



Merrimack Valley People for Peace

Serving the communities of the Merrimack Valley

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

OCTOBER 2003

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

Good Attendance Twenty people attended our September MVPP meeting, including three young people interested in starting some youth chapters!

Cruz Candidate MVPP friend Martina Cruz is seeking a seat on the Lawrence School Committee. She recently helped plan the participation of those from Massachusetts who joined the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride finale in New York.

MVPP Website a Hit The newly created MVPP website is attracting people. There were 109 hits by October 12! Go to www.merrimackvalleypeopleforpeace.org.

Patriots React On October 1 the Chicago City Council passed a resolution condemning the USA Patriot Act, becoming the largest U.S. city to show its rejection of the Ashcroft-Congress brand of patriotism. Chicago joins Minneapolis, Detroit, Baltimore, Philadelphia, San Francisco, a host of smaller cities and towns, and two states, Alaska and Hawaii.

Farm Stand The World Trade Organization talks collapsed in Cancún because the major developing countries refused to cave in to U.S. and European demands. In the October 2003 issue of *Peacework*, Arnie Alpert reports that agriculture was the main issue of contention. Despite their advocacy of "free trade," the U.S. and E.U. continue to subsidize their own agriculture, allowing the richest nations to flood developing countries with cheap food, forcing small farmers into deeper poverty and off their land. Mexico now imports more U.S. corn than it grows due to U.S. corn subsidies. Developing countries are uniting "to present a platform of reform in agriculture" at next year's WTO meeting.

Land Rules Stand On October 7 the Supreme Court refused to consider overturning former President Clinton's order protecting more than 2 million acres on Federal land in five Western states.

Now Hear This The U.S. Navy has agreed to limit the peacetime use of a new high-intensity sonar as part of a federal court settlement with conservationists who contend that the sonar may inflict deadly harm on whales, dolphins and other marine animals. The agreement comes as scientists have amassed a growing body of evidence that military sonar is responsible for the deaths of whales and dolphins. Some scientists believe that intense bursts of sonic waves can shake and tear delicate tissues of the ears, brain and other organs, causing hemorrhaging, disorientation and death. Others believe that deep-diving whales and dolphins may panic at loud sounds and shoot to the surface too fast, damaging their internal organs with expanding gas bubbles similar to human divers who die of the decompression sickness known as the bends.

MVPP monthly meeting - North Parish Church - Tuesday, October 28, 7:30 PM

Printed on recycled paper

Remarkable Women, continued

In previous MVPP issues we have reported on the trial of three Dominican nuns, Jackie Hudson, 68, Ardeth Platt, 66, and Carol Gilbert, 55. They are now in prison for pouring their blood in the shape of crosses on missile silos as a symbolic gesture against what they believe to be illegal weapons of mass destruction. Jackie Hudson wrote the following (slightly edited) to another nun in Grand Rapids, Michigan, who has forwarded it to everyone:

This has been quite a saga since sentencing, to say the least. Four nights in the ineptly run Washington County Jail in Akron, CO (pop. less than 1,000). Was driven to Denver Federal building in the early morning of the 4th day. Picked up by the federal marshals and taken to Teller County jail in Divide, Co. – another small, relatively new facility, housing mostly state prisoners waiting to be taken to state prisons. I was placed in isolation and told that I would stay there until the marshals came to take me to Oklahoma. There was one bunk and one toilet, no TV or newspaper, only one book after 2 days of asking. Then supporters called the media, the media called the jail and by the afternoon I was moved into the general population! Thank you!! Thank you!!

Tuesday of the 6th week in Teller, I was told to pack and was driven to Pueblo County jail where from 4pm to 4am, was held in a holding tank, trying to sleep on a cement floor. There were three of us in the cell. We were then taken upstairs for a physical. Stripped of our clothes, we were told to shower, “bend over, spread your cheeks” and cough. The guard then issued us our black and white horizontal striped uniform and we were taken to the women’s pod. The lights went on at 5:30 am so we had a very short night. No coffee and a half of an orange for breakfast. I went to sleep until lunch!

Carol and Ardeth arrived in the afternoon. We had a grand reunion! At 5 am we were awakened by the guard and told to pack. We, along with 2 other women were driven to the Pueblo Airport. We hobbled aboard in ankle shackles, belly chains and handcuffs, were searched and not allowed even the smallest piece of paper. The plane went to Great Falls, Montana to Seattle (Boeing Field)

to OK City, picking up and dropping off people along the way. We arrived about 5:30 pm. There we got 4 pieces of Wonder Bread, one piece of bologna, an 8 oz bottle of water, an apple and a package of crackers and peanut butter. That was dinner! Lunch had been 3 packages of crackers and peanut butter!

We were again stripped, examined and issued a uniform. At 10:30 pm we were assigned a cell and at 5 am (seems to be the magic time of day) Carol and I were awakened and told to pack up because our plane was leaving this morning. We were again stripped, examined and issued a clean uniform. We were given 2 boiled eggs, 2 pieces of Wonder Bread and an apple for breakfast. Carol and I were called out shortly after that. It happened so fast we didn’t have a chance to say goodbye to Ardeth. (She will be leaving Tuesday for Danbury.) Carol was going east and I was on the one heading west. My solitary journey had now begun. There were about 100 men and women on the plane as well as 10 marshals. We landed at Travis Air Force Base where some

prisoners destined for Dublin were removed. We then flew to an abandoned AFB. We (2 women and several men) were taken off, patted down and

placed in a van and taken through acres of abandoned AFB housing (all destined to be torn down instead of being used for low income housing). Intake consisted of filling out the same forms we had filled out in OK City just the night before. Again doing what they do best - stripped, examined, and given a new uniform-this time dark green. We were interviewed by a PA and a psychologist and assigned a dorm. There are 280 women here at Camp. The women are employed in the newly constructed men’s addition, scheduled to open within the next year. I am on a lower bunk just inside the door. 20 women. There are 12 bunks, and four are unoccupied if you want to join us!! Most of the women are in a huge room divided into cubicles for two, 8 cement blocks high, with a bathroom/shower room off this area. There are 4 TV rooms along the hall (no chairs provided, and we are not allowed to sit on the floor)

The women’s warm welcome has been overwhelming. Susan Crane’s friend Alix, from Dublin, is here, as is Judy Birnbaum from the SOA. We met at supper the first

“A Patriot must always be ready to defend his country against its government.”

Edward Abbey, naturalist and author, 1927-’89

Special action

A Call for 20,000 Voices

Voices in the Wilderness calls for 20,000 or more citizens of the world to raise their voices in outrage against the injustice and hypocrisy of the lawsuit the US Justice Department has issued to Voices in the Wilderness to try to collect a fine of \$20,000 for bringing medicines to the people of Iraq. Go to www.petitiononline.com/usvvitw/petition.html

night. Blanca, from Clear Creek, is here also. Several of the women have come up and mentioned seeing articles about our action. For work, we are dressed with everything – uniforms, t-shirts, bras, pants, socks plus 1 pair of steel-toed boots for work. Tomorrow, Monday, will be my first day of work. Wake up call is at 5:30 am, breakfast 6 am to 7 am, pill line for meds 6 am to 6:15 am and 7 pm to 8 pm, lunch 11 to noon and dinner after the 4 pm count. Saturday and Sunday breakfast is from 7-8 am, lunch after the 10 am count. Otherwise we are pretty much on our own to use the library, track, etc. The sunsets have been spectacular. Mars is so clear these nights. All in all things are going fine.

Jackie's address is: Jacqueline Hudson 08808-039, Federal Prison Camp-Victorville, PO Box 5100, Adelanto, CA 92301

Recent History

September 22 Five members of the Massachusetts Congressional delegation (Reps. Capuano, Frank, McGovern, Olver and Tierney), and the 14 communities that have passed resolutions upholding civil liberties were honored for refusing to sign the USA PATRIOT Act at a "Champion of the Constitution" event sponsored by the ACLU at the State House.

October 4 The Immigrant Workers Freedom Rally in NY: After a "photo-op" by the newspaper *Rumbo*, four MVPP and 16 "Latinos for Justice" members from Lawrence boarded a chartered bus (organized by Martina Cruz,) to Flushing Meadow-Corona Park, Queens, New York, to rally with the 900 freedom riders, many of whom had been traveling for as much as two weeks and attending rallies in more than 100 cities across the United States. The rains held off as over 100,000 people rallied in the shadow of the Unisphere, symbol of the 1964-65 World's Fair. Union, civil rights and peace activists spoke of the urgent need to protect immigrant workers and the time being now to grant le-

gal status to illegal immigrants. We were impressed by the organization of the event, the quality of the speakers, and the incredible spirit and commitment to undertake the fight for justice. As Representative John Lewis, D-Ga., and an organizer of the 1961 civil rights freedom rides summarized for us all: "We are one people, we are one family, we are one house, and we are not going to let anybody turn us around. We've come too far." We ended the trip by shouting as a chorus "¡Sí se puede!" ("Yes, we can!") – Becci Backman and Arthur Brien.

October 10 The first ever World Day Against the Death Penalty sponsored by the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty. This event was designed to reinforce and strengthen the international movement for the universal abolition of the death penalty.

October 10 MVPP member, Sean Donahue, led a discussion on *War, Repression, and Resistance in Colombia* at Cambridge Insight Meditation Center. He also is Project Director of the Corporations and Militarism Project of the Massachusetts Anti-Corporate Clearinghouse. He has traveled to Colombia on three human rights delegations sponsored by Witness for Peace.

Coming events

October 25 Washington D.C., March and Rally in Washington, DC to end the occupation of Iraq. MVPP members will write a first-hand report about this protest. As of this writing,

Reading List

The Unconquerable World: Power, Nonviolence, and the Will of the People, by Jonathan Schell. One reviewer described it as "not decidedly rah-rah, etc, but rather, intellectual scaffolding."

The New Nuclear Danger: George W. Bush's Military-Industrial Complex, by Helen Caldicott, who recently gave a sobering talk on "Health, Environment and the New Nuclear Danger" at Concord Academy, Concord, MA. She is a prominent spokesperson for the antinuclear movement, Nobel Peace Prize nominee and inspiration to generations of activists.

we expect tens of thousands of people who oppose the war, invasion and occupation of Iraq to unite for a truly massive outpouring of popular opposition to the Bush Administration's foreign and domestic program.

November-January 2004 The Amesbury Public Library, in cooperation with the Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities is sponsoring a four part series of scholar-led book discussions on Understanding Islam, exploring the roots of Islam and some of the most important issues facing Muslims today, covering the following themes: "Muhammad and the Koran," November 19, 7-9 pm; "Islam and Literature," December 10, 7-9 pm; "Women and Islam," January 7, 2004, 7-9 pm, and "Islam and Politics," January 28, 2004, 7-9 pm. Books will be distributed, and a trained discussion leader will lead open discussion. For questions: Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities, 66 Bridge St., Northampton, MA 01060, 413-584-8440, www.mfh.org.

November 8 Sakowich Campus Center, Merrimack College, North Andover "Shaping the Future of Essex County -Practical Solutions for Sustainable Growth"- A unique opportunity to learn during an all day conference how you can help meet the local and regional challenges to smart growth and development. Marc Draisen, Executive Dir. Metropolitan Area Planning Council and a member of the Massachusetts Smart Growth Alliance will speak. Other topics include: "How Did We Get Here and Where Are We Headed," "The Essex County Landscape - Its History and Future," "A New Vision for Lawrence."

November 9 International Day Against the Wall, a date coinciding with the fall of the Berlin Wall, events and actions will take place worldwide against the Wall that separates Israel from Palestine. Go to www.stopthewall.org, to learn more about the Campaign.

November 21-23 Fort Benning, Georgia. Join thousands from across the Americas at the gates of the U.S. military base - home of the notorious School of the Americas (renamed *Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation*) - to stand in Solidarity with the victims of the School of Assassins and to speak out against terror and violence. Cross the line - engage in nonviolent direct action to make your voice heard, to close the SOA/WHISC, and to change oppressive U.S. foreign policy. www.soaw.org/new.

November 25 Join MVPP for its annual "stone-soup supper" at 6:30 pm for a simple meal of soup and bread. Becci will provide the soup base; please bring items to add to the soup, or some bread. Thanksgiving is a traditional time of reflection about the hungry people in the world, and a time of giving. Instead of a more substantial meal, we will be contributing to OXFAM. After a brief busi-

ness meeting at 7:30, Jane Bernhardt, a 3rd generation portrait artist, performer, and peace activist, will share her portraits, narratives, and the poetry of Hibakusha, the Survivors of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, from her trip to Hiroshima in August.

December 2 Rogers Center for the Arts, Merrimack College. Join us for A Night with Noam Chomsky, a benefit for the Massachusetts Anti-Corporate Clearinghouse, co-sponsored by MVPP, 7 pm. With more than 70 books to his credit and an inexhaustible supply of articles and speaking venues, Chomsky's legendary worldwide stature has grown without the help of the mainstream media. A frequent critic of the corporate and government controlled major media, Chomsky seeks to engage Americans in real dialogue around complicated topics. Tickets are \$7. Call 978-683-3967.

Hope and Humor Keep Us There: Reflections of a Peace Vigiler

by Don Abbott, September 28, 2003

On the evening of March 16, 2003, hundreds of vigilers assembled in the center of Andover, MA, in solidarity with citizens in communities around the globe who simultaneously witnessed for a peaceful alternative to the imminent invasion of Iraq. On the evening of the day after the onset of war, a handful of these people returned to the scene to continue the vigil, and ever since a steady band of a dozen or more individuals has maintained an hour-long vigil five days per week. Several, including this writer, have since joined Merrimack Valley People for Peace.

"Tonight is our 6th-month anniversary. We've been here for half a year."

Boryana startled me with this declaration at a recent vigil. By mid-September, we had generally noted the passing of time because now we were beginning once again to light candles against the growing darkness, just as we did the day after we invaded Iraq. But could it be half a year?

A kaleidoscopic memory began to kick in, images falling in and out of time and place, as I let Boryana's revelation carry me where it would.

- More than 225 people overflowing the square at Old Town Hall, in concert with hundreds of thousands of like-hearted souls gathering at 7 pm, following the setting sun around the globe in their home communities; everyone lighting the darkness with the unconventional hope that a mad juggernaut could somehow be stayed.
- A commitment by some of us to meet on the evening of the day after the invasion, followed by a same-time-same-place invitation which soon led to a surprisingly clear need, im-

In this issue, we present the first of a two part series on two MVPP vigil groups. This month we highlight the diverse group from throughout the Merrimack Valley who vigil against the war in Iraq in downtown Andover. Next month we will highlight the smaller, yet no less important group that has been protesting for years at the Raytheon Plant in Andover.

mediately felt, to keep it up. Why? It didn't exactly matter; each of us had reasons, and we seemed open to an uncertain journey and whatever discovery it would offer.

- So we felt our way along, in the cold and brilliant full moon and windswept icy rain, and the gradually brightening spring evening. And what began as an everyday witness settled into a Mon-Wed-Fri-Sat-Sun. sequence.

Whatever the ensuing, steady weeks of vigiling may have communicated to the public, it has become an intensely important, shared experience for each of us. Desmond Tutu was so right to remind us in Cochran Chapel last May that we become human through other human beings. That's what a dozen or so of us have been trying to become for all these months. The affection we have discovered and expressed for each other and the solidarity we have created (not to mention the vital, updated news and commentary we have exchanged) surpass anything I ever could have imagined.

But because we primarily are there to communicate with anyone who passes by, mostly anonymous people with unpredictable moods and responses, the vigils can be difficult at times, requiring an even-keeled, good humor and self-restraint in the face of hatred, fear, ignorance, and intolerance. From the outset at least two dialectical realities have been clear to us: 1) Xenophobia, for generations a notorious American trait, is all too alive and well today in our land and yet, 2) A clear and growing majority of responding people are in favor of our messages, close to 60% from the beginning and now approaching 80% and higher.

Although in the minority from the start, the voices of hatred and fear on the street were almost overwhelming during the first month.

"Shoot 'em. Bury 'em. Dig 'em up, and shoot 'em again. They're savages."

"We already got the Sand Niggers. We blew 'em all up."

"Do the fuckin' Iranians next!"

As our second month passed and people began to notice that we had not gone away, we sensed our emerging opportunity to engage the public in the issues, especially as the invasion gave way to occupation and casualties daily mounted for the Iraqis and our troops.

Vigiler's sign: **This War Was Not the Answer**

Passerby's question: *"What is the answer? Got that one?"*

Vigiler's reply: *"Justice."*

Passerby: *"Don't you know? The war is over. We won. You lost."*

Vigiler's reply: *"What did we win?"*

People would stop and initiate conversation with us, sometimes to argue their justifications for the war, often to ask questions and even admit uncertainties. I had an especially poignant and somewhat lengthy discussion with a young man in his mid-20's who approached me on crutches. Serving in an Army Reserve Unit on Cape Cod, he had suffered a knee injury that required major surgery and prevented him from shipping out with his unit. He first wanted to know if we were against all war in principle or had qualms about this one in particular. I responded in the latter instance, citing my opposition to "pre-emptive" invasions and my concern over our use of depleted uranium munitions. He was proud of his training and his men, but anxious about their safety and conflicted about the turn of events that had kept him home. His in-laws live in the area and his wife was due to deliver their first child in a few months. We parted, separated by many differences but respectful, and I called out, *"I hope you'll take awhile to heal."* He returned an ironic smile and disappeared into the darkness.

Other responses developed from the natural inclinations of individual vigilers. We wrote and distribute a handout *Why We Still Vigil*, with useful website resources on the flip side. By mid-summer, both the Stars and Stripes and the Earth Flag flew regularly with our multicolored Peace flags from Italy. In August, some of us stocked a table with fliers, important news articles and commentary, and items for sale—flags, bumper stickers, buttons, and the critically important book on depleted uranium, *Discounted Casualties*. This display is now a feature of every Saturday morning vigil, when numbers of pedestrians stop, browse, and linger for conversation.

I wish I could remember who wrote or said something I scribbled down in a notebook at least 20 years ago, because his or her words capture what has carried us along these months: *to laugh one another into fruitfulness and courage for the long haul*. Ah, the sudden glory of humor as it keeps us human, if not deft and on our toes! How many times we have split our sides laughing at comic visitations.

– A woman who stopped after passing us on the sidewalk, turned and said in all seriousness, *"Get a job. And when you get some money, you can become a Republican."*

– The jogger who christened us *"Saddam's Glee Club."*

– The bicyclist who jeered at us as he sped by, *"I eat Hippies for breakfast."*

– The motorist who stopped to say, *"Jeez, if there wasn't a war in the first place, you wouldn't be standing there!"*

– The driver with the ultimate pronouncement, *"Jesus supports the President."*

– The mother of two, pre-teen daughters who parked her SUV at curbside to give us a piece of her mind, conclud-

Weekly Vigils

Lawrence, Saturday, 12-1:30 p.m., Broadway and Essex St., Lawrence Peace Coalition.

Raytheon, Route 133, Andover. Tuesday, 5:45-6:45 a.m.

Reading, second Saturday of the month, 11-12, Reading Square, Reading People for Peace.

Andover, Sunday, Noon-1, Shawsheen Square, Routes 133 and 28.

Andover, Mon, Wed, Fri, 7-8 p.m., Sat, 10:00-noon, Old Town Hall, Main St., Lou Bernieri 978-475-6847

MVPP is selling brightly colored peace flags from Italy! The flags are flying to great curiosity and interest at weekly vigils in Andover, Lawrence, Reading and Wilmington. The price is \$10.00 plus any voluntary contribution for MVPP. Contact Bobbie at bg@comcast.net to learn how you, too, can be proud owner of a peace flag!

ing with, *"We could have had a woman President with PMS, and she'd have pushed the button by now. Yeah!"*

– Our latest curbside banter... suggestions for a vigil sign: *"I Am a Patriot Act"* and for bumper stickers: *"Bush/Cheney '04: Leave No Billionaire Behind"* and *"Vote Bush in 2004: I Has Incumbentory Advantitude."*

With tragedy forever wed with comedy, the grave urgency of peace work continues. And it will endure well beyond whatever the outcome of the 2004 elections, as long as pandemic poverty and injustice, the conditions that create war and terrorism, prevail across the world. Enter humor as progenitor of long-haul fruitfulness and courage. A Japanese proverb reminds us, *"Time spent laughing is time spent with the gods."* Laughter is more than a stay against either burnout or senselessness. If we dare to let it, it will link us, if not to the divine, then to a spiritual wellspring of resistance and possibility: in spite of everything, yes!

That's the source of hope that the Andover vigilers have become for me. And now into our seventh month, I need these hearty friends more than ever. Just yesterday,

– An elderly man spoke with some disdain, *"Have you been in the Service?"* I tried to reply, *"We all are, sir."*

– A driver accosted me through his open window, *"What about all those who died in New York?"* I replied, *"We mourn them. We knew some of them. But violence begets violence."* "Oh, he muttered, *"That's so 3rd grade."*

– A storeowner on Main Street confronted me at the end of the morning vigil as I was stowing my flag in the back of the car, *"How old are you? You know who Hitler was. Don't you remember World War II? Surely you know all about Hitler, don't you!"*

And there was even more today, in Shawsheen Square:

– A motorist, at the red light, rolls down his window: *"You think that little sign and that little flag will protect you against the Jihadists?"* I asked, *"Do you feel safer now than you did on 9/11?"* "Yes, I sure do!" he affirmed. *"Even though our invasion and occupation are breeding more terrorists?"* I asked. *"You better keep you head low,"*

he warned, deadly serious.

– A backseat passenger yells out, *"Why don't you grow some balls and join the military?"* I reply into thin air, *"Why indeed!"*

– Another driver: *"So you want anthrax in your coffee?"*

Thank heavens, Mike was at the opposite curbside, and I called over to him, *"The venom is really back these days."* He was quick with an upbeat reply, *"Maybe because the message is getting through."* I turned my signs back toward the oncoming traffic: **Bush Lied, Thousands Died** and **No Justice, No Peace**.

A sedan slows to a halt in the midst of the Square, just next to the small island where I stand, and through his open window a gentle, middle-aged stranger offers, *"Thank you, my brother,"* and heads off again on his way.

As the prophet and activist, The Rev. William Sloane Coffin Jr., would always say, it is faith that puts us on the road and hope that keeps us there.

Minutes MVPP

September 23 Attendance: Don Abbott, Becci Backman, Lou Bernieri, Arthur Brien, Jane Cadarette, Bill Callahan, Peter Cameron, Sean Donahue, Angela Galen, Ralph Galen, Bobbie Goldman, Eli Grober, Barbara Haack, Henry Misserville, Brian Quirk, Kathie Robinson, Thea Shapiro, Masood Sheikh, Mary Kate Small, Aviva Stahl, Simone Stahl, Boryana Tacconi, Jim Todd, Mary Todd. We were pleased to welcome such a large group, especially students Angela Galen, Eli Grober, and Aviva Stahl.

Becci reported regarding memberships that there are 58 individuals on paid status, with 34 other active members and 7 inactive still to renew. We decided to follow a suggestion to send newsletters to both offices of our elected representatives, locally and in DC. Noting that 2004 is the 20th year for MVPP, Becci urged us to celebrate the milestone with an effort to add dramatically to our membership. We agreed that it was especially important to connect with students, perhaps with the

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- contributions are tax deductible. "2004" on your mailing label
indicates that your membership is paid through May 2004.

establishment of student chapters.

Re sale items, Becci reported that the Bread and Roses Festival had brought in about \$300 and the response from street sales netted around \$50 additional. We have sufficient supplies of items, including a good quantity of flags, to tide us over for several more months. We warmly thanked Becci for her leadership in these efforts.

Treasurer: Peter reported a current balance of \$2,385.55.

We reviewed the list of working groups; volunteers work in the following areas ("point person" underlined):

Newsletter: Barbara Haack, Lou Bernieri, Arthur Brien, Michael Frishman, and Bobbie Goldman.

Membership and Outreach: Becci Backman, Arthur Brien, Angela Galen, Ralph Galen, Eli Grober, Barbara Haack, Henry Misserville, and Aviva Stahl.

Publicity: Jane Cadarette, Kathie Robinson, and Mary Todd.

Handouts & Brochures: Lou Bernieri and Boryana Tacconi.

Web Page: Brian Quirk, Don Abbott, and Bobbie Goldman.

Program & Events: Don Abbott, Henry Misserville, Jim Todd, and Boryana Tacconi.

Others, including Masood, Mary Kate, and Boryana, kindly offered to help wherever needed.

We reviewed the success of recent events, including the Bread and Roses Festival, the Sept. 10 vigil, and the Sept. 14 program on depleted uranium. We noted that the regular Andover vigils, still five times weekly, are now in their seventh month. We quickly shared updates on several upcoming events, including the Stone Soup dinner on November 25, which is our regular meeting date, and our potluck dinner in early January. Mary Kate reminded us of the January 23, 2004, concert featuring Pete Seeger, sponsored by the *People's Music Network for Songs of Freedom and Struggle*.

We voted to make a contribution of \$50.00 to North Par-

ish Church in memory of Dana Fisher.

We discussed the need for a microphone or bullhorn for our vigils, and Don and others will look into various options.

A vote on whether and how much to contribute to Professor Tony Van Der Meer's defense was tabled until next month.

Sean Donahue then presented background on plans for a night with Noam Chomsky, December 2, at the Rogers Center for the Arts at Merrimack College. It will be a benefit for the Massachusetts Anti-Corporate Clearinghouse. Organizations are being asked to join as co-sponsors, and we enthusiastically voted \$100 to do so. MVPP will be listed in the program. This event will sell out quickly. Tickets (\$7 each) will be available shortly at 978-683-3967.

We closed the meeting with brief discussion about planning future programs. We recognize the need to be as focused and clear and strategic as possible as we move forward, while maintaining the larger picture. We also want to strike an appropriate balance between education for ourselves and programs and outreach for the greater public. Suggestions included programs devoted to the substantive work of teaching non-violence, connecting with veterans' groups, speakers like Howard Zinn, "regime change" at home, a report by Jane Bernhardt on her recent trip to Hiroshima, civil rights and the Patriot Act (Nancy Murray from ACLU), Mike Prokosch from United For A Fair Economy, and follow-up on the program about depleted uranium. The working group on program and events will meet in the coming weeks to try to focus and refine some of our thinking for this year. They will report their suggestions at the October meeting.

The next monthly meeting is 7:30 pm, Oct. 28. Shelagh Foreman, Director of Mass Peace Action, speak about their Campaign for a New Foreign Policy.

Respectfully submitted, Don Abbott

Merrimack Valley People for Peace

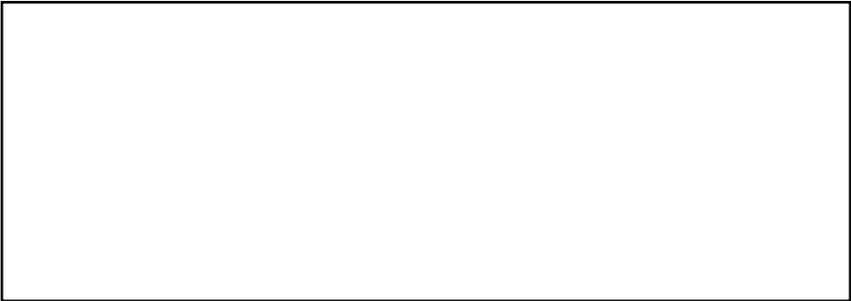
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www.Merrimackvalleypeopleforpeace.org

**PEACE IS
PATRIOTIC!**

Stone Soup!
November 25
See page 4



The MVPP Newsletter is printed monthly and has a current mailing of 120. We are grateful for suggestions, comments and help with publication. ("2004" on your mailing label indicates that your 2003-2004 dues have been paid.)

MVPP President: Bobbie Goldman Vice President: Katherine Robinson

Newsletter Editors: Barbara Haack, Michael Frishman, Bobbie Goldman, Lou Bernieri, Arthur & Marguerite Brien

**CALL AND WRITE YOUR REPRESENTATIVE AND
SENATORS AND MAKE YOUR VIEWS KNOWN**

*Everyone knows one picture is worth 1,000 words.
Every legislator knows one letter is worth 1,000 votes.*

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

315 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
202-224-4543 fax: 202-224-2417
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