two and a half years ago my husband, Charley Richardson, and I had no idea we'd be making presentations like this...."

"What we did know in August, 2002 was that my stepson – Charley's son Joe – a Marine, was deploying for Kosovo. He told us at that time that he would be ending up in Iraq – and indeed he did.

"Fall, 2002 was when the drumbeats for war were getting deafening, and Charley and I noticed that all those saying 'We gotta go to war!' weren't going anywhere – nor were their loved ones. It was OUR loved ones who would be used as cannon fodder in a war that was about oil markets and dreams of empire.

"We made our first poster, with Joe's picture on it. It said: *"Our Son Is A Marine – Don't Send Him To War For Oil!"*

"We met a father whose son was about to deploy, and in a phone conversation in November, 2002 the three of us decided to break the military's code of silence that extends from the military to its families and beyond – and form **Military Families Speak Out**. Our goal was to support our loved ones and all our troops by trying to prevent an invasion of Iraq.

"Today **MFSO** includes over 2,200 military families from across the country – with new families joining every day. Many families are from right here in Massachusetts and over the border in New Hampshire. Over 60 families are Gold Star families – whose loved ones paid the ultimate price, in a war that should never have been. Our goal now is to end the occupation, bring the troops home NOW, take care of them when they get here,

and end the policies that allowed this unjustifiable war to happen.”

Countering the charge that we're unpatriotic

“... We hear things like, ‘Your loved ones volunteered! There’s no draft! They knew when they signed up they might have to go to war! Quit whining!’

“Our experience in the labor movement actually helped us formulate our response to that one --

“All of our loved ones took a vow – they signed a contract – saying they would put themselves in harm’s way if necessary to protect Country and Constitution. But there is no part of this war that is about protection of Country and Constitution. AND...

“We know that contracts have two sides. The implied vow of the military and the government is that it will never send our servicemen and women into illegal, immoral wars, into wars based on lies.

“That’s the side of the contract that has been broken, and this Administration, backed by the majority in Congress, betrayed all of our troops – and their families, and this nation.”

Iraq War as a local issue

“Right before Mother’s Day we were with Rose Gonzalez, an **MFSO** member from Somerville who was, at that time, about to have her second child (she has since given birth to a beautiful son). While many were preoccupied with what to get their mothers for Mother’s Day, Rose knew exactly what she wanted to send her mom:

- A Kevlar vest with ceramic plates, and
- Armor for her Humvee

“In her civilian life, Rose’s mom works for the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority. She’s now with the Massachusetts National Guard, running convoys in Baghdad.

“Remember the National Guard – firefighters, police officers, teachers, EMT’s, others, who signed up under the banner ‘Stay At Home And Serve Your Country,’ ... who have now been sent half-way across the world into a war based on lies. We’re now working with some members of the Massachusetts legislature to look at the impacts of the deployment of the National Guard on soldiers, families, communities, and the state... those hidden costs of war that need to come to light. This war isn’t just a national, foreign policy issue – it’s a local issue that is affecting all of us.”

How to respond to “We can’t leave now”

“It does seem that more people in this country are coming to the conclusion that this war is wrong. But many get stuck in a place that says, ‘Well, we can’t leave now.’

“We see that the U.S. occupation of Iraq is in fact the problem, not the solution. Iraqis get targeted because they are seen as collaborators with a foreign occupation. What needs to happen is to remove the foreign occupation. We do not know exactly what things will look like when we leave. We do know what they will look like if we stay. We are gasoline on the fire.

“On an encouraging note, last month Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey from California introduced an amendment calling for President Bush to present a plan to Congress to bring the troops home from Iraq. She said, ‘*I honor and support the brave men and women who are serving our country in Iraq, and I believe that the best way to support them is to establish a plan to bring them home.*’ 128 members of Congress, including all 10 members of the Massachusetts Delegation and five Republicans from around the country, supported Congresswoman Woolsey’s amendment. Unfortunately, 300 voted against it. But it’s an important start.

“And yesterday, Congressman John Conyers held a hearing in the Capitol regarding the ‘Downing Street Memo’ – the minutes from the meeting in London in July, 2002 that show the premeditated nature of the Bush Administration’s rush to war and their activities in ‘fixing evidence’ around a war policy they had decided on long ago. Cindy Sheehan, a co-founder of Gold Star Families for Peace and a member of **MFSO**, spoke eloquently about the death of her son in Iraq on April 4, 2004, and the right of all in this country to know the truth and the whole truth about this war.

“Congressman Conyers took a letter to President Bush at the White House following the hearing – this letter had the signatures of 122 Members of Congress and 560,000 people in the United States – demanding answers about the issues and facts that came out in the ‘Downing Street Memo.’

“Today, Congresswoman Maxine Waters announced the formation of a Congressional ‘Out of Iraq’ Caucus – with fifty Members of Congress to begin with. Congressman John Tierney was among them.”

Taking care of our returning Iraqi veterans

“No service man or woman comes back from Iraq with the assurance of being safe or sound. They’ve been exposed to things that will put them at risk for decades to come – Depleted Uranium, trauma that causes Post Traumatic Stress Disorder...

“... Lance Cpl. Jeffrey Lucey, a 23-year-old Marine Reservist from Western Mass. didn’t come back the same, in the summer of 2003, after fighting in the battle of Nasariyah. One year ago this weekend his parents, members of **MFSO**, had him committed to the VA hospital; but the VA released him after four days, saying they wouldn’t even test him for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder until he got his alcoholism under control [this young Marine was doing what’s called self-medicating... using alcohol in this case to try to dull the pain]. Three weeks later, on June 22, 2004, his father came home to find his son hanging from the rafters in the basement by a garden hose. He had taken his own life to escape from an indescribable pain.

“Too many are dying on the battlefield or in its cross-fire in this war – but many more are dying in their souls because of what they saw and what they did in a war that should never have been.

“This nation must do a much better job of taking care of our soldiers when they come home – but that’s not enough. We must be doing all we can do to stop them from having to go off to this unjust war in the first place.”

A growing membership of mutual support and public commitment

“A few weeks ago we got a quick note from a young Marine on a ship heading home from Iraq. He said, ‘I’ve heard about you from my wife. We will talk later. Thank you for what you are doing.’ We then got an email from his wife, a member of MFSO, who wrote:

What my husband didn't tell you is that he's planning on applying for conscientious objection when he gets back. ...[He] went from joining the Marines and thinking it was the right thing to do to opposing war completely in any form. He's even against using guns at all! I think he's always been this way but it took the past year for him to figure it out. ...I can't thank you enough for what you do. Having this organization has changed my life in such a positive way. Not only do I have wonderful support that I just couldn't have found on my own, but I also have made connections (press, etc.) and learned how to come to terms with standing up for what I believe in even if most of the mainstream population is scared to do so. ...[We] plan to get even more involved with the peace movement and standing up for our beliefs--including educating young people about alternatives to military (or at least educating them about the reality of military life). It's not that we're against the military--just militarism and the corrupt aspects of the way that the military is run.”

From CHARLEY RICHARDSON:

Background

“I have to say that it is a little weird that I am up in here in front of so many people who have been fighting for peace for so long. The reason that I am up front here is because of a decision that my son made long ago, a decision that we opposed and tried to talk him out of. To make it even stranger – our son is the one who worked for the American Friends Service Committee in Cambridge one summer and his dog tags identify him as a Quaker. He is, in some ways, the most religious of us all. It is indeed a confusing world we live in...”

How the Bush Administration got us to go to war

“If we are going to stop this war, we have to talk about how they got us to go to war in the first place.

“Well, first they learned the most important lesson of Vietnam – don’t threaten to send the sons and daughters of the well-off and the politically connected.

“Then they lie about the reasons for war.

“They hide the true cost of the war.

“They use fear. FDR said that ‘the only thing we have to fear is fear itself.’ This administration has turned that on its head, and instead is using fear as a weapon against the American people.

“They send our kids off to war and then say that we are unpatriotic and unsupportive when we speak out, when we raise questions of truth and justice.

“I have to say here that it is amazing how the leaders of the religious community have been strangely silent about this war – as this immoral force imposes its will on the world.

“And they have left all of us feeling disempowered and discouraged. They have made many give up.

“There is a conspiracy in the United States, a conspiracy of fear, of silence, and of economic coercion. A conspiracy that allows wars to happen and traps young and working people in them.”

The trap set for young and working people

“It goes like this:

“First you eliminate all of the good steady jobs that people can get coming out of high school.

“Then you raise the cost of a college education beyond the reach of so many.

“Then, to add injury to despair, you make health care unaffordable.

“And by the way, you work to undercut pensions and destroy social security.

“And you leave the military as one of the few viable options for those who can’t afford or aren’t ready for college.

“And you fill young people with video game visions of honor and courage – of wars with no pain.

“And you fill them with promises of camaraderie, of life with a purpose, of skills and education and travel, of steady pay, of service to country and community....

“(Do you know how to tell when a recruiter is lying?)...And you teach them how to beat a drug test, and fake a diploma.

“And then the trap is closed. Just as surely as the draft of 35 years ago.

“There is a draft in this country – a draft that mainly affects poor and working people.

“A draft that leaves them with few economic choices, a draft that stops losses when they have done their service and keeps them in the military involuntarily.”

The lethal trap: being sent to your death

“We received this e-mail from a father about his son who wanted to get out at the end of his enlistment, stating:

My son is a Marine who just returned from his second combat tour in Iraq at the end of February. He and others were asked to extend with his current battalion until October 2006. He chose not to do so and was quickly cut orders to another battalion leaving this summer. He is being sent to Haditha, Iraq in the Anbar Province about 100 miles from the Syrian border.

The new battalion he was sent to fought in Fallujah, where they had 33 killed and 300 wounded. Needless to say they are very short on experience so as punishment for not extending they are being sent right back. They immediately made my son a (leader of a team) which has all new boots with no combat experience.

“The most troubling thing to me is what comment came from his old command. They said that the ‘non-extendors are being sent to their death.’

“This is not an isolated incident. We’ve heard many similar stories.”

Despite the record of complicity of Congress, signs of hope

“Just a couple of weeks ago, I gave a speech that pointed out that the Senate had just voted 100-0 to continue funding the war.

“I had to repeat it, because even though I’ve read it many times, I couldn’t believe it.

“The Senate had just voted 100-0 to continue funding the war in Iraq. \$82 billion worth of death and destruction under the banner of supporting our troops.

“Washington has thoroughly abandoned us, even as more politicians admit in private that the war is wrong.

“Washington has abandoned us, and the administration has worked to hide the true cost of this war.

“That’s what I said then – but today there is a more hopeful message as the members of the House of Representatives have undertaken three separate initiatives to work to end the war – the resolution calling for an exit strategy supported by some of the most conservative elements of the Congress, the creation by Maxine Waters and others of the ‘Out of Iraq’ caucus in Congress and the effort by John Conyers and others to demand that the President respond to questions raised by the ‘Downing Street Memo.’

“Now is indeed the time to turn up the heat, to re-double our efforts.

“Jim McGovern, a Congressperson from Massachusetts who recently returned from Iraq, wrote a column the other day stating:

What worries me almost as much as our misguided policy in Iraq is that so many of my colleagues and so many citizens have become resigned to the fact that the war will go on. Congress is not being inundated with letters and phone calls and faxes and e-mails and street protests demanding an end to our presence in Iraq.

“Politicians have never ended wars – we know this. It is social movements that end wars and we have to continue to build the one that will bring this war to a close. Congress needs to hear from us, every day, all the time. We need to carry the message:

*Not one more Day
Not one more Dime
Not one more Life
Not one more Lie*

*End the occupation
Bring the troops home now
And take care of them when they get here.”*

REFLECTION

Editor’s note: Nancy Lessin concluded her presentation at the Annual Meeting with a reading of the following piece written last February by an anonymous, young American soldier who is due home soon from a tour of duty in Iraq:

“Duffle Bags”

As I leave my metal box that I have called home for the last year, I carry two duffle bags. The first is full of the gear and clothing that has offered me survival and protection. The other bag is harder to see with the uncompassionate eye. I have filled the second with guilt. The shame for the part I have played in this campaign in Iraq. It is more useless than the first. However, it is a burden I must carry.

The ritual a soldier goes through to fill a duffle with the maximum amount of gear is a wrestling match. It took every trick in the book to fit all my soul debt into the long green bag. First I rolled everything tight and squeezed it down pinching and tucking to wedge it in. As it filled I punched the sides. I held the edges and smashed my foot into the opening. I dropped it again and again like packing cigarettes. After fitting all my bad karma inside, I had to sit on it while pulling and straining to clip the top closed. Out of breath I finally collapsed on top of the bulging bundle.

The duffle will be dragged around with me perhaps for the rest of my life. From home to home. Town to town. Until I am too old to lift it. Then I will lay down beside the large duffle and crawl inside to die.

So when you see a soldier returning home with a duffle bag at a bus stop, an airport baggage claim, or being stuffed into a taxi, think about what is inside the bag. It might be rolled clothing of browns and tans. Or, it could be dark secrets that he will never reveal to his family.

The soldier will not put his burden upon you. But if you feel any responsibility for the weight of it, you may carry it for a while if it would make you feel more decent. And if you forced him to open it, perhaps every one can take a little with them to relieve the strain of those who served. It might be a reminder that we are all at fault for America's role in the violence in the Middle East. However, a soldier is trained to sacrifice. He will take the burden to the grave or make a grave out of it if he must.

Recent Action/Events

by Becci Backman, with Don Abbott

Andover Days

On June 4th, MVPP inaugurated its new canopy at Andover Days, sponsored by the League of Women Voters and held on the Andover Common. From 10 am to 3 pm, MVPP members Becci Backman, Masood Sheik, Peter Cameron, Barbara Haack, Boryana Tacconi, and Kathie Robinson talked with mostly newcomers to Andover about MVPP, our current work, and ways in which to become involved to effect more sane policies by the U.S. government. While sales at the table were far from brisk, there were many lively conversations.

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

\$20.00 Individual
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MVPP is registered with the IRS as a 501(c)(3) organization. Contributions to MVPP are tax deductible. **“2005” on your mailing label indicates that your membership is paid only through May 31, 2005. “2006” means that your dues are current. Otherwise, now is the time for the renewals.** Last year, approximately one-third of our members joined/renewed at higher than the basic rate.

State House Hearings on B. U.’s Bio-Lab, HR 1397, Rep. Gloria Fox’s Bill.

On June 9th, MVPP members Becci Backman and Peter Cameron joined more than 300 citizens of Greater Boston in Gardner Auditorium at the State House to support Representative Gloria Fox’s legislation which seeks to regulate Level 2, 3 and 4 so-called “BioSafety Labs.” The supporters included many UJP coalition members, a strong showing of young activists from Boston Mobilization, and concerned residents from the Roxbury neighborhood where Boston University proposes to construct a Level 4 BioSafety Lab (Level 4 facilities test mostly biological agents for which there is no known antidote or cure). The panel of professionals with public health, bio-ethics, medical and scientific expertise emphasized the need for the proposed legislation, because there are no state or local regulations to address issues of transparency, accountability, health, and safety for such a facility. At the present time, beauty salons and land fills have more state and local oversight. The Joint Committee on the Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture, which conducted the hearing, was engaged and asked pointed questions of both the proponents of the legislation and BU’s experts, who argued that no additional legislation is needed. In response to very direct questioning, BU finally admitted that its opposition is largely premised on the moratorium to construction that implementation of the statute and regulations would entail. Delay, in all likelihood, would lead to the facility being built outside of Massachusetts, where opposition is not organized and such legislation might not be demanded. See also p. 8.

Water Privatization--“Thirst”

On June 12th MVPP members Don Abbott, Becci Backman, Jane Cadarette, and Sue Imhoff, accepted the invitation of fellow member Joan Kulash (People for the Environment) to attend a screening of the documentary “Thirst” with a discussion led by Jonathan Leavitt of Mass Global Action and Water Allies Network. Held at North Parish Church in North Andover, this was an eye-opener about a critical issue with local, regional, national, and global dimensions. We urge members to become more informed about the abuse of private water systems at “Our Communities, Our Water” (www.massglobalaction.org/water). Watch for future screenings in the area. Also see Books of Note on p. 9.

Cambridge Common--230th Birthday of the Army On June 14th, the 230th Birthday of the U.S. Army, June 14, the Cambridge Common hosted an Army encampment, complete

with Humvees, paratroopers parachuting from Blackhawk helicopters, and a sophisticated Army recruitment truck containing video games, give-away items and personnel eager to enlist young people. More than 200 demonstrators ringed the encampment, chanting throughout the ceremony. They included Michael Sullivan, the mayor of Cambridge, Army brass, and families of serving and fallen soldiers. MVPP member Becci Backman joined the demonstrators, who were quickly shown that the Cambridge Tactical Police Force (TPF), armed and dressed in black from head to toe, would tightly control the event. Before the ceremony began, three demonstrators, including Joe Gerson of AFSC, were arrested for failure to move quickly enough when ordered to do so by TPF. The chants may not have been polite and respectful enough for some in attendance, but as the Army was departing, Becci was approached by an Army major who thanked the demonstrators for our presence and message.

Semana Hispana in Lawrence

This year MVPP again participated in the weekend culmination of Hispanic Week in Lawrence. On Saturday, June 18, we set up our canopy and tables with the express purpose of distributing counter-recruitment materials and providing a reality check about enlistment in the U.S. military. We enjoyed warm hospitality from the community. We spent time at the table and roaming the throngs distributing literature and buttons in both Spanish and English (“Students Not Soldiers” and “Demilitarize Our Schools”) from noon until nearly 8 p.m. Fourteen members and friends returned Sunday, June 19, to be the lead group (after the Queens of Semana Hispana of various ages) for the Hispanic Week Parade. We carried PEACE flags and periodically chanted “Bring the Troops Home, Now/Bring the Troops Home” and were cheered as we marched. Following the Parade, we again distributed counter-recruitment literature until 4 p.m. Counter-recruitment is a high priority activity of MVPP, and we made valuable contacts for future work in Lawrence. Members who generously gave of their time included Lawrence residents Martina Cruz and Dilenia Rodriguez, Don Abbott, Becci Backman, Arthur Brien, Peter Cameron, Bobbie Goldman, Sue Imhoff, Brian Quirk, Boryana Tacconi, Melinda Taranto-Garnis, and Jim & Mary Todd.

Local Action/Issues

Counter-recruitment and DVD Project, by Becci Backman, with Don Abbott

Education and action on the issue of counter-recruitment remain one of the top current priorities of MVVP. Working in conjunction with UJP, AFSC, and other regional and community groups, we seek to dispel myths about the realities of military service, refute false information provided by military recruiters and advertising, and inform young people and their families about their rights in the presence of aggressive military recruitment. We respect those who believe they have a duty to serve their country through military service, but we stand for independent and informed choices by all.

One of our major projects is financial and consultative support for an important DVD project, due for completion before the end of summer. Spearheaded by the significant volunteer effort of Noble Larson, Arlington UJP member, the DVD will feature well-indexed footage of the Boston-area tour of the Iraq Veterans against the War in winter 2005 and subsequent interaction between veterans and youth in the Teen Empowerment program in Boston.

The DVD, entitled ***Iraq Veterans Speak Out***, contains excerpts of speeches by Michael Hoffman, a Marine Corps Lance Corporal, and Kelly Dougherty, an MP who served in Iraq with the Colorado National Guard. It also includes speeches by Military Families Speak Out (MFSO) members Rose Gonzalez, whose mother was called up from the Massachusetts National Guard, and Debra Lucey, the younger sister of Marine Reservist Corporal Jeffrey Lucey, who committed suicide after returning from Iraq, failing to receive the mental health assistance he needed. Those speeches, introduced by Nancy Lessin and summarized by Charley Richardson, co-founders of MFSO, comprise the first 45 minutes of the DVD. Additional footage includes presentations by Michael and Charley at the inter-city youth organization, with lively Q&A. Remarks by Boston City Councilor Chuck Turner, tour organizer John Harris, and MFSO member Diane Quinones conclude the piece. The entire DVD is approximately two hours long.

MVVP helped finance the production of the DVD, and members have provided valuable editing advice to make the presentations more effective for use in counter-recruitment and informational settings. The final version will be available in August, at which time MVVP will begin its broadest possible distribution.

In the meantime, with continuing assistance from people like Bill Sweet at AFSC, we continue to disseminate flyers and educational information at major events such as the upcoming Lowell Folk Festival. We also will seek meetings with public school administration, religious leaders, community organizations, and parents.

Ironic editorial footnote, stated bluntly by MVVP member Lou Bernieri at a recent vigil in Andover: "George Bush is our greatest counter-recruiter!" The more the current administration "stays the course" with this immoral, illegal, and unjust war, the more our elected leaders lose their legitimacy in the eyes of the American public.

Brief Updates

a.) **B.U. Bio-Lab**. With the help of Boston Mobilization, we continue to monitor this critical issue closely. Following the June 9th hearing at the State House, it appears that Gloria Fox's bill will be rewritten by the Joint Committee before going to the floor for a vote. The position of Speaker of the House Salvatore Dimasi will be a key factor in the future of this legislation. Members should contact him (617-722-2500) to support regulating the proposed lab with the highest standards for safety and health. Meanwhile, we learn from Mobe that on July 11th, "African-American and Latino residents of the South End and Roxbury filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), alleging that the location of the proposed Boston University BSL4 Bioterrorism Laboratory violates Title VI of the Civil Rights Act."

b.) **BeNow, Inc. of Wakefield, MA**. This local marketing firm, under a Pentagon contract, is creating a database on all high school and college students in the country to boost the effectiveness of the recruiting and retention efforts by all of the Armed Services. BeNow, Inc. uses computers to analyze large amounts of data to target potential customers based on their personal profiles and habits. Questioned as a serious breach of the Privacy Act, which was passed by Congress to reduce the government's collection of personal information on Americans, this matter is becoming a major counter-recruitment priority among regional peace and justice groups. On July 14th, MVPP members Don Abbott, Becci Backman, Bobbie Goldman, and Boryana Tacconi attended a planning meeting at the offices of Boston Mobilization. For further updates: www.bostonmobilization.org/.

Letter to the Editor

London Terror Attacks Hurt Islam and Muslims
Lawrence Eagle Tribune; published July 12, 2005

As an American Muslim I wish to express my abhorrence at the barbaric attacks, grieve for those who were killed or injured and offer my condolences to those who have lost their loved ones. I also call for swift apprehension and punishment of the perpetrators, whoever they are.

I sincerely believe that those who commit such acts of terror in the name of Islam are not only destroying innocent lives, but are also betraying the clear commands of the faith they claim to uphold: The Quran equates killing of even one innocent person to killing of the whole humanity (5:32). No injustice done to Muslims (in Palestine, Bosnia, Iraq or elsewhere) can ever justify massacre of innocent people. Also, no act of terror can ever serve the cause of Islam or the Muslims who have been wronged, killed or oppressed.

While we grieve for those who perished in these attacks, let us not allow George W. Bush and Tony Blair to manipulate our grief and anguish to justify their illegal occupation of Iraq, which has left 100,000 innocent Iraqis dead, many more thousands injured and thousands more imprisoned and tortured. We must seek an end to this and all terrorism.

Sincerely,

Masood A. Sheikh, North Andover

Books of Note

Recommended Reads, compiled by Don Abbott

William Sloane Coffin: Letters to a Young Doubter, Westminster John Knox Press, 2005. Just published and modeled after Rilke's Letters to a Young Poet, an exchange of fictional letters between Coffin and a bright young college student, offering sage advice about faith and doubt in the face of ever-more confusing and complex problems in today's world. The author, a life-long peace and justice activist and a force for progressive religion in America, issues a compelling call for "a politically engaged spirituality."

Tony Clarke: Inside the Bottle: An Exposé of the Bottled Water Industry, The Polaris Institute (www.polarisinstitute.org), 2005. An essential resource about a major, yet relatively unpublicized, ecological issue: abusive control of public water systems. A vivid and disturbing portrayal of how four companies--Nestlé, PepsiCo, CocaCola, and Danone--dominate rural and public water resources, paying little or next to nothing for them, marketing them at huge profits, and distributing them in plastic bottles made from environmentally destructive, toxic material. Critical and practical education about what communities can do to challenge and resist.

Gene Sharp: Waging Nonviolent Struggle: 20th Century Practice and 21st Century Potential, Extending Horizons Books, Porter Sargent Publishers, Inc., 2005. Written by perhaps the world's preeminent scholar and writer in the field of nonviolent action, this book is an indispensable resource for activists and policymakers. A powerful encyclopedia, clearly organized, very readable, and filled with case histories, practical advice, and reflection. Moreover, as one reviewer says, "Sharp's research provides solid evidence and reasoning that can sustain realistic hope for persons of any temperament...a provocative program for world social improvement enriched by new historical experience and analysis."

Robert Shetterly: Americans Who Tell the Truth, Dutton Children's Books, Penguin Group (USA) Inc., 2005. In response to 9/11/01, this artist turned to the enduring examples of citizens in American history, from all walks of life, who stood for truth and told it both in thought and in action. He produced a stunning collection of portraits, accompanied by the individuals' stirring personal words, presented in this volume as a gallery show. One might question the suitability of such a volume for young readers--such is the complexity of the grounding words and concepts of those who challenge the status quo. Yet, the demand to nurture truth tellers and responsible, courageous citizens is such an urgent, lifetime mandate, that one must start at the earliest years.

Patwant Singh: The World According to Washington: An Asian View, Common Courage Press, 2005. Written by one of India's leading commentators on international and cultural affairs and the environment, this a potent and urgent book, grounded in profound understanding of the long history of Western rule over Asia, especially the misuse of American power through direct and indirect interventions since World War II. An Asian voice that courageously asks Americans to look at themselves as others see us, and to rethink our country's quest for hegemonic power before it is too late. Should Americans ignore this book, it would be at their great peril.

Hiroshima / Nagasaki 60th Anniversary Remembrances

Selected Regional Activities & Events, August 2005.

For complete, up-to-date listings: www.justicewithpeace.org/

Tuesday, August 2

5:30 pm to 6:30 pm: Copley Square Vigil (Dartmouth & Boylston St., across from Library).

7:00 pm: Film "Radiation: A Slow Death, A New Generation of Hibakusha" at Community Church of Boston, 565 Boylston St, Boston. Sponsored by Women's International League for Peace & Freedom (WILPF) Boston & Community Church of Boston. Premiered at Tufts in April, this film makes connections among the hibakusha survivors of the atomic bombs, Gulf War veterans suffering from Depleted Uranium exposure and "downwinders" from a nuclear power plant in Washington State.

Saturday, August 6

****CHURCH BELL TOLLING TO MARK 60th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BOMBINGS****

8:15 am: coinciding with the hour of the first bombing at Hiroshima, bells will toll in various regional communities.

10:00 am to 12 noon: MVPP will be remembering Hiroshima during our regular vigil in front of Old Town Hall at 20 Main Street, Andover.

12:00 noon to 2:00 pm: Brookline Peaceworks Vigil, Coolidge Corner.

1:00 pm to 2:00 pm: Park Street Vigil (at Tremont & Park St.), near main subway exit.

3:30 pm on: Sponsored by Watertown Citizens for Environmental Safety; 617-926-8560, mailbox 2; www.watertowncitizens.org/.

3:30 pm to 5:30 pm – Film "Radiation: A Slow Death, A New Generation of Hibakusha," art and photo exhibit, discussion; St. John's United Methodist Church, 80 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown.

6:30 pm to 7:15 pm – Public reading of John Hersey's Hiroshima; also at St. John's Methodist Church.

7:15 pm – Procession from St. John's Church to Watertown Square with posters.

7:30 pm – Vigil in Watertown Square.

8:30 pm – Move to Charles River Dock for reflections, music, and the floating of candle boats.

Sunday, August 7

11:00 am: Peace Sunday at Old South Church, 645 Boylston St., Copley Square; worship service featuring New England Peace Pagoda, music by Kaji Aso Studio performers, Japanese songs and hymns of peace, scripture readings and sermon with themes of peace and stories from Hiroshima, prayers for peace from many faiths, and display of origami cranes.

2:00 pm: Hibakusha Peace Project Performance by Jane Bernhardt, Minoru Ishikawa, Greta Bro, Peter Meyer and Friends, Old South Church, Copley Square. For further information: Jennifer Mills-Knutsen, 617-425-5153.

Monday, August 8

5:30 pm to 6:30 pm: Arlington UJP will be remembering Hiroshima and Nagasaki during their weekly vigil at the intersection of Pleasant Street and Mass. Ave. in Arlington Center.

6:30 pm to 8:00 pm: MVPP Vigil to Commemorate the Eve of the 60th Anniversary of the Bombing of Nagasaki, Old Town Hall, 20 Main Street, Andover, MA. Beginning at 7:00 pm, a microphone will support voluntary sharing of poetry, stories, personal reflections and music. Additional information: Don Abbott at 978-474-9253 or bdabbott@comcast.net.

Tuesday, August 9

6:30 am to 8:30 am: Join the regular weekly vigil of the Raytheon Peacemakers and Merrimack Valley People For Peace at Raytheon in Andover (350 Lowell Street, at the intersection of Routes 93 and 133). Please bring banners and signs. Overnight hospitality can be provided upon request. For further information, contact Mary Kate Small at 978-474-0606.

Other Upcoming Events

compiled with the help of Sue Imhoff

Sunday, July 24 through Sunday, August 7: Exhibit of Jane Smith Bernhardt's "Hibakusha Peace Project." Portraits with stories and poems of A-bomb survivors. Performance piece on Sunday, August 7 at 2:00pm. Additional information: 617-536-1970. Gordon Chapel, Old South Church, Copley Square, Boston.

Friday, July 29 through Sunday, July 31: Lowell Folk Festival. The largest free folk festival in the nation; three days of traditional music, dance, craft demonstrations, street parades, dance parties, delicious ethnic foods--7:00 pm to 10:00 pm on Friday, 11:00 am to 11:00 pm on Saturday, and noon to 6:00 pm on Sunday. For further information: www.lowellfolkfestival.org/. **MVPP will display at its table on Saturday from 11:00 am to 8:00 pm, especially concentrating on counter-recruitment information and discussion. Do join us on French Street, near Borderhouse Park**

Sunday, July 31, 6:30 pm: Forum on the "Downing Street Memos," featuring Congressman Barney Frank, State Representative Gloria Fox, and constitutional lawyer John Bonifaz, who is co-founder of a national campaign (www.AfterDowning-Street.org/) calling for a full congressional investigation into whether the President has committed impeachable offenses in connection with the Iraq War. **Arlington Street Church, 351 Boylston St., Boston.**

Sunday, July 31 through Friday, September 30: Exhibit of "African Peace & Reconciliation Symbols." The Seacoast African American Cultural Center, in conjunction with Portsmouth, N.H.'s 100th Anniversary Celebration of the Signing of the Peace Treaty, opens a special exhibit of African Peace symbols rendered by the students of Richard Haynes's Fundamentals of Design class at McIntosh College. Reception on July 31 from

6 pm to 8 pm. Additional information: 603-862-2050. Connie Bean Community Center (2nd floor), 135 Daniel Street, Portsmouth.

Tuesday, August 2, 7:00 pm: Seacoast Peace Response film: "About Baghdad." In July 2003, Sinan Antoon, an exiled Iraqi writer and poet, returned to his native Baghdad to see what became of his city after decades of wars, sanctions, oppression and occupation. Antoon takes us along on his quest to explore what Iraqis feel and think about the post-war situation and the complex relationship between the U.S. and Iraq. An independent film by InCounter Productions, "About Baghdad" is a journey into the hearts and minds of Iraqis encountered in Baghdad. For more information contact Amy Antonucci amyla44@juno.com 603-750-7506. UU Church, 292 State St. in Portsmouth.

Saturday, August 6: THE SHADOW PROJECT. The Shadow Project is political art, by the people, for everyone. People all over the world will make chalk shadows on the streets of our cities, remembering the human shadows burnt into the streets of Hiroshima by nuclear bombs. We do this on the eve of Hiroshima Day, August 6th, with the hope of preventing nuclear shadows from ever being cast again. For the 60th Hiroshima Day commemoration in 2005, we want to again go global with the International Shadow Project. The Cold War may be over, but with the lapse of treaties and nuclear oversight, and research to build new atomic bombs, the threat of nuclear disaster is closer than most people think. Recently our fears have been focused on terrorism, but the old terrors have not gone away. Create a Shadow Project in your town or city to raise public consciousness and generate pressure for our leaders to examine nuclear dangers again. Learn how and check schedule of activities in Massachusetts at: www.ShadowProjectHome.org/.

Friday, August 12 to Sunday, August 14: Special Nonviolent Communication Weekend Workshop. Led by Sura Hart, a certified trainer with the International Center for Nonviolent Communication (CNVC), CNVC contact person for the U.S. Schools Project, and co-author of The Compassionate Classroom: Relationship Based Teaching and Learning. Tuition: \$175 for full weekend, \$100 for Friday night and Saturday only. See www.nvcboston.org/. **Cambridge College, 1000 Mass. Ave., Cambridge.**

Tuesday, August 30, 7:30 pm: "Worlds Apart: 9/11 First Responders Against War." Documentary film by Tom Jackson, peace and media activist, who traveled to Afghanistan in May 2004 and July 2005 with Ground Zero for Peace. Previously, Tom worked with Voices in the Wilderness and produced "Greetings From Missile Street," which looked at the effects of economic sanctions on Iraqi civilians. Further information at www.joepublicfilms.com/. **World Fellowship Center, Albany, NH (www.worldfellowship.org).**

Tuesday, September 6, 7:00 pm: Slideshow "An Imaginary Axis of Evil: Iran from the Inside" and discussion with Anne Miller, director of NH Peace Action, who attended a ten-day women's "Building Friendships" delegation to Iran this spring. The trip was partially motivated by the growing concern that the US may either take or sanction military action against suspected nuclear facilities in Iran within the next year. While in Iran, the delegation met with a number of diverse NGOs and with many ordinary Iranians in the cities of Tehran, Yazd and Esfahan. Free and open to the public. For more information: Amy Antonucci, amyla44@juno.com or 603-750-7506. **UU Church, 292 State St., Portsmouth, NH.**

Friday, September 9 through Sunday, September 11: New Hampshire Peace Action's World Fellowship Weekend with Kathy Kelly. For further information: 603-228-0559 or www.nhpeaceaction.org.

Saturday, September 24 through Monday, September 26: **SAVE THE DATES! END THE WAR ON IRAQ!** Sickened by the killing, the torture, the destruction, and the spiraling human and financial costs of the illegal and immoral war? Join United for Peace and Justice for three powerful days and action to tell Congress and the White House that we are fed up and will hold them accountable! Three Days of Action: Saturday the 24th--March On Washington to End the War On Iraq; Sunday the 25th--Interfaith Service/Grassroots Training; Monday the 26th--Lobby Day/Nonviolent Direct Action/ Civil Disobedience. Send email to ujpcoalition@yahoo.com for additional information. Other information: Becca at 617-491-4857. **Washington D.C.**

Excerpts of Minutes

MVVP Meeting: 6/28/05

Don Abbott, Clerk

(See our website for the posting of full minutes.)

Treasurer's Report: Peter reported that we have a current balance of \$4,407.54. We gratefully acknowledged Peter's work as Treasurer for the past five years, as he turns the books over to Sue Imhoff. We authorized appropriate purchases of software to enable Sue to manage data on our budgets as we go forward.

Funding Decisions: We voted to make the following three donations: a.) \$200 to Seacoast Peace Response for the Scottford Simunyu Defense Fund; b.) \$100 to AFSC in recognition of its counter-recruitment work and recent support of our efforts in this area; and c.) \$100 additional to Military Families Speak Out, in further recognition of their significant work.

DVDs about the Iraq Veterans against the War: This project is moving ahead very well. We expressed gratitude for all the work that Noble Larsen has put into it. 11 members screened the recent version at Bobbie's home last week; Bobbie will host the next screening at 7 PM on Thursday, July 21. Since we will have hundreds of DVDs available by mid- to end of August, we had a lengthy discussion of how best to put them to use. We decided that we would not sell them, preferring to make them readily available at no charge and recognizing that we supported their creation (fronting \$500 or about half of their costs) as an educational tool for broad use. The DVD has considerable potential as a means to help students understand the nature of war, and this one in particular, and to make informed decisions about military service. We all are thinking of the best ways to help the greatest numbers of students, parents, community organizations, churches, schools, etc. to see it and discuss its implications. The agenda of the July monthly meeting will devote much time to this, since we need to be ready as the new school year begins. In the meantime, Sue has volunteered to be the person to gather/receive ideas from everyone in the group.

Upcoming Programs and Events: a.) If we can get a permit, we plan to have a table at the Lowell Folk Festival on July 30 and 31. Becci, Boryana, Niki, and Sue expressed interest in being there to help. We authorized up to \$100, if a fee is required with the permit. b.) We plan to have a table again at Bread and Roses Festival in Lawrence on Labor Day (noon to 6 pm), and we authorized payment of the requisite \$25 fee.

c.) Some members are planning to participate in the mobilization being planned for September 24-26 in Washington, DC.

d.) Save the date of Saturday, October 29, for another rally/march being considered for Boston. e.) Carlos Mejia will be coming to our area on a speaking tour in November, and we will investigate a few possibilities for sponsoring events at regional venues in Greater Lawrence.

Commemorating the 60th Anniversary of Hiroshima and

Nagasaki: Bobbie circulated a full schedule of regional activities being planned in and around Boston. We then confirmed that in Andover, in addition to our regular vigils on Saturday morning on the 6th and Sunday noon on the 7th, we will hold a special vigil on Nagasaki Eve, at 7 pm on August 8, in Old Town Hall Square, and a two-hour vigil from 6:30 pm-8:30 pm at Raytheon on Tuesday, August 9. Don will be the point person for the former, and Arthur and Mary Kate will coordinate the latter. Regional groups and the general public will be invited to both. Niki also reported that there will be a special vigil in Newburyport from 8:00 am-9:30 am on August 6. She expressed interest in enlarging two very moving photos for use at these vigils (and beyond). One depicts "The Unkillable Human," a sculpture of an "evaporated victim" of an atomic bomb; the other, an image of "The Tear of War." Barbara volunteered to help Niki pursue this plan, and we authorized an expenditure of appropriate funds for their production, if deemed feasible.

Officers and Board Members

The following slates of officers and board members were approved by votes at the Annual Meeting on June 17. (Full minutes of the meeting are posted on our website.)

Officers

President: Bobbie Goldman
Vice-President: Becci Backman
Secretary: Don Abbott
Treasurer: Sue Imhoff

Board of Directors

2003-2006: Peter Cameron, Henry Misserville, Brian Quirk, Kathie Robinson, Mary Kate Small
2004-2007: Lou Bernieri, Ralph Galen, Joan Kulash, Masood Sheikh, Mary Todd
2005-2008: Arthur Brien, Jane Cadarette, Barbara Haack, Brenda McCarthy, Boryana Tacconi

REMINDER: MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

MVPP's membership year ended May 31. Many thanks to all who have already renewed. If your address label reads "2006", your dues are current. Otherwise, please send your check soon to save us the expense of personal reminders. More than a third of our members renew at higher than the basic level. Please consider a larger donation. It will be money well spent!

For savings of budget, paper, and postage, **please indicate with your renewal if you would prefer to receive the MVPP newsletter via e-mail, instead of regular mail.**

Merrimack Valley People For Peace
P.O. Box 573
North Andover, MA 01845-0573

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

*TIME TO RENEW
(see pages 7 and 11)*

PEACE IS
PATRIOTIC

The MVPP Newsletter is printed monthly and has a current mailing of 160. We are grateful for suggestions, comments, and help with publication. (2005 on your mailing label indicates that your 2004-2005 dues have expired on May 31, 2005)
MVPP President: Bobbie Goldman. Vice President: Becci Backman. Newsletter Editor: Don Abbott. Newsletter contributors: Becci Backman, Arthur and Margaret Brien, Bobbie Goldman, Sue Imhoff, Brian Quirk, Masood Sheikh, Mary Kate Small, and Boryana Tacconi.

CALL AND WRITE YOUR REPRESENTATIVES & SENATORS TO MAKE YOUR VIEWS KNOWN

President George W. Bush

The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500
White House Comment Desk: 202 456-1111
E-mail: president@whitehouse.gov

Senator Edward M. Kennedy

304 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
202 224-4543 fax: 202 224-2417
2400 JFK Building, Boston MA 02203
617 565-3170 fax: 617 565-3183
Form: <http://kennedy.senate.gov/contact.html>

Senator John F. Kerry

304 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
202 224-2742 fax: 202 224-8525
One Bowdoin Sq., Boston, MA 02114
617 565-8519 fax: 617 248-3870
Form: <http://kerry.senate.gov/text/contact/email.html>

Representative Martin Meehan (District 5)

2447 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
202 225-3411 fax: 202 226-0771
305 Essex Street, Lawrence, MA 01840
978 681-6200 fax: 978 682-6870
E-mail: martin.meehan@mail.house.gov

Representative John Tierney (District 6)

120 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
202 225-8020 fax: 202 225-5915
17 Peabody Sq, Peabody, MA 01960
978 531-1669 fax: 978 531-1996
E-mail: <http://www.house.gov/tierney/email.htm>

A link to all in US legislature:

<http://thomas.loc.gov/home/legbranch/legbranch.html>

How Senators and Representatives voted:

Senate: http://www.senate.gov/pagelayout/legislative/a_three_sections_with_teasers/votes.htm
House: <http://clerk.house.gov/evs/2004/index.asp>

State Voting Information: Look up who you vote for at
<http://www.wheredoivotema.com/bal/myelectioninfo.php>