



peace & justice news

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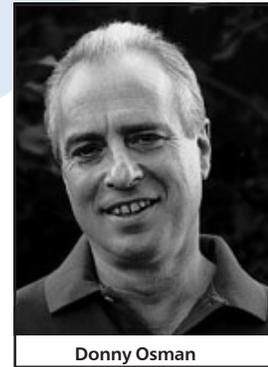
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■ More events

PSA contest. ACME Media Fall Conference.
Service Nation Day of Action.

PJC Welcomes New Executive Director

The Peace & Justice Center has hired Donny Osman to be the new Executive Director. "I am thrilled to have the opportunity to help the PJC continue to be a vital, progressive voice for social change." Donny's life's work has given him a unique skill set that we believe will help to support, energize and grow the work of the PJC. Donny has worked extensively in the arts and is the Director of the renowned Governor's Institute on the Arts. Donny is a graduate of Woodbury College's Mediation and Conflict Management Program. He served three terms in the legislature as a State Representative, and his voting record demonstrates his commitment to civil rights, racial and



Donny Osman

economic justice.

Donny says, "I am eager to begin working with staff, board members, membership and the public to help take the Peace & Justice Center forward. ☺"

Rock the Boat - To the Left

The Peace & Justice Center Celebrates Social Justice Activist

The Peace & Justice Center is hosting its annual event on Friday, September 19, from 6:30 – 9:30pm. **Rock the Boat** will take place at ECHO, located on Burlington's waterfront.

From music with Amber de Laurentis & Tom Cleary, to live and silent auctions, the Peace & Justice Center will celebrate social justice activism and community accomplishments! Auction items include a weekend getaway on Cape Cod and a home Asian dining experience for 6-8 people.

The Peace & Justice Center will proudly present long-time PJC member and social justice activist, Roddy O'Neil Cleary, with *The Ed Everts Peace &*



Roddy O'Neil Cleary

Social Justice Award for her life-long commitment to activism and volunteerism.

Since 1976, Roddy has been a force for social change. She has worked for justice

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EDITORS

Wendy Coe
Gene Bergman
Robin Lloyd

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21 Church Street
Burlington, VT 05401
802.863.2345
fax: 802.863.2532
www.pjcv.org
wcoep@pjcv.org

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(alphabetical order)

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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.



Meet the Members

Bridget Downey-Meyer

By *Andrea Arratoon*

Bridget Downey-Meyer has been a PJC member for 17 years. She is currently a very active member on our Special Event Planning Committee as we plan Rock the Boat and our 30th Anniversary Celebration. She brings experience, energy, creativity, and connections. It became clear to me during our first meeting that Bridget knows a ton of people in the community. She's done a lot of incredible work and has lived in and around Burlington for over 40 years.

Bridget's work for social justice began in the late '60s. She told me 'the world was changing and I wanted to be a part of it.' In 1969, Bridget, a 23 year old single mother, joined the Mt Philo Commune. The original work of the commune was draft counseling. Commune members helped draft resisters with their conscientious objector status. Out of the Mt Philo Commune came lots of anti-war work. She talked about stopping traffic in DC in 1972 to end the Vietnam War. Remembering, she said, 'the sense of community among the demonstrators was powerful for me.' She credits her time living communally and the consciousness raising that went on there for her lifelong commitment to peace and justice work.

The Mt Philo Commune was part of a network of communes in Vermont. Commune members, committed to social justice and peace activist work, began many Burlington progressive institutions that survive and thrive today. Bridget was part of a group that started the People's Free Clinic, which is now the Community Health Center. In keeping with the communal concept, she was trained to do everything at the clinic. The VT Women's Health Center (now Women's Choice) and Onion River Coop, (City Market), were also started by the communes.

With her husband Nick, Bridget owned and operated Chapin Orchard in Essex Center for 16 years. She is very active volunteering with the Unitarian Universalist Society, the Vermont International Film Festival, Vermont International Festival, and her local library and community in Essex Junction. Bridget has three adult children. Asked if her children were activists she said, 'Unfortunately, it's not as compelling as it was in the '60s for young people.'

I asked Bridget why she's a PJC member. She said, 'I believe so strongly in what you do, and I want to support the work. And I'm not as active as I used to be, so being a member is my way of being active and supportive now.' ☺

Rock continued from page 1

for refugees, women, and minorities. She is a frequent volunteer for COTS, Vermont Interfaith Action and the Burlington Food Shelf, and was a member of the Freedom to Marry Task Force. A former Roman Catholic nun, Roddy directed the Cooperative Campus Ministry and taught in the Women's Studies program at University of Vermont. Roddy was part of the first organizing team of the local Habitat for Humanity. She and her husband Bill have two sons. She has recently retired after 11 years as Affiliate Minister at the First Unitarian Universalist Society.

Tickets are \$25 and are available at the Peace & Justice Store or by calling the number below. Hors-d'oeuvres will be served, and there is a cash bar. All proceeds will benefit the social justice work of the Peace & Justice Center.

For more information, visit our website at: www.pjcv.org or call Andrea at 863-2345 x6. ☺

The Ed Everts Award for Peace & Social Justice

Criteria:

- A long standing commitment to activism through volunteerism
- Understanding of the interconnectedness of the issues of economic and racial justice, peace, and human rights
 - Educating the masses to issues that the media ignores
 - Working collaboratively across sectors
 - Inspiring others to action



Robin's Nest

In Memorium: Christel Holzer, 1913 – August 6, 2008

By Robin Lloyd

Christel was hard of hearing in her later years, and often requested in meetings that people ‘speak up’, although she was very soft-spoken herself. I remember driving with her somewhere, probably to a peace demonstration, when I had to lean towards her to catch her story above the sound of the motor. That was when she told me about the moment that changed her life. To hear her tell it, it was not an outwardly dramatic moment, but her heart must have been pounding. (It could be the basis for a film script.)

Christel was born in 1913 in Germany to a middle class, intellectual family. As she told Alexis Lathem, in an interview here in January 1997, “We were brought up with humanistic ideals, reading Goethe and Schiller and Herder and Karl Marx, and the German philosophers, and we felt things needed to get better and would get better under the democracy {the Weimar Republic}. Then we saw the first Nazis going through the streets with music. We thought they were just *lumpen*, outcasts, we thought they would never be able to have power. But then in ’33 Hitler was appointed by Hindenburg.”

Her father was a famous pastor and professor of theology, with an extensive library. The Nazis told him that they wanted to take his books. He thought that they wanted to move them to another library, so he packed them up in his best suitcases. When they arrived, they took the suitcases outside, emptied the books out, and set them all on fire. So much for Goethe, et al.

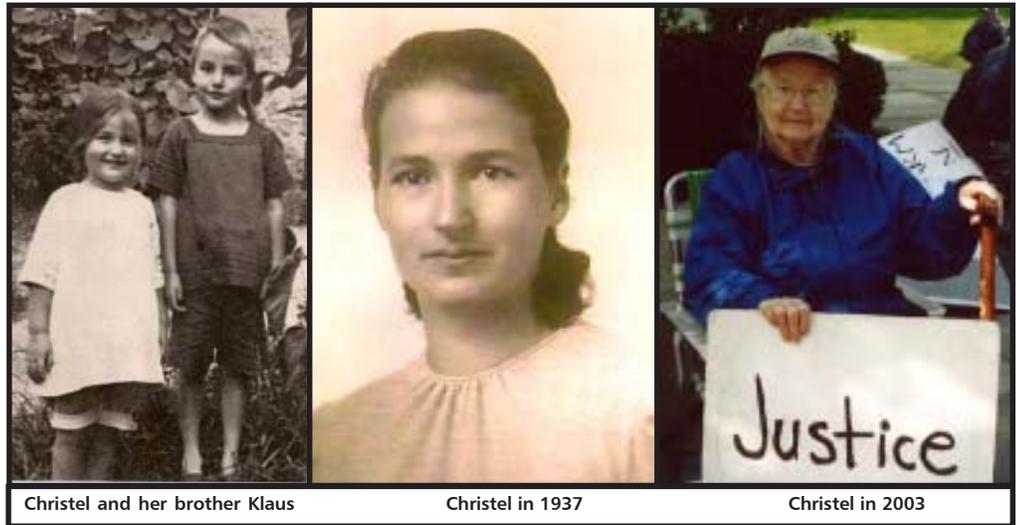
He had to stop going to his church, she said. “I had seen the Nazi flag hanging in all the churches, except the Quaker meeting houses. In all the other churches, if the minister would not comply, and hang out the big flag, he would be dismissed. That happened to everyone – professors, teachers – if they did not join the Nazi party they would lose their jobs.” Her father, ultimately, was

dismissed from his job by Goebbels, the Minister of Culture.

Christel’s moment of truth came in 1937. She had decided to get a degree in book-binding, because she felt it was a profession that she could teach without having to parrot the ideology of the state. (One can’t help but wonder whether there was even something quietly subversive about her choice – books are bound, and

America, had two husbands and five children, moved to Brattleboro in 1963 and came to live in Burlington to be near her daughter Marianna in 1986. She became a Quaker and devoted much of her free time to the work of the American Friends Service Committee.

Like another person of German descent in Vermont, Peter Schumann, Christel has helped us understand the sometimes



Christel and her brother Klaus

Christel in 1937

Christel in 2003

then are bound to be written in; thus in a dictatorship the mere making of books could cause suspicions).

However, there was one treacherous step she had to take before obtaining her degree. She had to salute the swastika. “On the day I was to get my master’s degree – I remember telling myself, I must do this, but I could not do it – we had to pass a big Nazi flag with the Hoken Kreuz on it. I did not raise my arm and salute, and I passed the people who were holding my scroll and one person who was holding the bible – I just passed them, they did not give me my scroll – and actually you could have heard a needle fall – and I went out the back door.”

She left home that day and took a boat to New York. She was 24, spoke no English, and knew nobody.

She managed to make her way in

subtle ways that fascism takes root in a society: the saluting of flags and signing of loyalty oaths, the pervasive *uberpatriotism*, the willingness to toe the line, and an unwillingness to speak out.

“I think if fascism were to come here” she said in her 1997 interview, “if people had to take an oath to something they didn’t believe in, and chose between earning money for their family and standing up for their conscience, lots of people would not stand up. “We have to stay informed and think about what we do...the little things we can do locally are important, but we still have to have the knowledge of what is going on in other parts of the world and carry it with us and try to struggle together.”

The comments in quotes are taken from an interview with Christel by Alexis Lathem, in the Peace & Justice Newsletter of January, 1997. 



Economic Justice

Measuring Poverty – Low Wages and the Missing Class in Vermont

By Colin Robinson

On July 24th the Federal Minimum Wage went up to \$6.55/hr as part of legislation passed by Congress in 2007, which gave millions of workers across the country their first raise in ten years. Although this increase is a positive step forward, after ten years remaining at \$5.15/hr, it does little to change the economic picture for millions of workers. Over this same period, we have seen median wages for working families decrease, while productivity is up 20% since 2000. Additionally, if the

what little they have, it is clear something isn't working. Hundreds of thousands of Vermonters are playing by the rules, working hard, trying to live life, but remaining one paycheck, one medical emergency, or one high fuel bill away from the financial edge. Unfortunately this isn't the picture for all Vermonters. While the majority of us struggle to make up the difference between our wages and our bills, the number of Vermont tax filers making over 1 million dollars increased by 23% from 2005 to 2006.

and nearly 118,000 Vermonters living between 200% and 300% of FPL. This is a total of nearly 280,000 Vermonters living below 300% of the FPL. Now let's bring in the Livable Wage numbers – for nearly every category of family size the annual Livable Income is right around the 300% of the FPL. These are families that are often juggling several jobs along with family and still just scraping by, but since many of them make “too much” to be eligible for public benefits and don't make a livable wage, they are caught on a

precarious edge. Many have begun calling this segment of our population the Missing Class – what used to be the Middle Class is sliding quickly to the gray area between what our federal government considers “poverty” and what hard working Vermonters need to survive.

In Vermont we have been and continue to be a leader on many fronts, but clearly

Family Size	300% of the 2008 FPL(1)	2008 Updated Annual Livable Income(2)
1	\$31,200	\$30,244
2	\$42,000	\$49,068 (2 Adults) or \$45,396 (1 Adults, 1 Kid)
3	\$52,800	\$54,288 (1 Adult, 2 Kids)
4	\$63,600	\$52,811 (2 Adults, 1 wage earner, 2 Kids) or \$74,318 (2 Adults, 2 wage earners, 2 Kids)

Footnotes:

1. According to the Department of Health and Human Services
2. Indexed figures using the average 2007 CPI-U. Basic Needs Report 2007, Vermont Joint Fiscal Office, March 2007 Revised Study. <http://www.leg.state.vt.us/jfo/Reports%20by%20Subject.htm>.

federal minimum wage had kept up with inflation since its peak in 1968 it would be \$10.06/hr, far closer to a livable wage, but still two dollars more than the minimum wage of Washington state, which is the highest in the county.

Here in Vermont we have one of the highest minimum wages in the county at \$7.68/hr, and it is adjusted every January 1st for inflation, which doesn't happen with the federal minimum. However, Vermont families continue to struggle as fuel, food and the cost of other basic necessities continue to climb. With approximately 20,000 Vermonters making the state minimum wage or receiving the tipped minimum wage, over 60,000 Vermonters living in poverty and many thousands more barely holding on to

To add more numbers to this picture, we should look at the Federal Poverty Limit (FPL). This is the measure by which eligibility for most public benefits are based, however, the methodology was first created in the 1950s – and hasn't been updated in 50 years! So, if you are a family of four you must make less than \$21,200 annually in 2008 to be at 100% of the FPL. This is where the 60,000 figure above comes from – this is the number of Vermonters living at or below 100% of the FPL. However, as many of us know from our own lives, Vermonters who have trouble filling their cupboards or filling their oil tanks often make much more than this. Looking a little bit higher, we see that there are nearly 100,000 Vermonters living between 100% and 200% of FPL,

something isn't working for the vast majority of us. We need to begin to talk about where the poverty line really is – where is the edge in our state - and how many Vermonters really aren't making it as they fall into the Missing Class. We need to ensure that Vermonters are able to meet their basic needs, receive a livable wage and that small businesses are able to thrive. We must make sure that we invest in Vermonters – invest in ourselves -- to ensure that we can all succeed.

We need your help. If you want to get involved in ensuring all Vermonters can find Livable Jobs and Livable Wages in Vermont send us an email at livablewage@pjcv.org or call 802-863-2345 x8. 



7 years! Vigil Against War, weekdays, 5:00-5:30pm, Top of Church Street, Burlington. Sept. 2001 - Aug. 2008. Pleading for Justice Not Revenge, No Invasion of Iraq, Bring Troops Home, No War with Iran. Photos from Pax Christi files.



Peace & Human Rights Project: Interns Work on Opt-Out

VT Schools and Opt-Out

By *Emily Coon, MMU graduate*

When I opened the May edition of the Peace & Justice Center's Action Alert and saw "Interns Wanted!" halfway down the page, I knew I had to apply. Originally, working on the opt-out campaign stemmed from my previous work on opt-out at my own school. During the past year I worked at my high school on No Child Left Behind, the federal education law that provides the impetus for an invasion of student privacy by the military—the collection of the personal information of every single high school junior and senior throughout the US. Mount Mansfield has a relatively progressive opt-out policy, so I thought that working with other schools around the state should be relatively easy, as all schools should be complying with a 2006 Vermont law about student privacy, right?

In practice, schools varied from complete adherence to the policy, from Brattleboro's clear, concise opt-out form which is sent home to students at the beginning of each school year, to South Burlington's murky policy hidden in fine print in the last pages of its student handbook. When I called some schools my query about policy was met with blank silence, like at Craftsbury Commons, even though all Vermont schools are in compliance with No Child Left Behind.

At some schools my call was ignored, perhaps due to vacationing staff or other concerns. However, I made an attempt to contact nearly every single secondary school in the state of Vermont, via letters, e-mails and telephone calls; school responses were recorded and compliance of different high schools will be available in a future edition of the Peace and Justice newsletter.

But work this summer on opt-out was not just working on relationships with schools: it was working on relationships with students. Over the coming months, volunteers from high schools around the state and community members working with the Peace & Justice Center will table at various high schools to speak to

students about opting out and about truth in military recruiting. When volunteers table, they will tell students about a few resources I created this summer: one is a pamphlet exclusively about opt-out and the process that Vermont high schoolers need to go through in order to completely remove themselves from contact lists for the military. Another is two social networking accounts to build relationships and spread the word about Recruiting for Peace: a Facebook account and a MySpace account.

In the coming months, the opt out campaign will focus on community outreach and on continued opt-out awareness, especially before the deadlines this fall to submit opt-out forms. Four committed volunteers will table at area high schools. At least one tabling is already set up and a few others are in the works. One volunteer is going to work on the Youth and Militarism aspect. We have already arranged for a screening of 'Sir No Sir' at the Brownell Library, and s/he is going to table during the screening. In addition, s/he will do volunteer outreach and awareness about the opt out campaign among other teenagers, especially at South Burlington High School, which has been difficult for the Peace & Justice Center to access in the recent past.

In the next year, I envision opt-out becoming a more unified effort across Vermont. More students will become informed as to their privacy rights under federal law, and so opt-out rates across the state will increase. Military recruiters will have fewer children to whom to preach their sales pitches. This summer wasn't just about collecting forms; it was about making sure volunteers had the forms so that they could go into schools and hand them out to students. Calling schools wasn't just about making sure that all schools were in compliance with the law, it was about making sure that all students had access to the same information. And if just one fewer teenager signs his or her life away to eight years of murder, death, and loss of individual thought, the work I've done this summer to propel this campaign along will have been worth it.

Recruiting for Peace's facebook account is located at <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=16503803999&ref=ts>. An account is necessary to access the group. The MySpace account is at <http://profile.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=user.viewprofile&friendID=120459732> and no account is necessary to access the site. Please contact the Peace and Justice Center at (802) 863-2345 x5 for tabling materials, to volunteer, or for more information on opt-out and the Recruiting for Peace Campaign. 

The Laws - Is Opt-In Possible?

By *Kylie Vanerstrom, UVM Student*

My main focus throughout my internship at the Peace & Justice Center has been researching opt-out policy under No Child Left Behind Section 9528, in the interest of transitioning to a system of opt-in in Vermont public schools. I began by familiarizing myself with the law itself, as well as the policies (both good and bad) of schools across Vermont and the rest of the country.

The No Child Left Behind Act, which was signed into law by President George W. Bush in 2001, was aimed at raising education standards in the United States through a system of increased testing and rigid standards for teachers. However, the law contains a little-known provision (Section 9528), which requires that schools provide student directory information to military recruiters upon request, unless a parent explicitly

“opts-out”, or states that the information should not be disclosed.

A few schools, such as New York’s Fairport Central High School and Berkeley High School in California, were well known for having a system of opt-in. I attempted to make contact with Fairport Central in an effort to discern whether or not the school had been threatened with the loss of funding, or had faced other obstacles with the transition to opt-in policy. It took over a month for the registrar to return my call, and she informed me that the school had switched back to an opt-out policy roughly four years before, but she would not give me a reason for doing so.

I researched the matter, and found that the Department of Defense instituted a “crackdown” on schools using an opt-in model in the summer of 2003. While Berkeley held on for several more years than any of the other schools using this model, it too switched to opt-out in May 2007, after being told that they would lose over \$10 million in federal funding if they continued to employ a policy of opt-in.

Because we planned to recommend that Vermont schools switch to opt-in, I spoke with Allen Gilbert, of the Vermont chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, to discuss the legality of such a switch. Mr. Gilbert stated that he believed that if the matter was taken to court, the military would win, because of the wording of the law.

However, in exploring the precedent of information disclosure laws, I found that No Child Left Behind Section 9528 is a direct contradiction of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, which requires explicit consent before any information about a child be released to a party other than the child’s parent or guardian. The Student Privacy Protection Act, also known as H.R. 1346, which would amend NCLB Sec. 9528 to require that parents or students must give consent for information to be released to the military or institutions of higher education, was introduced in the House of Representatives in 2005 and again in 2007 by Rep. Mike Honda (D-California), but gained little progress.

On May 3, 2006, the Vermont legislature passed H. 538, [An Act Relating to Informing Parents and Students of Their Rights and Responsibilities Under State](#)

[and Federal Law](#). This piece of legislation requires that Vermont schools inform students and parents of their right to opt-out, and allows students themselves (even those who have not yet reached their eighteenth birthday) to opt-out.

Though opt-in is the more logical and just model for the disclosure of directory information, it would be irresponsible for the Peace and Justice Center to recommend a course of action that might put a school’s funding in jeopardy. Thus, I began to investigate a viable alternative to the opt-in model that might produce comparable results. Many schools are now using “emergency card opt-out”, which means that the opt-out question is placed on the document containing

Note From Jen Berger:

First of all, I want to extend a HUGE thank you to Emily and Kylie for all of the work they have done with RFPC this past summer. Not only did they bring knowledge combined with a desire to learn, they brought passion and ideology to their work. It was an honor to work with them. That said, if you’ve read their articles, you’ll know the strengths and barriers of this years Opt-Out Awareness Campaign.

To Quote Uncle Sam: I WANT YOU! to volunteer with RFPC this Fall. Can you commit to tabling one time at a high school in the state during lunch for about 2 hours? If ten members say yes, we can increase awareness to at least 500 students. If 20 members say yes, at least 1200 students will be reached. Please join us for one or more tabling opportunities throughout the months of September and October. Contact Jen at 802.863.2345 x 5 or peace@pjcv.org.

information such as a student’s allergies, prescription medications, and emergency contact information. By law, parents must return this form to the school each year. Emergency card opt-out has yielded excellent results. For example, the Pajaro Valley Unified School District Board of Trustees enacted an emergency card opt-out policy in June 2005, and saw a significant change in the number of opt-out requests the next year. In the 2004-2005 school year, Watsonville High School reported that of 2486 opt-out forms issued, only 385 (or 15%) opt-out

requests were received. The next year (the year the new policy was put into effect), this number rose dramatically to 60%, and from 2006-2007, another 6% of students had added their names to the opt-out list. Thus far, no schools that have used such a policy have reported threats of a reduction or revocation of funding.

In tabling at Vermont events such as SolarFest and Addison County Field Days, I spoke with several parents who had opted-out under NCLB Sec. 9528, but whose children were still being contacted by military recruiters. It may be that some of these forms were lost in the shuffle of the great amounts of yearly paperwork, but it is more likely that another entity is to blame.

The Pentagon maintains an information database known as the Joint Advertising Market and Research Studies (JAMRS), which contains the name, address, phone number, age, ethnicity, grade point average, and areas of interest of over 30 million Americans between the ages of 16 and 23. This information is obtained from a variety of sources, including private marketing firms. The aim of this database is to learn how to “better market the military to young people”, and is independent of No Child Left Behind. Even if a student or parent opts-out through their school, the Pentagon can maintain the information gathered from other sources. One can write to JAMRS requesting that the information not be released to other entities, but once it is installed into the database, the information will never be permanently erased.

While it was originally my intention to find a concrete way for Vermont schools to adopt an opt-in policy, it seems more feasible to raise awareness on opt-out, while advocating a switch to emergency card opt-out. Once (or perhaps while) this is accomplished, we can explore ways to change the regulations that bind schools to military recruiters, so that each child is provided the opportunity to an education free of militarization. ☺



Letters to the Editor

To the Peace & Justice Center:

After reading the August edition of this newsletter, it struck me that, once again, the progressive community has managed to talk about Israel-Palestine without calling uniformly for solidarity with the Palestinian people, and without illuminating the larger historical and political forces that gave birth to and have fueled the conflict since the late 19th century.

I also found particularly disturbing the statement that “We [the Peace & Justice Center] don’t have the capacity to alleviate or broker this pain” arising from the “unjust” situation in the Middle East. This is a startling admission of political impotence (or despair) by a veteran advocacy organization, and, equally troubling, an abdication of responsibility to provide moral and material support to Palestinians, Israelis and others resisting the occupation.

With due respect, your exhortation to look for “common ground” is about as useful to stopping the occupation as sending more military aid to Israel. I never searched for common ground, nor was advised to, with proponents of South African apartheid, and with good reason. It was stupid and futile to expect a government organized on the basis of white supremacy and terror to commit to democratic transformation and racial equality until it was defeated or weakened beyond recuperation by a popular resistance movement and international sanctions.

What was true for South Africa during the apartheid era is true for Israel today. Mass resistance, internally and on an international scale, is the only realistic and principled course of action. Gaza is under siege and the West Bank is being stolen, walled off and colonized so that contemporary Jews across the planet, at their whim, can “return,” richly subsidized, to a land where they have never lived, and where they will have more rights and privileges than non-Jews. This is a fact and a violation of international law. No amount of soulful conversing with people who believe Israel’s actions constitute self-defense, are justified by

the Nazi genocide, or are sanctioned by the Hebrew Bible will make it any less factual and criminal.

Dialogue in this context will only serve peace and reconciliation interests if it inspires effective resistance to the occupation and exposes Zionism as a pernicious system of tribal nationalism and apartheid. For 130 years, the Zionist project has been committed to the ethnic cleansing of Arab Palestine to create a sovereign Jewish state with a Jewish demographic majority. This is the heart of the matter—and the “third rail” of the Israel-Palestine question.

In response to Michael Schaal and Crow Cohen, contributors to the August newsletter, it must be stressed that the conflict is not about cycles of violence, the tribulations of a “tiny country surrounded by enemies,” or the lingering trauma of the Holocaust. And, most assuredly, it is not about *their* private angst, religion and ethnicity. Schaal’s assertion that *his* welfare is “inextricably linked” to Israel as a Jewish state and Cohen’s search for “seeds of hope,” no matter how sincere, are irrelevant to understanding the geopolitical dynamics of Zionism and 41 years of military occupation.

One can not make sense of, let alone stop, the war against the Palestinians without a critical perspective on Zionism and the systemic ways Israel controls access to land, political power, justice and social benefits on the basis of race and religion, within its 1967 borders and the occupied territories. Many Americans, on the left and right, who would stridently oppose efforts by this country to become officially a “Christian” state, are uninformed or foolishly sentimental about what a “Jewish” state is in law and practice.

I propose that PJC, in collaboration with Vermonters for a Just Peace in Palestine/Israel, sponsor a series of workshops in 2009 for activists, faith leaders and educators on the origins, history and ideology of Zionism, and on its legal and moral legitimacy in light of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This would be a modest but

important step toward reclaiming a historically informed, activist-oriented engagement with the crisis in Israel-Palestine and broadening support for our brothers and sisters in the occupied territories.

It would be also a much-needed antidote to the self-absorbed, confessional, “can’t we all just get along” conversations in the peace camp that make us feel righteous, introspective and sensitive, but do not empower us to overcome Zionism and end the occupation.

Sincerely,
Mark Hage, 8/14/08
Montpelier, VT 



Hi, Sydnee,

Congratulations on a great Israel/Palestine special issue. Four years ago, I was so sorry to see the global rancor acted out in Burlington, especially at PJC. It’s a very anxiety-producing situation and calls for a lot of patience and care for each other.

It helped me to read the articles in the special issue.

I especially wanted to let you know how much I liked your lead article [Choosing Wisely: The Power of Being an Activist, Aug 2008 issue]. In addition to being well-written, the content seems to me to be the only hope and speaks fundamental truth. Obviously, the world is not heading in the right direction with war-talk and war-making. We have to give peace and non-violence a real chance.

Thanks for your important work.

With warm regards,
Larry Medsker
Shelburne, VT 

Nagasaki Vigil

By Rev. Ryon L Price,
United Church of Colchester

On Saturday, August 9th I stood with some 50 others to commemorate the dropping of the atomic bomb on Nagasaki 63 years ago. Each year, the brothers and sisters of Pax Christi Burlington gather beneath the bell tower of the former Immaculate Conception Cathedral and remember the thousands of lives lost in Nagasaki on August 9, 1945 and Hiroshima three days earlier. Each year they gather to honor those lives and pray for a world without atomic weapons.

The bell tower proved a fitting place. The sole standing artifact after an arsonist's torch destroyed the rest of the church, the bell tower remains a perfect picture of the destruction a world with much science but no soul can wreak.

Pax Christi (Latin for "Peace of Christ") is a Catholic organization. Yet not only Catholics were present. I am Baptist. Jews, Muslims, and a troupe of Buddhist drummers also showed up. There were blacks and whites and browns there, too. And there were children there also.

And as one person at the vigil said, "That is why we come — for the children." We came for the sake of the children. We came to bear witness to the truth, that when the powers of this world perpetrate acts of aggression and vengeance, it is the children who suffer most.

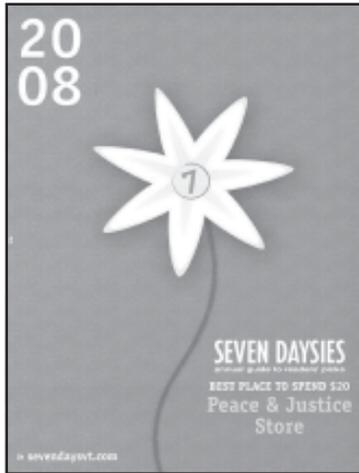
Even as we vigiled, the powers of this world were at work again. In what has the potential to escalate into the first act of a new Cold War, Russia was bombing Georgia. Nuclear-armed Russia was flexing its muscles, daring the rest of the international community to say anything.

Near the end of the vigil an old nun, Sr. Clare Naramore, said something. Not so much in words, but in presence. She is in her nineties, her body tired and beaten down by many years of life and service. She needed assistance getting from the car into her wheelchair. She was late. She was late, but she had come. She had come to give her body, enfeebled as it is, to the future of this world and the future of its children.

O that we all might do the same. ☸

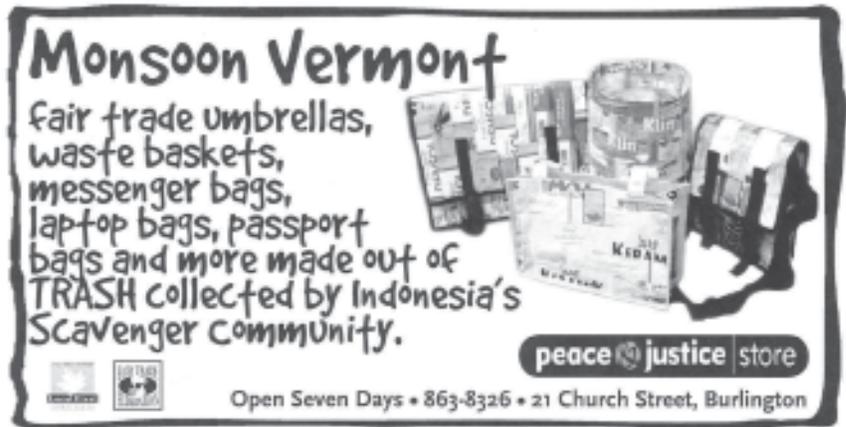
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Goodbye & Thank You, Kecia!



PJC Staff, Kathy Bouton, Wendy Coe, Jennifer Reay, Colin Robinson, and Andrea Arratoon (Jen Berger, missing) present Kecia Gaboriault a memory collage of her time here at the PJC over the past year as our Americorp VISTA community organizer.

CALENDAR

September 2008

[2] Tuesday

• 6:15pm Burlington-Bethlehem-Arad Sister City meeting at Burlington College, 95 North Ave., Burlington.

[6] Saturday

• 9am-5pm Oskar Castro from the national office of the American Friends Service Committee, in Philadelphia, will be conducting a statewide Truth in Military Recruitment training at Christ Church, 64 Main St, Montpelier (gray stone Episcopal church across from the Montpelier Post Office). He will go over topics such as 'what are the issues' and 'how to talk with a recruiter'. There will be time to discuss forming a statewide network of those involved in CR work. The event is free, however, donations will help to cover the cost of the space. Please bring a brown bag lunch. Contact Joseph Gainza @ jgainza@afsc.org or Jen at peace@pjcv.org for more information or to register. Contact Jen at 802.863.2345 x5 or peace@pjcv.org for more information.

[7] Sunday

• 12-1 Vets for Peace live broadcast over Channel 15.
• 2-4pm Vets for Peace meeting at PJC. All interested are welcome.

[8] Monday

• 7-9pm Vermonters for a Just Peace in Palestine/Israel meeting at PJC.

[9] Tuesday

• 12-1:30pm "A Conversation on Race" Inspired by Barack Obama's 37 minute speech: "A More Perfect Union" at the Fletcher Free Library Pickering Room. Bring your bag lunch. **Again on Oct. 14.** Sponsored by the Undoing Racism Coalition.

• 7pm Dr. J. Larry Brown, Director of the National Center for Hunger & Poverty, and faculty member, Harvard University School of Public Health, will speak on Why the Working are Poor: Moving from Hunger and Poverty to Social Justice, in the McCarthy Recital Hall at St. Michael's College. Dr. Brown is the nation's leading scholarly authority on domestic hunger. He chaired the Harvard-based Physician Task Force on Hunger in America in the 1980's and has authored numerous books and articles,

including Hunger in America: the Growing Epidemic. "Today, America is the only western democracy where citizens go hungry on a widespread basis," Dr. Brown says, "some 35 million altogether. The problem is not that we do not know what to do. Other nations have already ended hunger. We have hunger because of the failure of political will."

[10] Wednesday

• 6-8pm Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) meeting at the Peace & Justice Center. Info: 372-6117.

[17] Wednesday

• 6:00pm PJC Board meeting.

[18] Thursday

• 7- 8:30pm Central Vermont Peace & Justice Group meeting at the UU Church, Rutland. info@centralvermontpeace.org

[19] Friday

• The PJC's 2nd Annual Rock the Boat at ECHO, on Burlington's waterfront. \$25. See page 1 and the inserted poster.

[20] Saturday

• 10:30am Special Palestine Film Showing at the Roxy Cinema, Burlington. In the summer of 2007, Adam Beach, a photo-journalist and film maker, traveled to the West Bank and Gaza. A documentary film about his experiences, Handala, explores the bitter realities and trauma of life under Israeli military occupation, with a focus on Palestinian nonviolent struggle. The showing is free, and Peder Wiegner, the film's producer, will be present to talk about the making of the film and to answer questions.

[21] Sunday

• 1-5pm WILPF presents a JANE ADDAMS BIRTHDAY TEA, at the Fletcher Rm, Fletcher Free Library.

[26] Friday

• 6pm Film: *Sir No Sir* at Brownell Library in Essex Jct. Followed by discussion.

Read the Peace & Justice News Online

If you would rather read the *Peace & Justice News* online--you can go to our website <http://www.pjcv.org/pjcnews.htm>. We would also like to start up a list of folks who would like it emailed to them (a 12 page pdf file). Email wcoe@pjcv.org if you would like this to happen.

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Vermont Peace Vigils

- Barton: 12-12:30pm Fridays on the Common
- Brattleboro: Saturday, 11-12, Post Office
- Bristol: 5-6pm Fridays, corner of Main & North Sts.
- Burlington: 5-5:30pm M-F: Top of Church St.
- Chester: Saturdays, 11-11:30am, Town Green
- Enosburg Falls: 5-5:30pm Saturdays, Main St. side of Lincoln Park
- Hardwick: 5-6pm Fridays, Peace Park
- Marshfield: Fridays; 4-5pm Rte 2
- Middlebury: 10:30-11am Saturdays, corner of Main & Merchant's Way
- Montpelier: 12-1pm Fridays, Federal Building
- Newport: 4-4:30pm Wednesdays in front of State Office Building
- Richmond: 5:30pm Thursdays, Congregational Church, Bridge St
- Rutland: 12-1pm, Fridays, Main St. Park, corner of West and Main
- St Johnsbury: Fri. 4-5pm, in front of the Main St. post office
- South Royalton: Thursdays, 4:30-5:30pm, on the bridge into town
- Vergennes: Saturdays, 10-11am, Vergennes City Green
- Williston: 5:15-5:45pm 1st Tuesdays, steps of Williston Federated Church

For more calendar events, join our email action alerts. For Peace & Human Rights, email peace@pjcv.org. For The VT Livable Wage Campaign, email livablewage@pjcv.org

ServiceNation Vermont Day of Action



Saturday September 27th, 2008

10AM- 1PM: SERVICE PROJECTS

Local organizations in Burlington will lead volunteers including students, business employees, politicians, political candidates, and residents of all ages in service projects. Co-Sponsored by UVM's Serveathon, these projects will allow Vermonters to lead by example in the call to expand service in America. At least 25 projects will occur in a variety of locations from improving youth centers to environmental work.

1:30- 3:30PM: THE "POWER OF SERVICE" RALLY, BURLINGTON

The "Power of Service" rally will be a celebration of the volunteering and service that occurs in Vermont, and a time to examine what expanded national service can accomplish for both Vermont and the US as a whole. Local organizations will display information on volunteer opportunities; volunteers will be recognized for the important work they're doing; local leaders and politicians will speak about the power of service; and local businesses will show their support by providing food and prizes for these volunteers.

10AM - 3:30PM: "DECLARATION OF SERVICE" SIGNATURE GATHERING

Throughout the Day of Action, signatures for a "Declaration of Service" will be gathered to show direct support for expanding service opportunities in the United States. Signature stations will be set up at key locations and college campuses across Vermont.

MORE INFORMATION

<http://bethechangeinc.org/servicenation>

■ 4th Annual PSA Contest - Deadline Oct. 8th

Last year we asked you to Change The World in 30 Seconds. Your local access community imagines the world might still need some changing. We want to see what you think needs to be changed about it and who is going to do it. Make a short video, under 1 minute, that is a Public Service Announcement, Political Rant or Campaign Ad and submit it by October 8th. It will air around the state and be eligible to win great prizes. Open to ALL ages and abilities. Classes and equipment available for production. Brought to you by VCAM, RETN and CCTV. Contact Meghan at 862-3966 x16, morourke@cctv.org for more information

Learn to Make your own PSA evening class: write the script, learn about cameras and editing, Wednesday, September 3rd at 6:30pm. To register for this free class contact Meghan at morourke@cctv.org or 862.3966x16

■ ACME VT Fall Conference for Media Literacy

ACME Vermont presents a fall conference on Media Literacy for educators and parents entitled, "Growing Up Digital: Kids, Commercialism, and New Media Culture" Sept. 25-26 at Rock Point Conference Center in Burlington, VT.

We live in a media-rich landscape, surrounded by information from print to broadcast to digital. Businesses target our children with advertising at an alarmingly early age, and kids adopt and adapt to new technologies at a blistering pace. Learn the language of new media, how to distinguish credible sources of news and information and how to add your voice and views to the picture. Gather the tools necessary to help your class or children grow from passive consumers to active thinkers.

Keynote speakers are Josh Golin of the Campaign for a Commercial Free Childhood in Boston, MA and Lauren Glenn Davitian of CCTV's Center for Media and Democracy in Burlington, VT. Workshops include a hands-on session on making video with youth, strategies for employing media literacy in the classroom, explanations of wikis, blogs and social networking, a presentation from a police investigator about keeping kids safe online, and more. Presenters will focus on decoding technology and offering solutions in the face of an often hostile commercial media environment.

7pm Thursday Sept. 25: Welcome gathering and film screening featuring a new film from the Media Education Foundation, followed by discussion. Friday Sept. 26: 8am registration, followed by keynotes and workshops. For more information or to sign up for the conference, go to www.acmevermont.org.

■ "What is YOUR Social Media Strategy?"

Do you want to mobilize more people to support your work and cause? Do you want to figure out how to use new "social media" tools to expand your reach and impact? Do you wonder how to fit the internet and traditional media into your communications strategy?

CCTV's Center for Media & Democracy is pleased to invite you to our third annual fall luncheon on Thursday, September 18th from 12-2pm at Channel 17 Studios. This year, we'll take a close look at how successful nonprofits, media organizations and campaigns map, build and measure their communications strategies. In addition to a lovely lunch, you'll hobnob with forward thinking people and get the "scoop" on the latest social media success stories to inspire your own communications work.

The 3d Annual Media Maven Luncheon is open to members and non-members. To reserve your place, contact Sam Mayfield, Member Services, smayfield@cctv.org.



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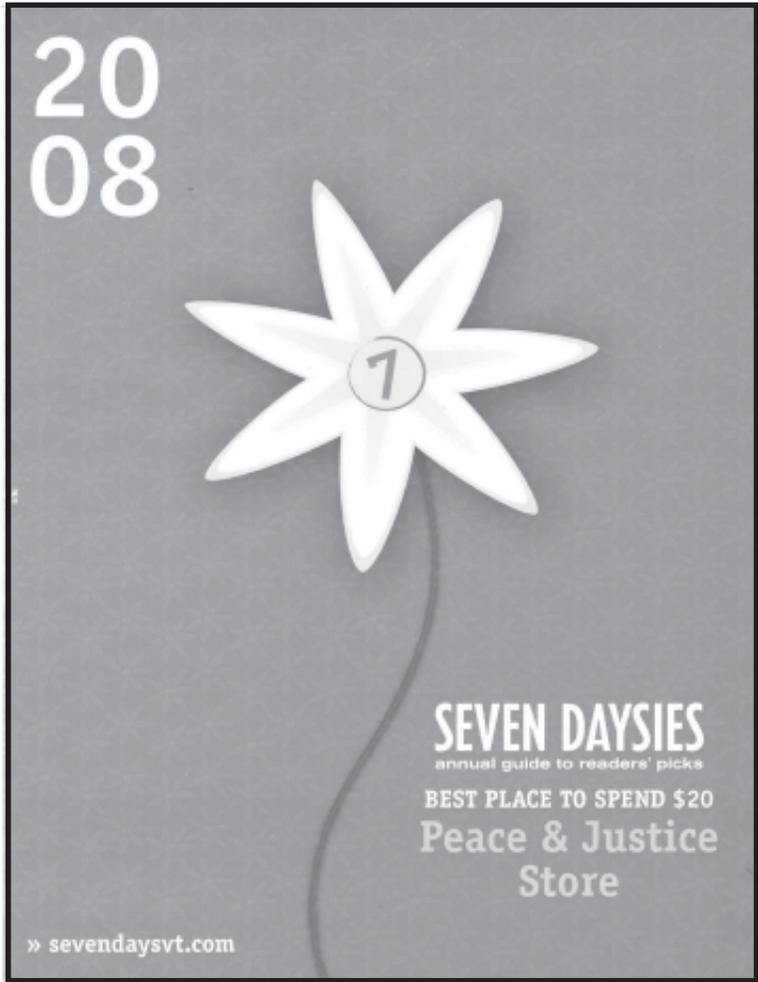
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