



# peace & justice news

A P U B L I C A T I O N O F T H E P E A C E & J U S T I C E C E N T E R

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## Building Connections

By Kyle Silliman-Smith, PJC Program Director

In recent years Chittenden County (and to a lesser extent, all of Vermont) has become a new cultural melting pot, which is now home to over 14 resettled communities. I cherish this diversity and believe that it contributes to a vibrant and loving community that I am proud to call home. In recognition of the enrichment that each international community brings to our lives, the Peace & Justice Center is launching a couple of very exciting summer programs! *The PJC Kids' Club* and *Let's Dance Together*.

*The PJC Kids' Club* is a program designed for children ages 5-10 and for youth, ages 11-15, to participate in as mentors. Each week the group will focus on getting to know a different cultural group from around the world by hearing from young adult guest speakers from that community. I believe that this program has the ability to build powerful cross-cultural connections among the next generation and support youth and young adults in gaining confidence and leadership skills that will help them to succeed. Parents of the children attendees are asked to stay for all program activities. By encouraging family participation, both children and their parents will have the opportunity to strengthen their relationships with each other and the community at large.

It will also be incredibly fun! Our programming will include stories & folklore, games, music, dances, language exploration, and snacks from around the globe. This group will meet at the Peace & Justice Center, 60 Lake St, Burlington, on Sundays from 2-4 pm throughout July and August. For more details on what

culture we will be exploring each week please check out the box on page 2.

The Peace & Justice Center's *Let's Dance Together* Series will create a space for people of all ages to discover different styles of dance from around the world with a modern flair! Each class will be lead by two instructors (Susmita and Goma, Zahra and Halima, Beny and Rodrick, and Zeinab and Madina) who will teach in the style of their culture. Each of these international teens have a passion for dance and an amazing natural ability. Many of them have experience leading classes for kids and some have aspirations of being professional dancers. Participants will hear from the youth dance instructors on what some movements represent culturally and the significance of traditional dance in their lives. The students are supported by dance instructor Morgan Sherry, who is helping them to develop a full hour long routine including warm-ups and cool-downs.

Like *the PJC Kids' Club*, this program is designed to build leadership skills and experience among youth as well as create an opportunity for all people living in this community to get to know each other in a fun way. I believe that performance is a powerful tool of expression that builds connections that cross language and cultural barriers. These classes will be unique and exciting and I encourage all experience levels to attend. Don't miss this unique opportunity to learn fun, new, and meaningful dances! Classes will take place on four consecutive Saturdays

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EDITOR

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PUBLISHED

4/year

(See form on page 12)

CIRCULATION

1,200

The opinions expressed in the articles, including those by staff, are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the peace & justice center.

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PJC MISSION

Our mission is to create a just and peaceful world. To this end, we work on the interconnected issues of economic and racial justice, peace, and human rights through education, advocacy, training and non-violent activism, and community organizing, since 1979.



From the Board of Directors

## Dear Friends,

Transitions and decisions have occupied us at the PJC Board during the last three months. Transitions first: in mid-May Gaby Ochoa Brenneman left her position as store manager and director of the Fair Trade Campaign, with plans to travel more frequently to her native Guatemala. We all miss her gentle presence. Carmen Solari, formerly Gaby's assistant, is now bringing some new ideas to this position – like setting up a table promoting fair trade in the garment industry on Church Street. Carmen was a double Religion and English major at UVM. She selected Krista Panosian, who interned at the store last semester, as the new assistant store manager. Krista's studies at UVM have centered on international and community development; she's also full of good marketing ideas for the store. Together, they've managed a near-seamless transition.

Our Board is expanding. David Shiman, who brings us rich experience as a professor focusing on international education and human rights at UVM, joined in May. As a former board member of Amnesty International and former president of UVM's Faculty Senate, he's well connected to local resources and savvy about how organizations work. Let's all welcome him!

Decisions: On June 12<sup>th</sup>, we held a very productive joint Board-Staff meeting to review programming in the past year and, even more importantly, set directions for the future. We decided that, during 2013-2014, we would concentrate on one major program within each of the areas in our mission statement: economic justice, racial justice, peace, and human rights. For economic justice that will be the Livable Wage Campaign, though we don't plan to fully reactivate it until winter. Racial Justice will be promoted through programs on White Privilege. Peace and anti-war work will be covered by the Cost of War Series, which is funded by a grant through December; after that our main emphasis will be on drones. The Fair Trade Campaign – serially focusing on the production of garments and cocoa – is devoted to human rights. We also intend to leave space in our programming for emerging issues we consider important.

Ongoing programming in the last three months has included Cost of War speakers (most effectively, Medea Benjamin), white privilege workshops (including one for local police), and a series of workshops on nonviolence. This letter wouldn't be complete without congratulating Colleen Deignan and Kyle Silliman-Smith on their fine record of procuring grants for the Center during the past year. In June, they found out that the Haymarket People's Fund will be making us a sizable grant to support our racial justice programming. Brava! twice over.

Judith Yarnall  
for the Board

### PJC Summer Kids Club Series

2-4pm Sundays. Join us for stories, games, music, and snacks that will broaden your understanding of these communities in the Burlington area. Parents and family members are welcome! Info: 863-2345 x6.

#### 7 JULY: CELEBRATING IRAQ

Our guests will be Halah Sharad, a Peace and Justice Studies student from St Michael's College, and Anwar Diab Agha, lead singer and musician of Burlington's Middle Eastern band: the Anwar Ensemble.

#### 14 JULY: CELEBRATING BOSNIA.

#### 21 JULY: CELEBRATING THAILAND & VIETNAM.

Our guest will be Teasella Taelyn Thi Nguyen, a former intern of the Peace & Justice Center.

#### 28 JULY: CELEBRATING BHUTAN & NEPAL

#### 4 AUGUST: CELEBRATION OF AFRICAN CULTURES

#### 11 AUGUST: ABENAKI CELEBRATION DAY

Come explore Vermont's vibrant Abenaki culture with us as we meet and hear the stories of Abenaki community members from the area.

#### 18 AUGUST: CELEBRATING GUATEMALA

#### 25 AUGUST: CELEBRATING MEXICO

Carmen Solari, the P&J Store Manager, will have just returned from a Fair Trade Conference in Mexico.



**Connections** continued from page 1

beginning June 29<sup>th</sup> from 1-2pm, at North End Studios, 294 N. Winooski Ave., Burlington. For details on what each class will focus on, see box below.

The vision for both of these programs is to promote peace, justice, and appreciation for cultural diversity through play (an important aspect of nonviolence). I hope that these events lay the foundation that will allow our children and youth to become cultural advocates and delegates for peace and encourage the community as a whole to challenge our own biases and social stigmas. Not only are we striving to promote cultural understanding, but with these programs the Peace & Justice Center is celebrating diversity and equality for all. For more information on either of these programs contact me at [kyle@pjcv.org](mailto:kyle@pjcv.org) or 802-863-2345 x6! ☺

### Let's Dance Together Series

Join the PJC's dance series and discover a different culture's style of dance! International youth will lead these classes supported by dancing instructor Morgan Sherry on four Saturdays, from 1pm-2pm, at the North End Studios, 294 N. Winooski Ave. More info: Kyle at [kyle@pjcv.org](mailto:kyle@pjcv.org) or 802-863-2345 x6!

#### 29 JUNE

Susmita & Goma will lead this class. These young women are from Nepal and their families are originally from Bhutan. They will teach a fusion of Bollywood and traditional style dance.

#### 6 JULY

Zahra & Halima, Somali women, will lead this class. They will teach a modern style of dance with African influences.

#### 13 JULY

Beny & Rodrick will lead this class; they are not only extremely talented performers and dance teachers, but also brothers from the Republic of the Congo. They will teach a modern style of dance with African influences.

#### 20 JULY

Zeinab & Madina will lead this class. These young women are from Kenya and their families are originally from Somalia. They will teach a traditional Somali Bantu style of dance.

## Cost of War Speaker and Film Series Events to Look Forward to...

Although the details are not concrete yet, there are several great events to look forward to this summer.

### ■ Dirty Wars

**Dirty Wars Screening:** Early August – details TBA. “Filed from the frontlines of the war on terror, documentarian Richard Rowley’s astonishingly hard-hitting *Dirty Wars* renders the investigative work of journalist Jeremy Scahill in the form of a ’70s-style conspiracy thriller. A reporter for the *Nation*, Scahill follows a blood-strewn trail from a remote corner of Afghanistan, where covert night raids have claimed the lives of innocents, to the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC), a shadowy outfit empowered by the current White House to assassinate those on an ever-expanding ‘kill list,’ including at least one American. This jaw-dropping, persuasively researched pic has the power to pry open government lockboxes.” Review by Rob Nelson of *Variety*.

### ■ Hiroshima and Nagasaki Days

**Songs for Hope:** Friday, August 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm. Meet at Burlington’s waterfront (right at the beginning of the boardwalk). The event takes place on August 9<sup>th</sup> in memory of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. With local musician Eric George, we’ll sing songs for hope and peace in the future, and set candle boats in the lake (a Japanese tradition called toro nagashi). This is a great event for families, as it is outdoors, engaging, and kids are encouraged to sing loudly!

### ■ Jeremy Scahill

**Jeremy Scahill speaking:** Scahill has reported from Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Nigeria, Yemen, the former Yugoslavia and elsewhere across the globe. His work has sparked several Congressional investigations and won some of journalism’s highest honors. He was twice awarded the prestigious George Polk Award, in 1998 for foreign reporting and in 2008 for his book *Blackwater*. Scahill’s most recent book, *Dirty Wars: The World Is a Battlefield* takes us inside America’s new covert wars. The foot soldiers in these battles operate globally and inside the United States with orders from the White House to do whatever is necessary to hunt down, capture, or kill individuals designated by the president as enemies ([dirtywars.org](http://dirtywars.org)).

Some of you might have heard Jeremy Scahill speak in Burlington when the Peace & Justice Center brought him in April 2007 to speak about *Blackwater*. We are very excited to bring him back. We plan to have him speak at the end of August or beginning of September. Sign up for our e-news to stay in the loop ([www.pjcv.org](http://www.pjcv.org)). ☺



### Gun Sense VT

Ann Braden of Brattleboro speaks at a May 8th press conference in Montpelier. Gun Sense VT is a statewide coalition of individuals and organizations, such as VT Public Health Association and Child Safe VT, that have come together since the Newtown massacre in support of common sense gun regulation. They are gun owners and non-gun owners; doctors and teachers; hunters and veterans; from over 100 VT towns. Goals: 1. Make firearms less accessible to those who don't use them responsibly. 2. Decrease the flow of illegal weapons across state borders. 3. Help prevent gun violence in VT and elsewhere.

For more info: <http://gunsensevt.org>.

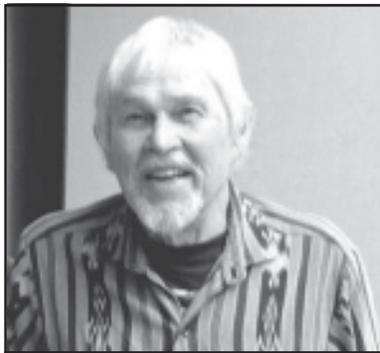
## Ed Aloysius Everts

**E**d Everts' long, wonderful, adventure-filled life of nearly 94 years, came to a close on May 10, 2013, in the Vermont Respite House with his wife of 45 years, Raven, by his side. Born in Berkeley, Calif., on June 12, 1919, Ed grew up in and around southern California and Hawaii. He graduated with a B.S. in chemistry from UC Berkeley in 1940, and was drafted shortly afterwards to serve in W.W.II. Trained at UCLA as a meteorologist, he served in the Army Air Corps in the Pacific theatre as a weather officer. Returning from a data gathering flight over Japan, Ed narrowly escaped losing his life when the plane crashed at sea. He spent three days adrift with the rest of the crew before being rescued and sent home to the states.

He remained in the Air Force Reserve until 1964, retiring as a Lt. Colonel. Ed worked in a wide variety of jobs from chemistry to TV production and Hollywood movies and commercials, to his favorite position as president of a local meat packers union where he helped lead a long and successful strike. Throughout his life he remained a strong believer in the importance of workers' rights and solidarity.

In the early 1960's, Ed decided it was time to see more of the world and he set off on a three and a half year odyssey to hitchhike around it. He met his soul mate and future wife, Raven, in Tokyo in 1965. Ed went back to school to earn a law degree from Boston College in 1970. After a two year driving/camping trip around Africa and Europe, Ed and Raven decided, in 1973, to settle in Charlotte, where they, along with longtime English friends, Paul and Marie Thorogood, among many others, built a passive solar octagon home under the skilled direction of master builder Cal Schneider. The closeknit community that developed over the following years was a great source of love, laughter, and support.

Ed devoted the second half of his life to turning swords into ploughshares working for justice and peace through the Peace & Justice Center in Burlington, the VT chapter of the American Friends Service Committee and the local Veteran's



**Ed Everts 1919-2013**

Ed proofread this newsletter for over 20 years. He would show up at the Peace & Justice Center with his coffee and a croissant. I'd hand him the pages and a red pen and listen to him singing old songs from the 30's or 40's as he worked his way meticulously through the newsletter. After it was printed, he'd proofread it again. So Ed!

for Peace, Chapter 57. He produced over 660 hour-long shows for the Peace & Justice Review on Vermont Community Access Media's Channel 15, and was awarded one of their outstanding producer awards. In 2006, he was runner-up for United Ways' Hometown Hero Award, and St Michael's College granted him their Cesar Chavez Peace and Justice Award. In 2007, he received the first Peace & Justice Social Justice Award (named in his honor) from the Peace & Justice Center. Ed was a long time member of the PJC Board of Directors and was awarded emeritus status.

Interspersed with their activism, Ed and Raven continued to explore the world, driving a VW bus with four others from Vermont to Tierra del Fuego and back in 1975-76, plus visiting all 50 US states, and all seven continents. Ed's love of the natural world led him to co-found the Birds of Vermont Museum in Huntington, and the Nature Conservancy's Raven Ridge Reserve in Charlotte/Hinesburg/Monkton.

A celebration of Ed's life was held Saturday, June 29, 2013, at the Unitarian Universalist Society, Burlington. **Memorial contributions in Ed's honor may be made to the Peace & Justice Center, 60 Lake St, Burlington, VT 05401;** or the Birds of Vermont Museum, 900 Sherman Hollow Rd, Huntington, VT 05462. ☺

## The Art of Social Justice

By *Emily Goldberg, PJC Intern*

"Kilroy Was Here." This was just a phrase and quick doodle that emerged during World War II, but despite its simplicity, the cartoon started a graffiti revolution. Kilroy, a bald man with a long nose, peering over a wall, became a popular character amongst military personnel in the US and overseas. Resurfacing again during the Vietnam War, Kilroy was the voice of the social and political movement against Vietnam. This is just one example of how art can play a significant role in social justice movements.

Art has many forms of expression that embody cultural norms and beliefs. Art not only brings an array of people together, but it enables reflection, empowering people to act in specific ways. It is the motivator and the accelerator of social behavior and change.

The Peace & Justice Center is proud to announce its new program, *Reference for Radicals*. This collaborative project partners with local artists, community organizers, and community members to support aspiring activists. Together we will create a zine-size publication, host two art shows, and launch a social media campaign (#RAD).

Each of the projects for *Reference for Radicals* truly encompasses the idea that art is connected to, and deeply rooted in, social justice movements. The publication works as a handbook filled with about 50 words and definitions for emerging activists as seen through the lens of peace and justice.

Twelve local artists have each chosen a word from the publication that is important to them. They are currently creating an art piece to represent that chosen word using a variety of different mediums. These pieces will be on exhibit at the South End Art Hop in early September and at the BCA Firehouse Gallery from December 12<sup>th</sup> – January 19<sup>th</sup>. For more updates and details on events, please check out the *Reference for Radicals* section on the Peace & Justice Center's website. ☺



# Which Way Home

By *Melissa Gelinas, PJC Intern*

**S**ince June 20th was World Refugee Day, it seems only fitting to explore the plight of refugees around the world. The Peace & Justice Center and Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program shed some light on the situation of many refugees with a panel of both US veterans and former refugees who talked about their various experiences with war. (For more information on our World Refugee Day event, see the article in *Seven Days*: <http://7d.blogs.com/offmessage/2013/06/world-refugee-day-in-burlington-bright-lights-and-dark-stories.html>). The panel, part of the PJC Cost of War Series, helped draw awareness to the ongoing effects of war, and the dire straits that many refugees are left in.

One group of refugees that seems to be less publicized is migrant children. The US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants describes migrant children as those who are often fleeing domestic abuse, gang violence, trafficking, or poverty, [and] arrive in the US without parents or resources. The point of entry for most migrant children is through the US/Mexico border, as many come from Central America in search of family members working illegally in the US, job opportunities, or even families willing to adopt them.

*Which Way Home* is a documentary directed by Rebecca Cammisa that chronicles the journey of some of these children, and sheds light on a largely unknown sector of the refugee community. This documentary is especially relevant now, given the recent focus on immigration policy in the US. The film provides an in depth look at not only the treacherous journey that these children embark upon, but also the reasons that these children travel thousands of miles unaccompanied to cross the border into the US. As each child's journey is chronicled throughout the documentary, the bigger issue of what we can do to solve this continuing problem is raised.

In a particularly moving scene, a man who runs a shelter for migrants in a Mexican town that surrounds a integral

railway stop advertises "free food here... come in to hear about how you can get to the US, brothers". Before the children are fed, however, he rallies all of the migrants and lectures them on the dangers of traveling to the US, saying "Mexico is the passage of death for you... It can kill you. The US is not the passage of death, the US is 'Death Itself'... Maybe many of you here will die. Many of you will never see your families again. Many of you here will never return to your countries. Because you will die on the way. Now, brothers, who really wants to get to the US? Raise your hand." Despite this warning meant to instill fear in the travelers, every hand in the crowd is raised.

The children who choose to make the dangerous passage through Mexico and into the US understand the dangers. Their parents (for the most part) know that they have left. In an interview with 14 year old Kevin's mother, she explains that she knew he left, but that her hope was that he would make it to the US and get

adopted by a family who would care for him so that he could get a job and send money home. The circumstances that these children are coming from are often so debilitating, that to risk their lives in order to live the "American Dream" and be able to support their families is a choice that they make no matter the danger involved. And when these children are caught and deported, they don't simply give up.

At least four of the children featured in the movie were apprehended part of the way through Mexico, but that didn't deter them. Kevin returned home briefly, but made the journey again, making it to the US border the second time, where he was apprehended by border control, and placed in a shelter in Washington state. "Perrito" was apprehended, and returned home, but vows to make the journey again when he turns eighteen in a few months. This documentary sheds light on a sector of the refugee population that many don't even know exists, and raises the larger issue of how to solve the problem of migrant children in North America. In short, it is definitely worth the watch. ☺

## Burlington's Livable Wage Ordinance

By *Kyle Silliman-Smith*

**A**t the end of last year, the Livable Wage Ordinance surfaced as something that should be looked at closely. This April the city attorney's office came out with a report on the implementation of this ordinance and a lack of consistency in enforcement. The City Council's Ordinance Committee (made up of Councilors Paul, Mason, and Bushor) is currently gathering information in order to remedy this problem.

As the powerhouse behind the Vermont Livable Wage Campaign, the Peace & Justice Center is incredibly interested in this process and the outcome of this review. When this ordinance was adopted by the city it was intended to be a law that would grow in scope and strength. This committee process has the potential to do that, but on the flip side, reevaluating the ordinance also carries the risk of weakening it. It is crucial that we stand with our membership and ally organizations to support the fair and just treatment of workers and the philosophy that the Vermont Livable Wage Campaign was born of.

The two committee meetings so far were largely dedicated to better understanding the ordinance and how it is currently working. The first was on June 13<sup>th</sup> with a report back from City Attorney, Eileen Blackwood, explaining the findings in a 55 page report on where the Livable Wage Ordinance currently stands. The second was on June 26<sup>th</sup> where the committee heard from Jesse Bridges (Director of Parks & Recreation), Doug Hoffer (author of the Peace & Justice Center's ten phases of the *Vermont Job Gap Study*, VT's State Auditor, and the person who updates the livable wage ordinance numbers each year), and Gene Richards (BTV Aviation Director).

Livable Wage continued on page 11

research • policy • action

# A “Race to the Bottom”: *Exploitation in the Global Market Economy*

By Kathleen Parent, PJC Intern

**T**his past April, horrific images of a collapsed garment factory in Savar, Bangladesh, which resulted in the deaths of 1,127 workers, shocked consumers around the globe. This tragedy, soon followed by a devastating fire in a Chinese factory, has contributed to concerns regarding workers’ rights in the developing world, and serves as an example of the dangers of the “race to the bottom” strategy implemented by many poorer countries around the world. To combat this destructive system and promote basic human rights, international enterprises must be required to uphold a global minimum wage and universal safety regulations.

The “race to the bottom” phenomenon occurs when states reduce regulations to encourage international companies to outsource to a particular location. Companies search for the best investments in the global market, and find them in struggling countries desperate to boost their economies. In an effort to overcome competition, these countries raise their appeal by implementing lower minimum wages, reducing taxes on foreign companies, and maintaining few or no safety regulations. It is an ironic race to be worst in governance yet concurrently most attractive in an exploitive market economy.

The bottom-to-top reform found through unions and demonstrations in the Western world are virtually impossible in primary international outsourcing locations. If workers demanded better wages or safer conditions, the company in question could simply abandon the site and seek more lucrative economic partners in the form of desperate workers and countries who are willing to be exploited because exploitive work is better than no work, just as an exploitive economy is better than no economy. As stated by political analyst Jason Hickel, “[t]he constant threat of replacement keeps workers cheap and docile, to the tremendous benefit of corporate profits.”

This dynamic means that change must be encouraged and implemented from the outside. With the advent of globalization, integrated economic standards are only logical, and should be a responsibility of both countries and corporations. Suggestions for the implementation of a global minimum wage have included action through the United Nations or through the International Monetary Fund, which helps regulate international trade, among other things.

Although a wage change may be difficult to monitor, the cost of providing fair pay would be reasonable: it is estimated that the average consumer in the United States would pay between 1-

2% more for a product.

A system put forward by economist Thomas Palley, recommends that a global minimum wage be set at 50% of a country’s median wage to be tied to the local economic climate. Another suggestion includes a fixed wage at a figure around 50 cents per hour. While both of these proposals pose some issues, they are important steps towards increasing the dialogue surrounding workers’ rights in a global economy.

Measures that individuals could take to encourage change include buying fair trade goods whenever possible and making it clear through surveys, letters to local representatives, and other means that workers’ rights are important to you as a consumer. Instances like Savar, Bangladesh are reminiscent of the 1800s, and to progress as a world we must begin to pressure exploitive companies and countries to change permanently. 

## PJC Fair Trade Garment Campaign

By Carmen Solari, PJC Store Manager & Fair Trade Program Director

Many of us have seen the images and articles plastered over major and minor news outlets covering the horrific building collapse in Bangladesh. Perhaps what is even harder than facing these images is accepting the fact that the true cost of our cheap clothing is the loss of 1,127 lives. The tragedy is carried out daily in impoverished countries the world over, where workers are forced to work in unsafe conditions, with severely inadequate pay, and under abusive management.

We at the Peace & Justice Center are no stranger to the negative domino effects of the race to the bottom (explored in Kathleen’s article), and we wondered how we might be able to glean some positive action from the attention given to the Bangladesh building collapse. Hence our Garment Campaign was created.

While we’ve focused on the importance of supporting the morals of fair trade for three decades through the Peace & Justice Store, we thought it would be poignant given our current social climate, to explore the issue of clothing specifically. We took to the streets to see how the Burlington community weighed in on the issue, equipped with a short survey meant to determine the demand for socially responsible clothing, as well as where exactly Burlington is getting it’s clothes from. We’ve taken all the great feedback and pointers from folks back to the Center and will be compiling data to, among other things, determine the top three countries Burlington relies on for textiles.

Once we have that information, we will be organizing a series of three informational talks, one for each country and its trials and tribulations concerning the production of clothing and labor laws. Keep a look out for the dates and times of those talks, and in the meantime, check labels, ask questions about where your clothes are from, and choose to go the sustainable, socially responsible route! 



# Deadline for the UN Millennium Development Goals

By Samantha Sawyer, PJC Intern

In 2000, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were adopted by all United Nations member countries. The adoption of these goals was a notable and momentous achievement in the global commitment to reduce extreme poverty and create better lives for people around the world. As developed by the United Nations, the MDGs are the following:

- **Goal 1:** Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.
- **Goal 2:** Achieve universal primary education.
- **Goal 3:** Promote gender equality and empower women.
- **Goal 4:** Reduce child mortality.
- **Goal 5:** Improve maternal health.
- **Goal 6:** Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases.
- **Goal 7:** Ensure environmental sustainability.
- **Goal 8:** Global partnership for development.

There has been much argument as to the actual effectiveness of these broad goals and how concrete development will be made, but indicators have been used along the way to measure and track progress. On June 12, 2013, the *UN News Centre* published an article stating that 38 countries have met the 2015 international target for eradicating hunger, meaning they have already cut in half the percentage of hungry people in their country.

The UN Food and Agricultural Organization's Director, General José Graziano da Silva said, "These countries are leading the way to a better future. They are proof that with strong political will, coordination and cooperation, it is possible to achieve rapid and lasting reductions in hunger."

However, there are still billions of people living in hunger and fear of when they will eat their next meal. It is important to realize that meeting these goals should not be the end. We need to think beyond the MDG deadline and continue to strategize other means to further these goals so that we can ensure that every person has access to healthy food and a sustainable way of living.

Fair trade and fair trading policies are a vital component of the progress that has been made to achieve these MDGs. Fair trade practices help people to live a sustainable life in terms of health, nutrition and finances and foster gender equality, female empowerment and education, which are included in many of the MDGs. It is important to recognize the role that socially responsible organizations and practices can have in achieving these goals and in creating what the world will look like after 2015. This is why it is vital to support the Fair Trade Beyond 2015 campaign and continue to support fair trade organizations and socially responsible companies who are working hard to achieve and maintain the MDGs.

The MDGs and fair trade have made quite an impact on millions of peoples' lives. There are many organizations and NGOs that have worked under these principals and with these MDGs in mind in order to change the world. One of these groups, Divine Chocolate, is a fair trade organization that works with cocoa farmers who are members of the cooperative Kuapa Kokoo in Ghana. Kuapa Kokoo has changed life as many Ghana-

ians knew it. For the first time, the farmers' (and their families') best interests are a top priority.

Farmers working with Kuapa Kokoo are able to earn a stable living, which creates a domino affect in the community. Children can continue their education and work towards achieving their dreams many of which are centered around giving back to their communities. In addition, Kuapa Kokoo's dedication to fair trade has enhanced other aspects of life; a village that has many of Kuapa Kokoo co-op farmers, now has clean and fresh water. They have a water pump that people from miles away envy and wish they had as well.

Divine Chocolate and Kuapa Kokoo are just one example of how organizations that support fair trade practices are changing the world. These organizations and practices are helping to achieve the MDGs and are making certain that everyone has access to clean, fresh water and that the alleviation of poverty and hunger is possible. The Peace & Justice Center is a proud supporter of fair trade and Divine Chocolate; we hope you will be too (it's delicious)! ☺

## Stop the F-35 Coalition

The Stop the F-35 Coalition opposes the basing of a new generation of super-sonic military jets in Vermont. Doing so would damage our quality of life, our economy, and our health. Basing of the F-35 here will lead to over 3,400 homes being designated unsuitable for residential use according to the Air Force. The F-35 noise levels will pose health risks to thousands of residents, schoolchildren and workers, disproportionately harming recent immigrants, renters, and homeowners of modest income. The wasteful spending on the F-35 (\$1.5 trillion and rising) should go to the unmet needs of our communities, such as healthcare, housing, jobs, education, food, and social security; not to promoting the military industrial complex.

- **S. Burlington City Council Public Hearing:** the panel will reconsider its position on the basing the F-35 on **July 8** (place and time TBD – contact [info@stopthef35.com](mailto:info@stopthef35.com) to check in).
- **Winooski City Council Public Forum:** the Council will be taking testimony on the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on **July 8** at 6:00 pm in Winooski City Hall. To read facts about the EIS, visit <http://www.stopthef35.com/tag/eis/>. To read the entire report, you can visit <http://acplanning.org/>.
- **F-35 Citizen's Hearing #2:** July 9 Chamberlin School, South Burlington, 7:00-9:30pm.
- **"No to the F-35" Rally:** join us in demanding public policies that protect our human rights and meet the real needs of our communities on **July 13<sup>th</sup>** at 2pm on the steps of Burlington City Hall.
- **Write-In Campaign:** the Coalition is organizing a write-in campaign to the Air Force during the official comment period on the revised Environmental Impact Statement. It is important for hundreds of Vermonters to register their opposition and reasons to the Air Force **before the July 15th deadline**. Write to: Mr. Nicholas Germanos at [nicholas.germanos@langley.af.mil](mailto:nicholas.germanos@langley.af.mil) or HQ ACC/A7PS, 129 Andrews Street, Suite 332, Langley AFB, VA 23665-2769. ☺

# Quinoa Popularity and Consequences

By Rose Leshner, PJC Intern

**A**s the Fair Trade Intern, I have been exposed to various troubling interactions between the poor and vulnerable global south, and the boom and bust, capitalist economy of the global north. I recently learned that one of my favorite and most commonly eaten snacks, quinoa, was fueling yet another troubling north-south exchange.

The ancestral crop “quinoa” has been a sacred and depended upon chenopod in pre-Hispanic Andean cultures for years. Containing all 10 essential amino acids for the human diet, it makes sense that the South American staple has become popular in the diets of health seeking junkies in Europe, Japan and the US. With quinoa’s nutritional properties front and center on the global food stage, even the UN’s Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) has recognized the crop as a gateway to combat world hunger and malnutrition. Clearly, quinoa successfully represents its famous nickname “the food for life.”

What, however, is the consequence of all this fame and glory on the global quinoa, crazed economy? Many researchers have concerns that the 5,000-year-old commodity is being consumed more by the global north, and less by the traditional, Andean cultivators. Government figures indicate that domestic consumption of quinoa in Bolivia and Peru, the two top producers of quinoa, has dropped by a third in the last five years (*Collins*, 2013). The reason for this is obvious – the price. With prices of quinoa higher than buying an entire chicken, quinoa farmers have better luck trading their luxurious quinoa for abundances of pasta and rice, both less nutritional alternatives.

Fortunately, Nadine Heredia, the first lady of Peru, is supporting a campaign to promote accessibility to the Andean diet, with quinoa being a major component. Additionally, Juan Rheineck, Peru’s vice-minister for agriculture, supports a public program that provides quinoa to local school children for breakfast. These campaigns, and many like it, are aimed at

boosting production of quinoa and making it a more affordable foodstuff for greater internal consumption.

Nevertheless, these solutions aid just one miniscule part of an unbalanced double-edged sword. So the real question is: what can we, the consumers, do? A viable alternative might be buying quinoa from the White Mountain Farm in the Colorado Rockies. This is the first farm to successfully grow quinoa in the US,

harvesting 70 acres last summer (visit [www.whitemountainfarm.com](http://www.whitemountainfarm.com) to order quinoa). Additionally, multiple Fair Trade quinoa producers exist. Companies such as Alter Eco, sold at City Market, sell quinoa that ensures fair prices that enable farmers to keep at least 10% of their yields. We should remember that what we are doing in the US – in Vermont – is affecting people and communities all around the World. It is our responsibility to educate ourselves, and choose options that respect the farmers, the people, and the communities who produce it. 

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## The Crude, The Great: Remembering Michael Hastings

By Frank Smecker

June 18: Vermont lost one of its best. Author, award-winning journalist and war correspondent, Michael Hastings, died Tuesday morning, June 18 at the young age of 33 in a tragic car accident outside of L.A. As a contributing editor at *Rolling Stone* and, more recently, a reporter for the social news website BuzzFeed, he’ll be remembered for his incisive wit and charismatic devotion to exposing hypocrisy and corruption in some of the most elite circles of US power.

Hastings was most celebrated for his joyously scathing *Rolling Stone* cover profile of General Stanley McChrystal, at the time the commander of US forces in Afghanistan in 2010. The piece, “The Runaway General,” caused quite the commotion: it shattered McChrystal’s standing, cost him his post, as it reported the General’s outspoken attacks on President Barack Obama. With that, Hastings set the bar for journalism at new heights.

In September of 2012, Hastings kicked up quite the row with Hillary Clinton’s aide, Phillip Reines—“Why do you bother to ask questions you’ve already decided to know the answer to?” Reines said with an embittered tone. To which Hastings replied: “Why don’t you give answers that aren’t bullshit for a change?” Last year, after seeking out the world’s most famous whistleblower, the founder of Wikileaks, Julian Assange, he began the interview with: “Are you fucked?”

Hastings was, without a doubt, one of journalism’s most badass “rock stars.” His closest friends and colleagues describe him as having the perfect blend of “charisma,” clever judgment and, at times, “irreverence.” He seemed invincible, as one friend put it. But most importantly, his anger toward the blatant lying and dissembling of truth spread by a charlatan media and unscrupulous administration left a legacy of honest reporting that all journalists should, categorically, strive to follow.

Hastings may have been angry over the current state of things. But he showed us how to sculpt such anger into brilliant and eloquent forms of fearless inquiry. Sure, sometimes his message was blunt, crude. But it was always clear: Don’t believe that the pervasive and popular is always true. You must take what you hear to task. Which is precisely what we should take away from his work.

In the wake of such a bewildering and mournful loss, let’s tilt our heads downward in a moment of deserved silence for Michael Hastings. Here, in the space of this silence, we must not only acknowledge his radiant insight and ethically balanced work, but we should, at the same time, lift our intemperate spirits high—to the very height at which he set the bar: into a state of tactful resentment towards institutional corruption, and the rampant manipulation that often ensues; into an irascibility we shouldn’t repress but rather channel into persistent dissent. And let’s not worry whether or not our dissent is crude, for Hastings expressed so well, so effectively, that, in the spirit of that great playwright, Bertolt Brecht—“crude thinking is the thinking of the great.” 



Robin's Nest

# African History as Told by Africans

By Robin Lloyd

**B**urlington College recently sponsored its first ever course on the Modern History of Africa, focusing primarily on Somalia, the Sudan and the Great Lakes region, and taught by Burlington area Africans who come from those regions.

We started with a video “This magnificent Africa cake’ documenting the arrogant way that the European powers, in 1884, sliced up, and gave themselves sovereignty over, the African continent. Class topics discussed included causes for the conflict in African countries, women’s leadership, genital mutilation, and more. Students’ final oral reports consisted of an in depth interview with an African refugee or immigrant answering the question “Why are you here?”

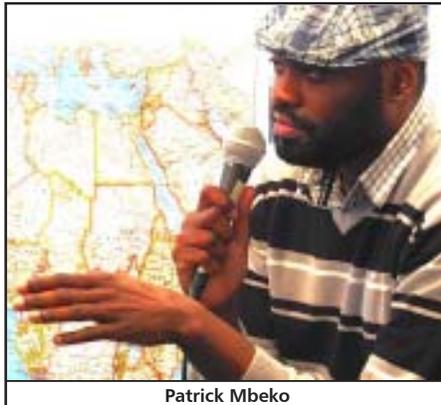
The course was designed by Sandra Baird, Kyendamina Mukeba (Cleophas), Robin Lloyd, and Jeanine Bunziyiye. Participating educators and members of the African Community are: Fatuma Bulle and Mohammed Abdi, (Somalia), Darius Jonathan (Sudan), Sebastien Hakizimana (Burundi), Eric Angera (Ivory Coast), Jacob Bogre (Bukino Faso), Mohammed Dioup and Ali Deng (Mauritania), and Grant Crichfield.

## ■ Patrick Mbeko

Our final speaker was Patrick Mbeko, an author from Montreal whose book *Canada and the Wars in Central Africa* is unfortunately available only in French.

Mbeko challenges the accepted wisdom on the origins of the Rwanda genocide.

In his talk, he argued that after the end of the Cold War, “the US wanted to reshuffle things and they wanted to dump all heads of state supported by France. The French controlled the Great Lakes region. To control the resources of the Congo, the US (and its allies Canada, the UK, and Israel) had to destabilize Rwanda. Paul Kagame (the Tutsi military leader in exile who led a rebel force to invade Rwanda and who is now president



Patrick Mbeko

of Rwanda) has been presented as the victim of the genocide,” but in actuality, Mbeko insists, “Kagame DID the genocide with the assistance of the UN. ....The Tutsi rebels committed most of the murders.” After invading the Congo, instead of killing the Hutu ‘genocidiaries,’ Kagame led the attack on Mobutu, the tottering dictator of the Congo, and replaced him with Laurent Kabila. American drones directed the rebels and researched the resources, even before they obtained power.

Mbeko points out that since the UN came to the Congo things have gotten worse. (The peacekeeping force MONUC, established in 1999, was renamed MONUSCO after a change in mandate in 2010.) “Women are raped next to the UN headquarters. Kabila senior was a puppet, but he refused to give the mining companies what they wanted. So they assassinated him and put in his adopted son. The UN is there to maintain the instability. No one [in power] has an interest in ending the war. This is called the strategy of chaos.”

He concluded “As long as instability exists the forces that support the UN and Rwanda/Uganda make money. The real destabilizer of the Congo is the US.”

In answer to a question from a young person in the audience asking ‘what can we do?’, Mbeko said, “To help the youth of the Congo, share the knowledge. Tell your friends. You can achieve big things. People like you and I have written history.”

## ■ Quaker Peace Teams

A week after the course ended another speaker on central Africa came to Vermont. His name is David Zarembka. He has been doing peace work with Friends (Quaker) Peace Teams in the Great Lakes region of Africa since 1998. He addressed an audience of Quakers and college students at the O’Brien Center in Winooski.

He spoke not about changing US foreign policy but about healing those damaged by violence. He asked “Are revenge, hatred, and another round of violence the only possibilities after deadly conflict? Can healing and reconciliation between enemies occur?”

Reading the words of participants in the Alternatives to Violence workshops that the Peace Teams organize in the conflict areas of Rwanda and Kenya reveals that, for many, a profound change of heart has taken place. Some of the experiential workshops were made up of half Tutsi and half Hutu participants. They worked on trauma healing, forgiveness and reconciliation. An environment was created where people could grieve together and publicly express anger. It seemed to lift a terrible burden from people’s shoulders. As one released prisoner said, “Now I am human”.

The African Great Lakes Initiative is funded by 16 US Quaker Yearly (regional) Meetings to the tune of \$200,000 annually. Contributions are welcome. For more information go to: <http://aglifpt.org/>.



David Zarembka

## CALENDAR

## July 2013

**[8] Monday**

- 6-8pm Vermonters for a Just Peace in Palestine/Israel meeting at PJC.
- 7pm Fed Up VT meeting at TBA. [fedupvermont@googlegroups.com](mailto:fedupvermont@googlegroups.com)

**[9] Tuesday**

- 7-9:30pm F-35 Citizen's Hearing #2 at the First Unitarian Universalist Society, Burlington

**[11] Thursday**

- 5-6:30pm Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) meeting at the Peace & Justice Center. 862-4929.

**[13] Saturday**

- 2pm "No to the F-35" Rally: join us in demanding public policies that protect our human rights and meet the real needs of our communities on the steps of Burlington City Hall.

**[15] Monday**

- 7pm Fed Up VT meeting at PJC every Monday. Fed Up VT is a radical grassroots women's rights coalition fighting for economic equality, reproductive rights, and freedom from gender-based violence. [fedupvermont@googlegroups.com](mailto:fedupvermont@googlegroups.com)

**[17] Wednesday**

- 5:30pm Burlington's Livable Wage Ordinance committee meeting in Conference Room 12, first floor, City Hall. See article that starts on page 5.

**[20] Saturday**

- 1pm Vets For Peace meet the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sat. of the month at the Kellogg Hubbard Library, Montpelier.

## August 2013

**[4] Sunday**

- 12-1 Vets for Peace live call-in show on Channel 15.

**[5] Monday**

- 7pm Fed Up VT meeting at PJC every Monday. Fed Up VT is a radical grassroots women's rights coalition fighting for economic equality, reproductive rights, and freedom from gender-based violence. [fedupvermont@googlegroups.com](mailto:fedupvermont@googlegroups.com)

**[6] Tuesday**

- 8:30pm: Peace & Popcorn at Art Lab, 4 Howard St., Suite G1, Burlington. Peace & Popcorn is a casual movie night open to the public. This is a great way for people who are interested in peace, racial justice, the environment, economic justice, international issues, politics, etc. to watch a documentary they normally wouldn't make time for, and to connect with people of similar

interests. The best part is, we serve popcorn, and it's free! Good films and good company. All are welcome!

**[9] Thursday**

- 5-6:30pm Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) meeting at the Peace & Justice Center. 862-4929.
- 7pm Songs of Hope Candle Boat vigil. Burlington waterfront. See p. 3.

**[12] Monday**

- 6-8pm Vermonters for a Just Peace in Palestine/Israel meeting at PJC.
- 7pm Fed Up VT meeting at TBA. [fedupvermont@googlegroups.com](mailto:fedupvermont@googlegroups.com)

**[17] Saturday**

- 1pm Vets For Peace meet the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sat. of the month at the Kellogg Hubbard Library, Montpelier.

## September 2013

**[1] Sunday**

- 12-1 Vets for Peace live call-in show on Channel 15.

**[2] Monday**

- 7pm Fed Up VT meeting at PJC every Monday. Fed Up VT is a radical grassroots women's rights coalition fighting for economic equality, reproductive rights, and freedom from gender-based violence. [fedupvermont@googlegroups.com](mailto:fedupvermont@googlegroups.com)

**[3] Tuesday**

- 6:30 Peace & Popcorn on the first Tuesday of every month. A casual screening of peace and social justice films from the PJC's library, chosen by the group that night. Join us for a good film and good company. All welcome. [Kyle@pjcv.org](mailto:Kyle@pjcv.org) or 863-2345 x6.

**[9] Monday**

- 6-8pm Vermonters for a Just Peace in Palestine/Israel meeting at PJC.

**[12] Thursday**

- 5-6:30pm Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) meeting at the Peace & Justice Center. 862-4929.

**[21] Saturday**

- 1pm Vets For Peace meet the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sat. of the month at the Kellogg Hubbard Library, Montpelier.

**See boxes on pages 2 & 3 for Kids Club and Dance Series.**

# The Upcoming Generation of Celebrity Activists

By Nicole Peruso, PJC Intern

Let's be honest: at some point or another, we've all been suckers for a little celebrity gossip. When celebrities take to causes or controversial topics, it can be hard to take their word seriously since the media communicate how detached they are from the realities of everyday life. This is how we are expected to remember them outside the entertainment arena. However, I'm here to contest this! There are several celebrities committed to bringing forth positive change in the world. This article highlights three female celebrities who are working hard for incredibly important causes: Gisele Bündchen, Eva Longoria-Parker, and Lady GaGa.

International supermodel Gisele Bündchen has become one of the most active environmentalists today. Since 2009, Bündchen has served as Goodwill Ambassador for the United Nations Environmental Program. That same year she co-hosted the Rainforest Alliance Annual Gala, an event that honors businesses and individuals for their outstanding commitments to sustainability. Bündchen has joined the Brazilian movement, Gota D'água, which aims to stop construction of the Bel Monte Dam, which is anticipated to destroy large portions of the Amazonian rainforest. She is also involved in her hometown's Clean Water Project in Horizontina, Brazil.

Latina actress Eva Longoria-Parker, who starred on the hit series *Desperate Housewives*, has also popped up on the activism radar. Longoria, a ninth-generation Mexican-American, has become an outspoken opponent of unjust immigration laws. In 2010, she teamed up with fellow Latino-American celebrities Jessica Alba, Rosario Dawson, and Wilder Valderamma to challenge Arizona's controversial immigration law. Longoria-

Parker's concern with Arizona SB1070 was that racial profiling would lead to discriminatory pursuits of legal US citizens like herself. She's since acted as a representative of the Latino-American community as co-chair of Obama's 2012 campaign.

Stefani Germanotta, more commonly known as Lady GaGa, is today's face of the gay rights movement. GaGa is openly bisexual and has become a gay icon and inspiration for the international LGBTQ community. One of GaGa's biggest accomplishments is drawing attention to the Don't Ask, Don't Tell (DADT) military policy that was practiced in the US Armed Forces. GaGa made a statement on the issue at the 2010 MTV Video Music Awards where she was accompanied by four gay and lesbian former members of the US Armed Forces who had been unable to serve openly under the DADT policy. Later that year, she spoke at a Servicemembers Legal Defense Network's rally in Portland, ME. She has also released several videos on YouTube urging her fans to contact their Senators in an effort to overturn DADT. This policy was officially repealed on September 20, 2011 thanks to the work of many activists including, but not limited to, Lady GaGa.

Sometimes it's hard to look past the hair, make-up, and tabloid articles that can draw negative attention to celebrities. But we can't forget that like us, these celebrities have causes that they believe in and fight for. The achievements of celebrities like Paul Newman, Robert Redford, and Bono certainly set a precedent for the activist community. More importantly, they've inspired a young and hip generation of powerhouse celebrities to emerge on the 21<sup>st</sup> century activist scene. I'm confident that the work of celebrities like Gisele, Eva, and GaGa will continue to inspire young activists around the world. ☺

## Livable Wage continued from page 5

Attending these meetings has been interesting because there are many different view points being expressed. However, since they have both been largely about gathering information the councilors themselves have not really shown where they stand. There are glimpses here and there, but the next meeting will be the most exciting because the three members of the committee will discuss their thoughts on how best to proceed. That meeting is set for July 17<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 in Conference Room 12 on the first floor of City Hall. I hope that everyone who is passionate about this issue or even has a budding interest, will attend.

There are a handful of things that we are keeping an eye on and urge you to think about and voice your opinions on as this process continues. Currently the livable wage ordinance does not apply to seasonal workers. Expanding the reach of this ordinance to include seasonal staff would be a huge victory for workers and for the philosophy of livable wage. This is something that we will be engaging the community in to support.

The committee is looking to better define what a "service" is. This is something to be careful of and also could be a potential way to strengthen the ordinance. The exception process will be discussed and mostly likely the language will be revised. We

would love to see more transparency from businesses seeking exemption to better assess the need, a plan for being able to pay a livable wage as soon as possible, and to have every exception brought to the full city council even if the Board of Finance is unanimously in support.

There also seems to be an interest in raising the \$15,000 threshold for contracts that must be in compliance with the ordinance. This could eliminate a massive group of workers from qualifying for livable wage pay and is cause for concern. A huge part of the next steps will be discussing process and implementation of this ordinance. The city attorney did come up with some suggestions and I urge you to read them (page 19 of her report) before the next meeting so that you have an idea of some of the proposals.

All in all, it seems to me that there is a genuine interest to stay true and dedicated to the Livable Wage Ordinance. It is also our duty as citizens to participate in these processes and make sure that ultimately our elected officials are acting for the benefit of all of us. The next steps will be interesting and I look forward to being a part of this process along with the many community members, PJC members, and others that have a passion for social justice. ☺

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