



Merrimack Valley People For Peace

Serving the communities of the Merrimack Valley

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

September 2006

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

Boryana Tacconi

Articles featuring MVPP members have appeared recently in the Boston Globe, in the Wilmington Advocate and in the Daily News of Newburyport. "A Veteran Sings for Peace" with a great photo of Pat Scanlon on the front page of the Globe Northwest section Boston Sunday Globe (08/27) focuses on Pat's new songs "Where Is the Rage?" and "I've Got a Feeling I've Been Here Before." The online edition of the Globe even offers the option of listening to both songs! MVPP president Bobbie Goldman is interviewed at length in "Not To Be a Bystander" in the Advocate (08/31). And Niki Rosen and her stalwart vigil for peace are portrayed in another front-page article: "Protester Has Peace of Mind", which appeared in The Newburyport paper, exactly on September 11th.

Congratulations to Bobbie, Pat and Niki and let us welcome the fact that our friends were given the opportunity to share their views on war and peace with the readers of three different newspapers within a short time! Is a new trend on the rise? Let us hope so.

MVPP Recipient of Grant for Counter Recruitment

On September 16th, MVPP received a very generous \$1,000 grant from Sisbros, a non-geographical covenant community, of which Anne Broyles and Larry Peacock, MVPP members, are participants. Having read about our efforts to reach youth, particularly those who are being heavily recruited from Lawrence, Anne solicited more detailed information about the counter recruitment work MVPP has undertaken and the funds we've expended. She advocated for MVPP, then graciously presented us with this one-time grant to "help MVPP expand its counter recruitment efforts." Heartfelt thanks to Anne and Larry for securing these much needed funds, and we hope to have several accomplishments to report to Sisbros in the coming months.

September 5th saw the opening of **Camp Democracy** – an exciting 3-week peaceful demonstration right in the middle of Washington D.C., on 14th Street and Constitution Avenue. The organizers and main participants belong to a large number of groups - Military Families Speak Out, Veterans for Peace, Iraq Veterans Against the War, Gold Star Families for Peace, Code-Pink, just to mention a few – but everyone is welcome to join and think, speak, listen and act on important concerns. The main theme of the camp is the need to end the war and take good care of the veterans once they come back home. A lot of excellent speakers come with a broad spectrum of messages, demonstrating that war affects all parts of American life. Immigrants' rights, labor issues, and climate crisis are some of the hottest topics, at first glance not directly connected to the war, but actually parts of a deeply interconnected whole. Speakers include Arun Gandhi, Antonia Juhazs, Ray McGovern, Marcus Raskin,

Scott Ritter, Howard Zinn and many more. Singers and poets tell about their vision for America in verse and song. New documentaries and movies on the need to end the war and on environmental and social justice issues bring their powerful message. The entire inspiring schedule of Camp Democracy can be found on www.campdemocracy.org with a complete list of speakers, musicians, artists and movies.

Members of Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW), Veterans for Peace, and Oregon constituents achieved a major victory in the case of Army Specialist Suzanne Swift. Swift was arrested and confined to base for going AWOL after her charges of sexual harassment and assault did not get appropriately addressed by the military. On September 12, attendees of the gathering *Camp Democracy* won a pledge from Oregon Congressman Peter DeFazio to initiate a congressional investigation into Swift's case. DeFazio made the pledge after a planned action of activists visiting him personally and constituents flooding his office with phone calls, e-mails and faxes in support of Suzanne Swift. IVAW released a statement saying: "*Congressman DeFazio has taken an important step toward ending military sexual violence despite the military's unwillingness to follow its own procedures and regulations. This is a good first step toward making sure there is never again another Suzanne Swift.*"

MVPP Monthly Meeting – First United Methodist Church – Tuesday, September 26 – 7:30 PM .
<http://www.merrimackvalleypeopleforpeace.org/>

Printed on recycled paper

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.

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

Nashua, NH in front of Nashua City Hall from 11 to Noon every Sat. www.nashuapeace.org

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).

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

On August 31, 22-year-old Army Specialist Mark Wilkerson turned himself in to Fort Hood in Texas, after being AWOL for more than 18 months. Prior to that, he gave a press conference at Camp Casey in Crawford, TX. In doing so, he joins Camilo Mejia, Pablo Paredes, Kevin Benderman, Katherine Jashinski, Lt. Ehren Watada, all of whom decided to go public with their decision to refuse deployment or redeployment on moral grounds. Wilkerson, who comes from a family with several members in the military, served in Iraq from March 2003 to March 2004 and went AWOL late in 2004, when the U.S. Army denied his request for conscientious objector status.

“When I first got there, I was very supportive of our mission and our president’s decision to go in,” he said before turning himself in. “But when I got there I started to wonder whether what we were doing was really important enough for people to be dying.” Wilkerson was flanked by members of Iraq Veterans Against the War and Gold Star Families for Peace, whose co-founder Cindy Sheehan asked in a statement for more people to follow in Wilkerson’s footsteps. “Soldiers are put into harm’s way without proper training and equipment, and for reasons we have come to find were fraudulent. The social contract between the U.S. government and our society and the soldier who serves has been broken,” she said.

Ten Nobel Peace Prize laureates, including the Dalai Lama, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Costa Rica President Oscar Arias, are coming this week to Denver, CO to help the nonprofit educational organization PeaceJam celebrate its 10th anniversary. PeaceJam encourages children and teenagers worldwide to initiate community service projects and work for social change. Beginning Friday, September 15th, the laureates will exchange ideas and join with about 3,000 teens from 31 countries in a three-day festival of unity and commitment to peace. They will call on youths to perform a billion “acts of peace” over the next decade – from mentoring young children or planting a tree to pressing international leaders for peace.

If young people need role models, they should aim higher than ball players, rock stars and actors, said PeaceJam co-founder, artist Ivan Suvandjieff. “We put them with the Nobel laureates and they connect as a real person. It’s not like you get a Nobel Prize and you turn into a perfect person. They are still human. That’s what’s so exciting to kids: you can make a difference, you can have a positive influence on the world, you don’t have to be perfect.”

On August 30th in California Governor Schwarzenegger and legislative leaders reached an historic agreement on a bill that will place tough controls on the state’s global warming pollution, with the goal of **reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 25 percent**. The California Global Warming Solutions Act will impose new controls on utilities, oil refineries and other major polluters. Co-sponsored by NRDC (National Resources Defense Council) and Environmental Defense, this breakthrough bill will put a market-based system in place that provides incentives to comply with the new law. Spearheaded by NRDC, a new and exciting coalition of clean-tech companies, venture capitalists, local governments, and tens of thousands of citizens have been rallying and pressing for the new bill. It will allow California to start breaking its expensive dependence on fossil fuels and lead a revolution in energy technology that we hope will soon become an example to be followed by other states.

A federal judge issued a preliminary ruling on September 7th that temporarily blocks the U.S. administration’s plan to allow oil development in the sensitive wetlands near Teshekpuk Lake in Arctic **Alaska**. U.S. District Court Judge James Singleton said that the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) failed to properly consider the impact of development on the marshy tundra that lies between the lake and the Arctic Ocean. The area, prized for its petroleum potential, is also an important habitat for migratory waterfowl from three continents during their featherless molting period, as well as home to a wide variety of wildlife. Judge Singleton said that, unless BLM can convince him to change his mind, the Teshkepuk Lake sale, scheduled to take place on September 27th, might not be held because it was based on flawed environmental assumptions.

Letters to the Editor

Poor peacemakers, poor stewards of the land

Newburyport Daily News, August 10.

It’s all the same war. If history, the timing of events, and the neocon agenda tell us anything, it is that there is no separation between the war in Iraq and wars in Lebanon and Gaza, most likely soon to include Syria and Iran, and any of the coming conflicts that will be further extensions of the Cheney/Bush/neocon agenda to encircle the globe with permanent military bases, subjugate the people of vulnerable lands and claim markets and resources, especially oil and gas, for avaricious backers and war profiteers. As always, any nation or dictator deemed useful will be supported, as long as they cooperate. And the mode of opera-

tion is obvious: attack first and think later, if at all. Diplomacy and negotiation are dirty words in the neocon book. Humanity reaches its lowest state in war; the horrific loss of life and destruction of civilizations taking place in the Middle East is an endless, massive crime against humanity, which will be spun to the American people in all manner of ways to make it palatable, not truthful. Will the rest of the political world simply accept this, simply nod "oh, O.K.," as we attempt total planetary hegemony?

And if the political world goes along, will the physical world agree as well? Will the atmosphere just swallow its growing burden of toxic pollutants swirling ever upward from industries, wars, autos, insecticides, and so on? Will the earth just tuck away the ever increasing level of deadly radiation accumulating from spent fuel rods, U.S. nuclear weapons and their duplicates around the world, the propagation of which is seen by most nations to be the only way to achieve minimum security? Will the earth be satisfied, as temperatures rise, to toss off a few devastating droughts, display some fierce and frequent storms, let the waters rise and bite off a few islands and coastlines as glaciers calve and ocean currents slow, and then let human business go on as usual, even as we've turned out to be the most destructive and abusive of its offspring?

In spite of our Panglossian leaders and thriving financial markets (now there's another consideration) there does seem to be a good chance that more than just part of the planet will burn---and that the blaze may not be easy to contain. Of course, there are those who are almost dying to be enraptured and delivered whole from the burning earth, but I fear that they will be dead, just like a frog or a bird or as other human beings, should catastrophic events occur.

Our chance to love and show compassion is in this sphere, for better or for worse. We have proven to be poor stewards of the land, and have failed miserably as peacemakers. There is something terribly wrong in the way we see one another and we're running out of time to fix it.

D. Philip
Newburyport MA 01950

Priority Seating

(A Commuter's Reflections on War)
submitted 8/25/06

Morning rush hour was over. Somewhere between Sullivan and Back Bay Stations the boys bounded into the Orange Line train. Brothers, I think, one 14 the other 9.

The older one crossed to my side, several seats to the left. He settled back, folded his arms and stretched out his legs. The younger one sat directly across from me, Game Boy in hand. With brown eyes flashing, he nodded to the empty seat beside him: "Sit here!" he mouthed to his unresponsive brother then gave a shrug and turned his attention to the video game.

It was at that moment, the familiar "Priority Seating" sign captured my attention, the arrow pointing down, not to an elderly or physically challenged rider but to this innocent and vivacious boy: filled with life, filled with promise. In a very real sense he was "every child." He was, indeed, a priority and he belonged to all of us.

As I gazed at his down turned head and watched his nimble fingers work the Game Boy, I was overwhelmed with the passage of time. In nine short years this boy would be 18. What then? Might he be without hope for a job? Having no money for college, will he be manipulated by military ads? You too can be one of the few, one of the proud (one of the dead.) Will innocent hands working the video game ply an M-16? Will he be told that he is fighting for freedom, as companies like Halliburton enjoy no bid contracts with our government and war profiteers grow richer by the day? In some far away country: Iraq, Iran or Syria, will this boy's priority seat be in an ill-equipped Humvee? Enough!

The chicken hawks in Washington must stop slaughtering our youth!

It's time to bring the troops home and once home, they should be given all the benefits they deserve, including physical and mental health care. Such care is paramount if we are to prevent yet another generation of "lost" and homeless veterans.

Brenda McCarthy
North Andover

9/3/06

Here are Michael Bleiweiss's latest two letters to the Lawrence Eagle-Tribune, one Sound-Off and one signed letter (because it's too long for a Sound-Off).

Terrorists won

As expected, Bush administration supporters have been writing in claiming that the foiling of the airline bomb plot serves as justification for their wiretapping program. They completely neglect the fact that the British found them through normal police work, informants, and targeted surveillance, not by tapping every telephone in the country. One of the goals of terrorism is to disrupt the normal operation of a society. By this standard, they have already won -- they have succeeded in getting us to allow our government to revoke our civil liberties, bringing us closer and closer to the sort of dictatorship that they would favor.

Fighting terror?

Once again, this newspaper tries to conflate the war in Iraq with the war on terror in its August 20 editorial. With no disrespect to our brave men and women in the armed forces, it must be repeated that the war in Iraq is an expensive distraction in both lives and wealth from the real war on terror and is actually exacerbating the problem. It has not prevented one single terrorist attack or attempted attack. Instead, experience shows that we thwart threats to our safety and security by diligent and focused police work (not by tapping every telephone in the country). We also weaken terrorists by eroding their support among the people in the countries where they dwell. This is not accomplished by bombing them. Finally, it should be pointed out that those who started and support the war in Iraq are the same people who are slashing taxes for the wealthy and corporations and telling us to go make money and shop.

Sincerely,
Michael Bleiweiss
Methuen, MA

MVPP Members in the News

Three papers wrote about three members. Here are extracts (typos included). The entire articles are printed on our website at www.merrimackvalleypeopleforpeace.org/wilm.htm

Pat Scanlon

A veteran sings for peace

Pat Scanlon writes two songs after being disillusioned by the war in Iraq.

Pat Scanlon says the war in Iraq is a "war of choice; it's being done for a political agenda."

By Tim Wacker, Globe Correspondent | August 27, 2006

As the fighting in Iraq drags on and Americans see the carnage on their TV screens every day, Pat Scanlon has an awful feeling that he's seen this before.

The Vietnam veteran has written two songs protesting the war in Iraq that he and a growing list of supporters hope will stir the kind of passion that helped end an even bloodier conflict more than 30 years ago.

The songs "I've Got a Feeling I've Been Here Before" and "Where Is the Rage?" were written in Andover and produced in Acton. But they have attracted national attention, including support from folk singer Pete Seeger, and are being promoted through a network of like-minded Merrimack Valley activists hoping to spark a peace movement throughout the country.

These songs are in the pain-wracked voice that can only come from someone who has suffered the consequences of a war built on lie after lie," said Jon Schuchardt, a member of the North Shore chapter of the Veterans For Peace, a national organization that emerged from the antiwar protests of the 1960s and 1970s.

"When Pat sings, people listen," Schuchardt said, "and music and singing the truth often touch people right in the heart."

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Bobbie Goldman

Bobbie Goldman looks like everyone's favorite aunt.

She has a quick smile, a calming voice and a helping hand; taking a reporter's camera lest he put in on a rain-soaked bench.

Goldman has the temperament needed to be a social worker for the Department of Public Health in Chelmsford and Tewksbury who helps kids with special needs..

But there is a world outside of her work and family that presents her a more pressing focus in her life.

Goldman's life mission is spreading peace.

"It is very important to me especially since what has happened in the past five years, since 9/11," she said this week.

A Woodland Road resident for the past seven years, Goldman, 59, is one of many like-minded residents who are members of

Merrimack Valley People for Peace, one of the area's most recognized and active peace and justice organizations.

You can see the MVPP gather in Andover's Center on weekday afternoons and around noon on the weekends, under a rainbow color peace flags, holding up signs with the hope they can, at least, raise questions about the country's involvement in conflicts throughout the world.

"We are gathering a lot more because we have a lot to say about our involvement around the world," she said.

She said not speaking out on the issues has led to the Invasion of Iraq and to what she sees is the slow erosion of the civil rights.

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Born in New York City and raised in Bloomfield, New Jersey, Goldman is the child of parents who escaped Austria in 1938; just after the Nazi persecution of "Kristallnacht" took place.

her immediate families close call with being victims in genocide installed a certain activism in Bobbie.

"I was taught not to be a bystander," said Goldman. "It was all these experiences - Jewish, Unitarian, Quaker - all have to do with my work for justice and civil rights."

...

"What I learned was that you have so much to gain from listening to the other side,"

...

NikiRosen

Protester has peace of mind

By Will Courtney

NEWBURYPORT - The seeds of Niki Rosen's calling to the peace movement date back many wars ago.

As a child living near an air base in Omaha, Neb., during World War II, her parents were air raid wardens because the base was deemed a possible target.

As she grew older, she connected with the '60s peace movement but watched from afar as a "hippie groupie." When Vietnam came, the pangs for peace work grew, but her focus was on raising five children, not on protesting war.

Then came the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. She remembers being shocked that day, but it was our country's reaction to the attacks that would change her life. Her children were grown. She was no longer married. It was her time to take a stand.

"I realized this was something I needed to do," she said.

...

two weeks before the "shock and awe" attacks that would begin a war that continues today, she took to Market Square on a Sunday afternoon and rallied for peace.

She was alone, both in number and in her beliefs.

...

She has found particular solace in the views of Frederick Franck, a Dutch-born artist and writer who created a sanctuary called Pacem in Terris - which translates to "Peace on Earth." Rosen once volunteered to weed the garden so she could spend time there. She has studied many philosophies, from Ghandi to Buddhism.

She notes that this Sept. 11 marks the 100-year anniversary of the beginning of Ghandi's nonviolent resistance movement.

Today, Rosen's personal nonviolent resistance movement is gaining its own followers. Now, when she goes out to Market Square, she has as many as 20 companions. She was even joined by her 11-year-old grandson on one occasion.

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Local Action

Update on Military Recruitment of Youth in Schools and Actions You Can Take

MVPP continues working to inform youth and their parents about the realities of military recruiting occurring in public schools. Our schools are increasingly military friendly; and recruiters are given access to students, in some instances, several times a year. JROTC programs can be found in many area schools. But those of us advocating nonviolent methods to resolve disputes are rarely invited to present the alternatives. Instead, we have to request access and, as in the case of Lawrence High School, which has the highest percentage enlistment in the state, we continue to be blocked. We're not giving up, because under free speech rights, students are entitled to hear different points of view. (Several school districts in Massachusetts already grant peace activist the same access as military recruiters are given.) In addition, we've learned during our summer events that many area schools continue not to inform students about their rights to prevent their personal information from being sent to military recruiters. We need your help to get the word out.

First, an overview of the current law and how military recruiters gain access to student's personal information. In 2001, Congress passed the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Under the provisions of the law, each school district receiving federal funds is required to release the name, address, phone number, grades and interests of every sophomore, junior and senior when asked for that information by military recruiters. The only way to prevent the release of the information is if the school district has received a signed opt-out form from the student or her parent. The school **must** inform students of their right to opt out. Many schools (Lawrence, Amesbury, Pentucket Regional, to name a few) do not notify students and their parents about this right. At a minimum, parents and school boards must insist that their high school comply with all the requirements of NCLB. In addition, NCLB stipulates that military recruiters must be granted access to school premises and students. Obviously, students have the option of not going to a recruiter's table, but recruiters always brings attractive giveaways - pens, key chains, DVDs, etc.

Another source of student information is gleaned from the ASVAB Test, which is administered in more than half of our nation's high schools. It is a three-hour aptitude test that is required for all persons enlisting in the military. The Department of Defense (DoD) offers the test for free, so many schools administer it without informing students that all information they supply is turned over to the DoD to be entered into its database. ASVAB is designed to identify talent and skills in subjects considered important for various military jobs. Access to the test results gives recruiters the upper hand when talking with potential recruits. It is important for students to know that they have the right to refuse to take the ASVAB test.

In addition to access to student information provided under NCLB, the DoD has contracted privately to develop a second database of information on youth. It has been reported that this database compiles information for students as young as the sixth grade. It is administered by JAMRS (Joint Advertising and Marketing Research & Studies). Every time a young person fills out an information card (entering a drawing, signing up for a "freebie" at the mall, entering a contest online), it is likely that the information is purchased by JAMRS. A huge amount of information has been accumulated in this manner. Tapping into this database gives recruiters an enormous advantage when approaching potential recruits. Students (18 years or older) and parents have the right to contact JAMRS and demand that their or their child's data be removed from the JAMRS military recruitment database. The request should be sent to:

Joint Advertising Marketing Research & Studies Office
Attention: Opt Out
4040 North Fairfax Drive, Ste. 200
Arlington, VA 22203

MVPP has an opt out form for schools and a sample JAMRS letter on our web site. We have members who are willing to come to your school to talk with students about the realities of military service, as opposed to the promises and half-truths provided by recruiters. We can provide brochures and literature to assist with informing students. Please become informed about the current practices in your own school district, then demand that the school district fully inform students of their rights and how their personal information is being shared with the DoD.

If you need assistance or want to pursue this topic further, please contact Becci Backman at 978 475-5679 or rback@ix.net-com.com.

Recent Events

Becci Backman

This summer, MVPP again took our message on the road. These activities were in addition to our ongoing vigils in Andover and Newburyport, which have continued unabated.

The last weekend in July, MVPP again joined forces with Greater Lowell for Peace & Justice for a full day at the **Lowell Folk Festival**. We distributed:

- Counter recruitment materials
- Post cards from Military Families Speak Out to be sent to Congress demanding immediate withdrawal of US troops from Iraq,
- Literature on a range of issues from immigration facts versus popular myths, to abuses by military recruiters (see article about actions needed to counter military recruitment in this issue), to analysis of the devastating, disproportionate bombings of Lebanon by Israel.

We made valuable contacts, enjoyed great music and food, and vowed to make this an annual event.

Our next stop was the annual **Bread & Roses Festival** celebrated in **Lawrence** on Labor Day. Here, in addition to distributing the materials mentioned above, we raised funds by selling countless buttons and bumper stickers, and talked with numer-

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

\$20.00 Individual \$50.00 Supporting
\$10.00 Student/Senior Circle One \$75.00 Sustaining
\$30.00 Family \$100.00 Peacemaker

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ E-Mail _____ Date _____

Return to MVPP is registered with the IRS as a 501(c)(3) organization. Contributions to MVPP are tax P.O. Box 573 deductible. Last year, approximately one-third of our members joined/renewed at higher than the basic rate. **Check here [] if you prefer to receive your newsletter via e-mail.**

ous concerned citizens.

With less than a week to recover from one fine event, we made our second appearance at **Paws for Peace in Amesbury**. This unique afternoon combines dogs of every shape, size and breed and their owners with training events, all manner of dog-related services and merchandise, plus peace & justice themes. Again, we reached hundreds of people with information and our wares. MVPP especially wants to acknowledge and salute Karen Kaminski, Director and Founder of Kids and K9 Assist. As sponsor and organizer of the event, Karen provides a very important program that pairs service puppies in training with youth (in her own words): "...to help end the cycle of abuse, neglect, violence and discrimination; by teaching kids, especially those who are at-risk and in-need; safety, responsibility, empathy and compassion through our educational and inspirational programs . . . The kids learn about individual's differences . . . They learn to help make our world a better place!" The many youth cheerfully making Paws for Peace a successful event, and thoughtful youth who came to our booth are a tribute to the efficacy of Kids and K9 Assist. (for more information about this program, visit: www.kidsandk9assist.org)

The MVPP road show continued with **Andover Day** on September 16th. The newly revitalized event enabled us to have a greater presence in the community where we vigil most frequently. The crowds for the event were large, with many students, parents, grandparents and educators stopping by to shop and talk about issues. We received many thanks for our ongoing presence, people purchased gifts for themselves and others, and MVPP, hopefully, connected with some new members. We will advocate for this expanded, celebratory Andover Day to become an annual event!

Many thanks for the hours of work contributed by Kathie Robinson, Brian Quirk, Boryana Tacconi, Niki Rosen, Bobbie Goldman, Melinda Taranto-Garnis, Sue Imhoff, Michael Bleiweiss, Mary Todd, Peter Cameron, Barbara Haack, Arthur Brien, Bob O'Leary, Anne Broyles, Brenda McCarthy, Pat Scanlon and Becci Backman to make these events possible. *A special thanks to Bill Sweet of AFSC for assisting with counter recruitment efforts at the Lowell Folk Festival and Paws for Peace.*

Upcoming Events

Sue Imhoff

Sunday, September 17, Discussion with Young Israeli and Palestinian Peace Activists Come and hear about a growing movement of brave, young Israeli and Palestinian peace activists. OneVoice trains people in dialogue and leadership skills and sets up simultaneous town hall forums in Israel and the Palestinian territories. Elad and Saed have been through and seen much suffering and violence; still they are determined to persuade their elders and comperes to work nonviolently for conflict resolution. Refreshments Served. Send email to nailajir-manus@aol.com for additional information. Other Contact Information: 617/462-3679. **Ehrenfield Hall, 50 Sewell Ave, Coolidge Corner Brookline**

Sunday, September 17, 2:00 PM - 5:03 PM "SO GREAT A CLOUD OF WITNESSES" We are gathering to celebrate the life of the Spirit among us - Our 40th Anniversary. Please join us for prayer, song and remembrance, feasting to follow. RSVP. Parking is available; food will be provided at the Bakery Cafe. A \$10 donation will be gratefully accepted. Send email to enneads@verizon.net for additional information. Other Contact Information: 617/576-0204. **Haley Housed Bakery Cafe, 2139 Washington St-12 Dade St, Roxbury**

Sunday, September 17, 6:00 PM A BENEFIT FOR PALESTINIAN PRISONERS IN MEMORY OF BLACK SEPTEMBER featuring Palestinian speakers, current and former US Political Prisoners, Music by PRESENTE! and VCR, Palestinian food. Over the past months, resistance movements in Palestine and Lebanon have acted with extreme courage. The Popular Resistance Committees in Gaza captured an "Israeli" soldier in order to press for the release of Palestinian political prisoners who number more than 10,000 and now include 65 elected leaders. Hizbollah captured two "Israele " soldiers to press for the release of Lebanese political prisoners. Send email to amyh@texnology.com for additional information.
ENCUENTRO5, 33 HARRISON ST. 5TH FLOOR

Sunday, September 17, 7:00 PM CRISIS IN THE MIDDLE EAST: The war between Israel Hezbollah, Lebanon, Palestine Panel Discussion Featuring: Anat Biletetzki, Prof. of Philosophy at Tel Aviv University, until recently chair of the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the occupied Territories; Seth Brysk, Director of the Israeli Action Center at the Jewish Community Relations, holds degrees from U.C. Berkeley, Naila Jirmanus, member of the CC Committee of UJP a Lebanese American who has just returned from Lebanon; Henry Munson, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Maine and author

of several books on Islam, Religion and Nationalism. Send email to boston@btvshalom.org for additional information. **The Eliot Church, 474 Centre St. Newton**

Wednesday, Sept. 20, at 7 pm: Learning about Permaculture #1 with Amy Antonucci, certified consultant, Madbury, NH. Part of Create a Peaceful World by Sustaining our Future at Dover Friends Meeting, 141 Central Ave., Dover. Sponsored by The Peace and Social Concerns Committee of Dover Friends Meeting, Seacoast Peace Response, Seacoast Alliance for Democracy, Clean Water Action, NH Faithful Democracy. Free and open to the public. Resources: The End of Fossil Fuel, 3rd edition by John Howe, Plan 2B by Lester Brown, and Whole Earth Catalog. For more information contact Phyllis Abell at pskillamabell@comcast.net 580-1934.

Thursday, Sept. 21, at 7 pm Sarah Farmer Peace Award/UN International Day of Peace. You are invited to an evening event held on UN International Day of Peace, at Green Acre Baha'i School to acknowledge the recipient of the 2006 Sarah Farmer Peace Award. This year's recipient is the Teaching Peace Conference, a conference held each April at the Oyster River High School for educators, activists, researchers and students. The award, presented by the Baha'i community of the Seacoast, gives recognition to an individual or group whose work embodies "a set of values, attitudes, modes of behavior and ways of life that reject violence and prevent conflicts by tackling their root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups, and nations." The commemoration will begin at 7:00 and end at 8:30. Music is provided by jazz player Charlie Jennison and members of Rock My Soul, and representatives from the Teaching Peace Award will be presented with a sculpture created by potter Jane Kaufman. Sept. 21 marks the second Sarah Farmer Peace Award; the Portsmouth Peace Treaty Anniversary Committee received last year's award. For more information contact Melinda Salazar msalazar@cisunix.unh.edu.

Thursday, September 21, 6:30 to 7:30 PM, Candlelight Vigil in conjunction with The Declaration of Peace nationwide Candlelight Vigil to end the U.S. occupation in IRAQ. Bring candles, peace flags, banners. **Market Square, Newburyport**

Thursday, September 21 The International Day of Peace A national press event and nonviolent action at the White House launch the Declaration of Peace week. Candlelight vigils across the US and around the world that evening. See if your peace group can organize a special vigil on this evening! E-mail ujpcoalition@yahoo.com to list your special vigil on the UJP website!

Friday September 22 Local Declaration of Peace Activities Nonviolent action at a number of District Congressional offices and other sites across the US. Check with your community peace group or call 617-491-4857 to see what is planned in your district!

Sept. 23, at 7 PM Helen Caldicott, will speak about her new book,

NUCLEAR POWER IS NOT THE ANSWER.

Named by the Smithsonian Institute as one of the most influential women of the 20th century; she was nominated for the Nobel Peace prize by Linus Pauling. Helen brings 35 years of unique experience to her timely subject. Come hear why she sees the current plans to expand nuclear power as a potentially catastrophic solution to energy needs. See our flier in this newsletter and www.merrimackvalleypeopleforpeace.org/ for more details. This MVPP event will take place at Newburyport City Hall, Newburyport, MA

Wednesday, September 27, at 7 pm: Sharing Information from the Common Ground Fair. Potluck at 6:00 pm. Part of Create a Peaceful World by Sustaining our Future at Dover Friends Meeting, 141 Central Ave., Dover. Sponsored by The Peace and Social Concerns Committee of Dover Friends Meeting, Seacoast Peace Response, Seacoast Alliance for Democracy, Clean Water Action, NH Faithful Democracy. Free and open to the public. Resources: The End of Fossil Fuel, 3rd edition by John Howe, Plan 2B by Lester Brown, and Whole Earth Catalog. For more information contact Phyllis Abell at pskillamabell@comcast.net 580-1934.

Wednesday, September 27, at 7 pm, Independent, unembedded US journalist and photographer Dahr Jamail will give a presentation on the US occupation of Iraq in the University of Southern Maine's Hannaford Lecture Hall in the Abromson Community Education Center, Bedford Street, Portland. For more information (still seeking financial co-sponsors), contact Kate Harris at kate@earthlovers.org.

Thursday, September 28, 7:30 PM - 9:30 PM Greg Palast: Steal the Vote '08-Author/investigative reporter speaks in Cambridge Greg Palast, author of Armed Madhouse and The Best Democracy Money Can Buy, speaks on election theft and how to stop it, at a benefit for Election Defense Alliance (www.election-defensealliance.org) and the Alliance for Democracy. Suggested donation, - (general admission). Pre-talk reception with Greg, 6:00-7:00, includes admission to 7:30 event. Buy tickets online at (www.thealliancefordemocracy.org), or at door--for more info call 781-894-1179 or email afd@thealliancefordemocracy.org. Other Contact Information: 617/266-8687. **First Parish Church, Mass Ave. and Church St., Harvard Square, Cambridge**

Saturday September 30 HOLLY NEAR IN CONCERT Singer, songwriter and activist Holly Near performs at a UJP fundraiser at 7:30 pm at Arlington Street Church, 351 Boylston St., Boston (Arlington Green Line Stop). This is her first Boston concert in years. Tickets \$35 at www.justicewithpeace.org or 617-491-5847. Organized by Cambridge United for Justice with Peace.

Sunday, October 1,

UJP RALLY ON THE BOSTON COMMON

Noon to 2:00 PM Bring the Troops Home Now - To a Society that Works for Everyone!! The Declaration of Peace week of activities to end the Iraq war will culminate in a rally on the Boston Common, at the Bandstand. With Holly Near (singer, writer, activist), Elena Letona (Executive Director of Centro Presente) and Andy Sapp (Iraq Veterans Against the War)

Wednesday, October 4 - Oct 11 HOST A PDA "GROUND TRUTH GATHERING"-Meet The Veterans - Get Involved Join 1000's gathering across America in universities, community centers, town halls, coffee houses and living rooms to screen THE GROUND TRUTH, engage in conversation and listen to Iraq veterans. For more information, visit www.the-groundtruth.net: Sign up and get a Gathering Kit.

Wednesday, October 4 Professor Rashid Khalidi to discuss his new book: The Iron Cage --The Struggle for Palestinian Statehood Khalidi is Edward Said Professor of Arab Studies, and Director of the Middle East Institute of the School of International and Public Affairs, at Columbia University. One of the foremost historians of the Middle East, Professor Khalidi focuses on history to provide a clear-eyed view of the current conflict and assesses the alternatives for peace in the Middle East. Ample time for questions and comments from the audience. Send email to numurray@comcast.net for additional information. **1st Parish in Cambridge, Unitarian Universalist, Harvard Square**

Wednesday, Oct. 4, at 7 pm: Learning about Permaculture #2 with Amy Antonucci, certified consultant, Madbury, NH. Part of Create a Peaceful World by Sustaining our Future at Dover Friends Meeting, 141 Central Ave., Dover. Sponsored by The Peace and Social Concerns Committee of Dover Friends Meeting, Seacoast Peace Response, Seacoast Alliance for Democracy, Clean Water Action, NH Faithful Democracy. Free and open to the public. Resources: The End of Fossil Fuel, 3rd edition by John Howe, Plan 2B by Lester Brown, and Whole Earth Catalog. For more information contact Phyllis Abell at pkillama-bell@comcast.net 580-1934.

Thursday, October 5 UNDERSTANDING THE PALESTINIAN -ISRAELI CONFLICT Panelists:1) Dr. Ali Asani, Professor of the Practice of Indo-Muslim Languages and Culture, Harvard; 2.) Dr. Elaine Hagopian, Professor Emerita of Sociology, Simmons College, Boston 3.)Dr. Sara Roy, Senior Research Scholar, Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Harvard, 4) Scott Schaeffer -Duffy, co-founder of the Worcester Catholic Worker. Send email to corneliasull@gmail.com for additional information. Other Contact Information: 617/262-9461. **The Paulist Center, 5 Park St. Boston, across from Park St.**

Saturday, Oct 7, 11 PM – 3 PM, Na Mu Myo Ho Ren Ge Kyo, 21st Anniversary, New England Peace Pagoda. 11:00 Buddhist Sacred Ceremony, Interfaith prayers for peace, 12:00 Dharma Talk, 12:15 Keynote, 12:35 Lunch, 1:15 Music, 2:30 Closing prayer dance. Nipponzan Myohoji Pagoda, Cave Hill Road, Leverett, MA

Sunday, Oct. 8, at 2 pm: The premier showing of Robert Greenwald's new film, "Iraq For Sale: War Profiteering" at the Exeter Town Hall, 9 Front St., Exeter, NH. To register to attend: www.dfalink.com/register.php?c=e&id=49744ee4415e4220&eid=11809&email=%E5MAIL%5D For more information contact Herb Moyer hmoyer@zwi.net.

Wednesday, October 11, at 7:00 pm: Creating Sustainable Villages Internationally with Alexander Petroff, Founder of Working Villages International, at the Dover Friends Meeting, 141 Central Ave. Dover, NH. Working Villages International is working to repair the ravages of war in one of the world's forgotten crisis areas, the Democratic Republic of Congo. For the past fifty years, much of Sub-Saharan Africa has been saddled with the heavy burden of debt and dependence. This village model is a way of breaking the painful cycle of paternalism that has grown between the West and Sub-Saharan Africa. "We want to improve the standard of living by building on the local culture of enthusiasm and hard work. By providing the funding, training and small-scale technology, we can magnify the productivity of their efforts, while keeping it within the boundaries of ecologically sound development." Part of Create a Peaceful World by Sustaining our Future at Dover Friends Meeting, 141 Central Ave., Dover. Sponsored by The Peace and Social Concerns Committee of Dover Friends Meeting, Seacoast Peace Response, Seacoast Alliance for Democracy, Clean Water Action, NH Faithful Democracy. Free and open to the public. For more information contact Phyllis Abell at pkillama-bell@comcast.net 580-1934.

Thursday, Oct 12, 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM THREE WOMEN FROM JERUSALEM (The church is in Harvard Square at the corner of Mass Ave and Church St.) This the 12th such tour organized by Partners for Peace, an NGO based in Washington D.C., whose mission is to help bring about a just and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The three women are 1) Ghada Ageel, Muslim of Khan Younis, Palestine 2) Shireen Khamis, Christian of Beit Jala, Palestine and 3) Rela Mazali, Jew of Herzlia, Israel. All three of these women have been deeply affected by the conflict and have risen above their hurt and difficult times to devote themselves to bringing peace and justice to their homeland. Send email to numurray@comcast.net for additional information. Other Contact Information: Nancy Murray - 617/482-3170x314. **FIRST PARISH IN CAMBRIDGE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST**

Friday, October 13th and Saturday October 14th Arlington East, Cape Cod National Seashore, Sponsored by: Cape Codder's for Peace and Justice and Veterans for Peace - Cape Cod Chapter 41. On Friday night October 13 at 7:00 PM there will be a SPEAK OUT and rally at Nauset Regional HS with musical guests including Pat Scanlon singing his latest anti-war hits as well as Gold Stars Families Speak Out, Gold Star Families for Peace, and Military Families Speak Out Carlos and Melida Arredondo. On Saturday October 14th, 2006 Cape Codder's for Peace and Justice and Veterans for Peace, Cape Cod Chapter 41 and others groups are planning a day of action by building 'Arlington East' on Cape Cod's National Seashore, Eastham, MA to memorialize those who have died in Iraq. This event will be disAbility accessible! www.arlingtoneast.blogspot.com

Reflection

September 11, 1906, 2001, 2006 and Beyond

Gandhi in India and King in the Jim Crow South both were part of a people who tasted injustice daily, who knew they were both oppressed and powerless. I believe that we are a part of a people that does not realize it is being forced to eat injustice daily, that does not feel oppressed, but does feel powerless. Thus, our challenge is both to awaken people to their chains of enslavement and to their limitless potential for empowerment.

Beause Gandhi was inspired by Tolstoy, who was inspired by Henry Thoreau's lecture of 1848, "*The Duty of Resistance to Civil Government*", I thought it would be best to go back to the roots of Gandhian and Kingian nonviolence.

Thoreau's conscience was violated by a purportedly democratic government which had legalized human slavery and waged a war of invasion and occupation against Mexico.

Thoreau declared that when a people respect the law more than morality, then "**even the well-disposed are daily made the agents of injustice.**" Thoreau reminded how the war against Mexico was "the work of comparatively few individuals" who used the law, the government, the army, and, above all, the submissiveness of the citizenry, as their tools.

He asked, are we human at all, or mere cogs in a machine? Must a human ever abandon their sense of right and wrong, must they ever submit to evil, cost what it may to reputation, property, or life itself?

Thoreau states how empty it is to merely voice an opinion on the side of right, but to do nothing; how cheap it is to vote, which, also, is doing nothing.

The entire burden of Thoreau's appeal, and of Gandhi's Experiments with Truth, and Dr. King's Freedom Movement, is the necessity to resist a state which has legalized injustice and violence. Thoreau asks, "How does it become a human to behave towards this American government today? I answer that one cannot without disgrace be associated with it."

Thoreau, Gandhi and King all understood the **iron law of necessity** which ordains that seeds of violence always produce a harvest of violence. The **means determine the ends**. It is impossible for peace to come from war, nor freedom from domination, nor democracy from occupation. No nation nor individual can escape the consequences of their own deeds, unless they confess their wrong and change their direction. It is Karma.

Ours has been the most violent century in all history: millions slaughtered in the mud in World War I, bringing forth the consequence of tens of millions slaughtered twenty years later in World War II, escalating at the end to targeting entire cities and their defenseless families. The previously unimaginable catastrophe of the Second World War, then, out of its hatred and the nihilism of unlimited violence, brought forth the seeding of the world with enough nuclear weapons to undo the works of Genesis.

Today, humanity is dancing on a volcano, though few seem to know it.

In Gandhi's words "**The first principle of non-violence is to resist everything humiliating.**"

It is humiliating to be lied to every day. It is humiliating to have national leaders like Bush and Kerry and the Clintons proclaim "hunting down" and "killing" as national virtues.

We are degraded and shamed by "Shock and Awe" bombing, boasted to replicate the effects of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Many of us know survivors of the World Trade Center catastrophe and grieving family members. But how many know victims of the 16 years of U.S. war against the civilian population of Iraq? Of the 3 ½ years of brutal occupation? These are catastrophes of human suffering like September 11th, but scores of times over, with no end in sight.

Even those who believe in an eye for an eye, and a life for a life, must take pause.

Forty years ago Rev. King warned the nation, that one day God would say, "You're too arrogant America! And God will break the backbone of this nation." Perhaps that has happened. Certainly the backbone of democracy --- the press, the pulpit, the separation of powers, the Bill of Rights, the universities as institutions of truth-speaking, the integrity of elections --- all seem broken. The Treasury is empty and the Budget broken. The mighty Mississippi River is in some ways the backbone of the nation; and New Orleans is broken. I was just reading that no one who lives in New Orleans calls "Katrina" a "natural disaster." We face Inconvenient Truths.

Martin Luther King warned that "**the nation was approaching "spiritual death."**"

What is spiritual death? It is, I believe, our condition today: the ice cold atmosphere of fear and paranoia. It is having every one subject to surveillance, spying, and search.

It is the silence that gives consent. It is "God and Country" as the dominant religion. That is spiritual death. It is congregations who reject a shepherd and demand another sheep.

Spiritual death is the blasphemy of "God Bless America" everywhere and "God Bless Iraq" nowhere. Spiritual death is the lie of "Yellow Ribbons", when we know the soldiers come home shattered, permanently wounded in soul and spirit, and thousands in caskets, wheel chairs, and gurney carts. Why are the pied pipers of patriotism given unchallenged access to our schools to lure children to the military, while we who speak for peace are locked out? Why are the streets given to guns and flags and uniforms on Memorial Day, July 4th, Veterans Day, while we who march for peace are put behind barricades and police cordons?

As a young man I volunteered and became a marine corps officer. It pains me to say, but Thoreau accurately describes a marine, a man who gives up his conscience and surrenders his humanity to become a **mere cog in a killing machine**. My spiritual father in non-violent resistance, Rev. Philip Berrigan was a veteran of the Battle of the Bulge and described himself in the army as "a skilled young killer." Francis of Assisi, returning from bloody fields of combat, had the same shock of self-recognition, which is perhaps why both became fearless, self-sacrificing war resisters.

Phil withdrew his allegiance, condemned the war-making state, disarmed five nuclear ships, planes, and bombs, and spent 11 years in prison, that “more free and honorable ground where the state places those who are not with her but against her”, as Thoreau says.

We have to recognize there is no glory in war, there is no honor in killing. Dr. King named war “the most colossal of all evils” because it is co-joined with all other evils: racism, sexism, economic exploitation, conquest, domination, torture, death squads, propaganda.... a tragic litany of horrors.

The victims of modern war are overwhelmingly women and children; about 80%. What heroism can there be in bombing defenseless soldiers or civilians from 5 miles in the air or with cruise missiles from a ship 600 miles away?

Technological killing of women and children is cruel, cowardly, and criminal, and our vocation must be to break the evil spell that has enthralled Americans to the love of war. A single Trident submarine is armed to exterminate 49 million.

We are in the grip of something worse than slavery, worse than apartheid, worse than Jim Crow segregation. Nuclear genocide is so far beyond any other mass murder that a new word had to come into being: omnicide, the death of all living things.

There is no cause for optimism. But there is hope. The Buddhist monk Guruji was intimate friend of Gandhi, joined the struggle for the liberation of India in 1933. In 1985 he achieved the first Peace Pagoda in North America, overlooking Amherst here in Massachusetts, a shining beacon of hope. The Walk for a New Spring has walked through here, pointing us to 180 degree moral about face.

There is only one alternative, one hope: “Thou shalt not kill.” And “Love your enemies.” Non-violence has no enemies.

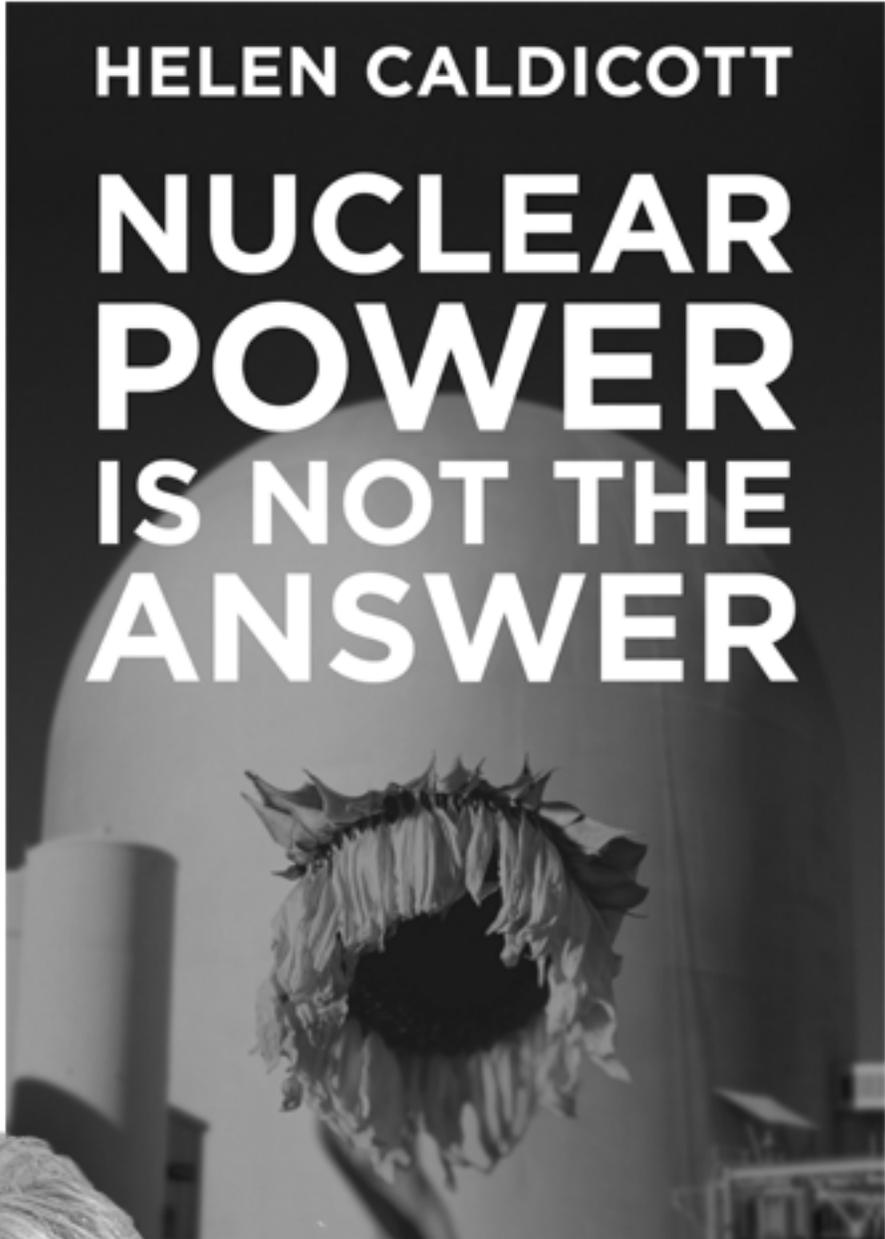
The choice is stark in its simplicity. “Non-violence or non-existence.” “We will live together as brothers and sisters or perish together as fools.” (King) Prophets have been sent into our land and they have not equivocated. Neither should we.

They have resisted. The choice is ours.

John Schuchardt, Evening of reflection at Unitarian Church,
Essex, MA

Merrimack Valley People for Peace presents

HELEN CALDICOTT
**NUCLEAR
POWER
IS NOT THE
ANSWER**



Dr. Helen Caldicott
discusses her newest book

7:00 PM Saturday
September 23, 2006

Newburyport City Hall
60 Pleasant Street, Newburyport, MA
Parking available near City Hall

\$10 suggested donation

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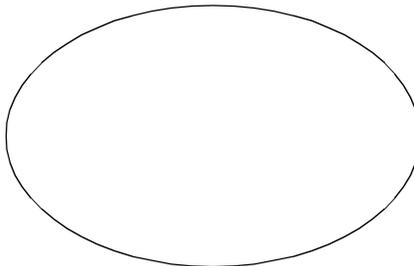
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A link to all in US legislature:

<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>