



peace & justice news

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SOS VT is an alliance of Vermonters opposed to the basing of F-35A Joint Strike Fighters at Burlington International Airport.

Esperanza (Hope)

By *Gaby Ochoa Brenneman*

October is Fair Trade month and for us this is a great opportunity to raise awareness about the impact Fair Trade has for many artisans and families around the world. We as a Center partner with about 62 different organizations in 32 countries expanding the fair trade market through education and advocacy.

In the context of Fair Trade month we were happy to bring Angela Mercedes Bailon, director of UPAVIM Unidas Para Vivir Mejor (United to live better) in Guatemala City. Angela came to speak in the colleges and high schools in our community about the impact that Fair Trade has had in her community and in her own life. Every time Angela had the opportunity to share her story, students would keep asking questions and trying to think of ways they too could get

involved in promoting change.

UPAVIM is a cooperative of women located in Comunidad La Esperanza (Community of Hope) one of the poorest marginal areas of Guatemala City. The families that came to live in La Esperanza were either people living in the center of town in crowded small rooms shared by ten people, or from families coming from the country, escaping their land from the civil war. There were about 5,000 families that came to live in this abandoned piece of land, making homes out of plastic and cardboard.

Angela shares in her story. "We did not have any services; no electricity or water, but we had a place to live." The women would go down to river of sewer waters and dig a hole by the river in order to filter the water a little. This water was used to wash dishes, clothes, and for drinking. Children and adults kept dying from Typhoid fever.

The idea of starting a cooperative in the area came out of the necessity of finding a way to generate an income for the families. The women would go to work during the day either to wash other people's clothes or to sell fruit on the streets and left their children at home with no supervision or in some cases took them with them. Angela shares, "in some homes they did not allow you to bring your children so you had to leave them at home. You could not work fast enough to go back to them." The money they earned was just enough to buy food for that day.

Invitation:
November 12, 2012
6:30-7pm Peace & Justice
Center Annual Meeting
Board Elections
(free)
7:15 Film: The Welcome
(\$10; \$5 student/senior)
Palace 9, South Burlington
See page 3 for more info

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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.



Hello members and interested people,

The PJC continues as an active organization in its 4th decade, working to promote economic and racial justice, peace, and human rights. We pursue this work through our Fair Trade Store, outreach to schools, teaching students about Fair Trade, the Cost of War Film and Speaker Series, promoting critical thinking with our panel discussions on Corporations are Not People and Rumors of War: Iran, our e-news, and this newsletter.

Our current staff includes Gaby Ochoa Brennehan, Colleen Deignan, and Wendy Coe who are being joined by two newly hired people: Kyle Silliman-Smith, program manager, and Carmen Solari, assistant store manager. [See pages 10 & 11 for more about Kyle & Carmen.] They will work with and support Gaby, the program manager of our Fair Trade Store and the Fair Trade Cocoa Campaign, and Colleen, the program and development coordinator, whose work includes the successful Cost of War Series and event planning. Kyle and Carmen's presence will be a welcome collaboration with our hard-working and much appreciated staff. In addition, we also have many interns and volunteers helping PJC with the store, programming, and research. If you are interested, we will happily accept the offering of your time and energy!

Working in conjunction with the Will Miller Green Mountain Vets for Peace and Main Street Landing, we were able to bring the powerful mural exhibit *Window and Mirrors*. Currently located in the Gallery at Main St. Landing, 60 Lake St., through October, these murals are the result of a nationwide call from the American Friends Service Committee to artists, asking for paintings that would provide a traveling memorial to Afghan civilians who have suffered and died in the war. The exhibit also contains drawings by students who were invited to portray the realities of their life during war.

A meeting was held October 1st to brainstorm and strategize about possible future projects; there was a lot of excitement about the idea of encouraging and educating nascent activists to engage in their passions through trainings on activism, non-violence, and anti-racism/white privilege.

We have been working to expand our committed board, and are pleased to welcome Andrea Swan as our newest member, joining Nathan Suter, Autumn Barnett, Spence Putnam, and Linda Ayer. We are also meeting with other potential board members to help in our work.

PJC's annual meeting will be held on Nov. 12 at Palace 9 on Shelburne Road, South Burlington. The meeting will begin at 6:30pm, ending at 7:00pm, in time for the film, *The Welcome*, which deals with life for returning vets and their families. We hope that you can join us for the meeting and stay for the film which starts at 7:15.

Please remember to shop for birthdays, weddings, and holidays in our Fair Trade Store – our inventory represents 32 countries and 62 artisans, varied and beautiful, and includes CHOCOLATE! Please also take advantage of our wonderful Cost of War series, and check our website and e-news for other events and information. Our programs would not be possible without the generosity of the Harris and Frances Block Foundation and the Sisters of Mercy Peace Initiative.

The disparity between the 99% and the 1% continues. People are still out of work, lacking insurance, and our world is challenged by grave environmental concerns that are begging to be addressed quickly and the ongoing socio-political issues that threaten us all. We have to believe in evolution, and know that we are all capable of effecting change.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Linda Ayer
Board Member

Why We Do What We Do

By Laurie Gagne, Director of the Edmundite Center for Peace & Justice at St. Michael's College. This is her speech from Oct. 2, 2012 to introduce the college's 6th annual Peace Pledge Ceremony.

Every year I come to this ceremony greatly discouraged by the violence that seems pervasive in all areas of modern life: from the arena of war, to intra-societal conflict, to domestic abuse. And I find myself wondering what is the point of our Peace Pledge Ceremony, what difference does it make? On Jan. 24, 2002, when 200 leaders of the world's great religions got together at Assisi to compose the pledge, most media outlets did not carry the story. Instead, we heard about the Enron hearings and the first day in court of Al-Qaeda supporter John Walker Lindh. And on March 4th of that year when Pope John Paul II sent a copy of the Peace Pledge to all the world's heads of state, that didn't make the news either. But we did learn that 7 American soldiers were killed in Afghanistan, Israeli troops killed 17 people in the West Bank, and Mike Tyson got a new license to box. Clearly violence gets more attention than peace. It's sexier, as we say, more enthralling.

And we're all affected this way. My own sense of discouragement, I realize,

signals that I, too, am impressed by violence, that on some level, I experience it as compelling. The late theologian Walter Wink went so far as to say that Americans *believe* in violence, that we regard it as the sure fire solution to situations of conflict, which would explain, of course, our penchant for going to war. So we must ask ourselves, what would make us believe in the power of peace and *non-violence*? What would break the spell of what Wink calls, "the myth of redemptive violence" in our lives?

In my own experience, I've found that telling stories helps. Learning about all the peaceful revolutions that have occurred in history – from Gandhi's movement for home rule in India, to our own Civil Rights movement, to the non-violent overthrow of Communist dictatorships, to the Arab Spring –telling these stories gives me hope. They teach me that non-violent social change is possible, that even long-standing conflicts can be resolved peacefully. But there's

another way, I've discovered, that hope can be enkindled and that brings us to why we're gathered here tonight.

We can learn about peace, we can visualize peace, we can pray for peace – but until we take the step from thought to action, we don't realize the power of peace. It is extraordinary how energizing it is to *do* something for peace, whether it's signing a Dear Hillary postcard, bird-dogging with SGAC, or participating in a Food Justice forum. Coming together in a group to "ensue peace" as the Bible says, we feel that connection with others, that disinterested love, which is the foundation of true peace. How many times have I said, "I'm not going to go to that vigil or rally" but gone anyway and come home with my heart wide open to possibilities for peace! Each time that happens, I'm aware that there's a power of love in us that is deeper than all our differences. Gandhi called it "soul force." When we act intentionally for peace, we tap into it.

Tonight we have all decided to act intentionally for peace. We have come to this Peace Pledge Ceremony. It won't be reported in the paper tomorrow, but its impact may well be perceptible in our lives: we may find ourselves a little more resistant to the siren song of violence, a little more trusting in the power of peace and love. ☸

PJC Programs

By Colleen Deignan

The Peace & Justice Center will be screening *The Welcome* as part of our Cost of War Speaker and Film Series on November 12th at 7pm, at Palace 9 in South Burlington (Shelburne Rd.). *The Welcome* is an inspiring film about a group of veterans working through the affects of war.

"The Welcome offers a fiercely intimate view of life after war: the fear, anger and isolation of post-traumatic stress that affects vets and family members alike. As we join these vets in a small room for an unusual five day healing retreat, we witness how the ruins of war can be transformed into the beauty of poetry. Here our perceptions are changed, our psyches strained, and our

hearts broken. And at the end, when this poetry is shared with a large civilian audience, we begin to understand that all of us are a vital piece of the Welcome as Veterans try to find the way back home. Their examples of unflinching honesty, courage and love lift us up, inspiring all of us once again to feel our common humanity, always the first casualty of war."

Last April, we screened *The Invisible War* at UVM. We've partnered with UVM's Voices for Planned Parenthood to bring another screening on Wednesday November 28th at 7pm in the Mildred Livak Room (419), UVM Davis Center.

"The Invisible War is a groundbreaking investigative documentary about one of America's most shameful and best kept secrets: the epidemic of rape within the US military. The film paints a startling picture of the extent of

the problem. Today, a female soldier in combat zones is more likely to be raped by a fellow soldier than killed by enemy fire. The Department of Defense estimates there were a staggering 19,000 violent sex crimes in the military in 2010. The Invisible War exposes the epidemic, breaking open one of the most under-reported stories of our generation, to the nation and the world."

The Peace & Justice Center is committed to providing education to the public about the devastating effects that war has on our society as well as the societies that are being occupied. Education is an incredibly important component to creating social change. The Cost of War Speaker and Film Series is a partnership between the Peace & Justice Center and the Will Miller Green Mountain Veterans for Peace. We're co-sponsored by the Harris and Frances Block Foundation. ☸

Why Do We Need To Talk About Fair Trade?

By Aleah McGraw, PJC Intern

The fair trade movement has been gaining momentum throughout the country (and the world), but many Americans are still in the dark when it comes to what fair trade is and why it *really* is important. At the end of September, Vermont's third annual fair trade business forum was held at city hall in Burlington. Called "Chocolate! Chocolate! Chocolate!," the focus of the event was on fair trade practices within the cocoa industry. There were a variety of local and national companies present to discuss and celebrate fair trade, including Ben and Jerry's, Equal Exchange, City Market, Dolma, Runa Tea, and Hope for Women, just to name a few. Andy Barker of Ben and Jerry's and Nicole Vitello of Equal Exchange were special guest speakers, who offered their company's individual struggles and triumphs with fair trade.

At the forum, it became clear that many in attendance had little, no, or a misinformed idea about what fair trade is. One common misconception is "fair trade=free trade." People often think that fair trade is some form of charity, and that fair trade items are often marked up to contribute to that 'charity'. In all actuality, fair trade goods are competitively priced with their conventional counterparts and the proceeds do not go to charity. Fair trade works to not only ensure that producers and artisans are fairly compensated for the true cost of production, but also support the creation of transparent and democratic cooperatives, allocating funds for community development projects and confirm no forced or child labor is occurring.

Many of the attendees at the forum were also shocked to learn that child labor and child trafficking are such severe (and often overlooked) problems in the cocoa industry. As of 2009, more than 1.8 million children had worked in the cocoa sector in Ghana and the Ivory Coast alone. These children, while often facing upwards of 12 hour days filled with hazardous activities and exposure to dangerous pesticides, are rarely compen-

sated for their work and sometimes even beaten if they attempt to escape. All the major, global chocolate companies are aware of these outrageous conditions on their suppliers' plantations, but have done little to rectify the situation despite protocols set forth and agreed to by leaders of the cocoa industry.

The reason the major chocolate companies have been able to continue these practices for so long is not because people don't care. It's because people don't know. The harsh reality of the situation is shocking. People need to know that children are literally slaving to make their chocolate bars. People need to be shocked. Small, intimate events, like the "Chocolate! Chocolate! Chocolate!" business forum, are essential for spreading knowledge about the fair trade movement and its principles. Events like this debunk myths about fair trade, while educating the public about real problems that affect real people and how they can make simple choices every day to make a big difference.

Much of the public thinks that supporting fair trade is a large, scary, and inconvenient undertaking. What's most



3rd Annual Fair Trade Business Forum at City Hall, Burlington.

important for everyone to know is that even the smallest choices can make a big difference. Buying a fair trade coffee brand instead of your regular coffee or switching to fair trade chocolate chips instead of Nestle Semi-sweet chips are simple choices that could be made every day that have much larger impacts on their producers. Every small action combines with other small actions, and before you know it, fair trade becomes the norm instead of the exception. It is possible and it all starts with knowledge and a little conversation. So get talkin' and spread the word. ☺

Fair Trade Recipes

By Corynn Benoit, PJC Intern

I was recently introduced to the film "The Dark Side of Chocolate"; a film that discusses the secret child labor issues of cocoa production that corporations try to keep hidden from chocolate consumers.

The producers of the film go undercover to reveal the astonishing child slave populations in major cocoa producing communities in Africa. At the beginning of the film, the producer begins interviewing major chocolate companies in Germany about where their chocolate

comes from. He talks to several different chocolate company representatives, and each of them answers the question where their chocolate comes from. The Ivory Coast, Ghana, Nigeria, and Niger are top cocoa producing countries in Africa. None of the chocolate companies he interviewed knew anything about exactly where their chocolate is coming from, except for the name of the country.

This was pretty shocking. We live in a world full of people who have no idea where their food is coming from. Major

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11th Anniversary of the Protocol

The Cocoa Industry Today

By Julia Sheed, PJC Intern

This year is the 11th Anniversary of the Harkin-Engel Protocol, the document signed in 2001 as an agreement to end the worst forms of child labor and forced adult labor in the cocoa industry. The protocol is an agreement by governments, cocoa producers, and NGO's to have completed the objectives laid out in the protocol by 2005. So what is going on in the year 2012 in the cocoa industry?

Around 70% of the cocoa production is supplied by plantations in West Africa. In order to reduce production costs, farmers employ children on the plantations, lowering the cost of cocoa worldwide. While chocolate is a delicious treat for most of us, thousand of children in West Africa and the Ivory Coast work in a system that exposes them to abuse and cruelty. The US Department of Labor estimates that more than one hundred thousand children in the Ivory Coast

cocoa industry work under the worst forms of child labor while as many as 10,000 children are victims of human trafficking and enslavement. Children rescued by the INTERPOL in the Ivory Coast report being forced to work twelve hours a day, suffering frequent beatings and receiving no salary or remuneration for their work.

In an attempt to avoid the media scrutiny and government regulations, the major chocolate companies in the US including Hershey and Nestle signed the Harkin-Engel Protocol committing themselves to certify their cocoa "child labor-free" by July of 2005. In 2008 the deadline was extended with a goal that the major companies would certify 50% of their farms. As of 2011 the companies have made few real and credible changes to ensure that children are not being forced to work or enslaved in the cocoa plantations. The chocolate companies

continue to make billions—Hershey posted net profits near half a billion dollars in 2009 despite the recession—while every day hundreds of children continue to be trafficked and suffer abuse in the cocoa industry.

We as consumers have more power than we often realize. Chocolate companies make their products for us to buy, and by choosing products that follow business models that we support, we are actively using our voice to make a difference. Your dollars are your vote, and buy purchasing a product you are implicitly supporting the practices that were behind the production of the product. Voicing your opinion by urging your senator or representative to take action and contacting your local newspaper to express support are great ways to get the word out.

The cocoa industry needs to step up and take responsibility for the unfair labor practices that are going on. And as consumers, we need to make it clear that what is going on is unacceptable and that we demand fair, slave free chocolate everywhere. ☺

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corporations have the ability to ignore what is actually happening during the production process of their food, and consumers don't seem to care as much as they used to. Fair trade, and fair trade cocoa specifically, focuses on making better trading conditions in developing countries. People who buy fair trade know exactly who is producing their goods and services, and also help promote higher quality of life for these workers.

Buying fair trade makes a huge impact on communities in developing countries. There are several simple changes you can make in your everyday lives that can help support these fair trade lifestyles. For example, buying fair trade bananas, cocoa, coffee, and sugar. Here is a recipe with simple fair trade solutions:

■ Fair Trade Brownies

Ingredients:

- 1 stick (½ c.) butter
- ¼ c. Fair Trade Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 1 bar Fair Trade Chocolate
- 1 c. Fair Trade packed light brown sugar
- 1 Tbsp pure vanilla extract
- 2 large eggs
- ¾ c. flour
- ⅓ c. Fair Trade Baking Cocoa
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. baking powder
- 10 Fair Trade Milk Chocolate Minis (or 1 bar Fair Trade Chocolate)
- Optional: almonds or other nut of your choice.

Preheat oven to 350°F. Butter a 9-inch baking pan.

Melt butter and the 1 large chocolate bar in a heavy saucepan over low heat. Stir constantly until smooth. Add olive oil. Remove from heat; cool to lukewarm. Stir

in brown sugar and vanilla. Add eggs, beat well, until mixture is thoroughly mixed and glossy. Stir remaining ingredients (already combined, excluding remaining chocolate and nuts) into the chocolaty mix. Pour batter in pan and even out. Insert the minis into the batter at an angle in a spoke or other even pattern. Cover with a thin layer of batter. Add nuts if using. Bake for about 30 minutes, until a fork/knife/toothpick comes out with just a few crumbs.

This recipe is from the many recipes the Equal Exchange website has to offer. Check out their website at: <http://www.equalexchange.coop/recipes>

Next time you're at the grocery store, try to be conscious of the food items your buying, and how one simple purchase can make a big impact. ☺



Robin's Nest

Talking about Race

By Robin Lloyd

Some two dozen parents and kids gathered for Denise Dunbar's talk at the first Saturday Conversation series at the *RACE: Are We So Different?* show at the Echo Center on October 6. Developed by the American Anthropological Association in collaboration with the Science Museum of Minnesota, the show is the first nationally traveling exhibition to tell the stories of race from the biological, cultural, and historical points of view. "Combining these perspectives offers an unprecedented look at race and racism in the United States" states the ECHO website.

Denise is an educational consultant and equity trainer for Reading to End Racism (RER), which is in its 10th year in Chittenden County elementary and middle schools. The books read in each classroom are age appropriate. Children can identify skin difference at six months. The goal is to help them understand the difference between prejudice and racism, and structural racism.

To hear Denise Dunbar, ending racism is all about telling stories. Our stories. "...and we need to map our stories with each other. You won't hear the stories if you commit yourself to color blindness. That's where my commitment is, to go beyond color blindness...then I can authentically answer, Who am I?" Denise Dunbar explained to a questioner following her show-and-tell presentation.

She added "Story telling is the foundation of Reading to End Racism. When I ask you to tell me what you know about me from my skin color...all you know really is that I and my ancestors grew up with more melanin in my skin to protect against sun exposure. People whose ancestors lived for long periods in



Denise Dunbar

the regions of the globe near the equator generally have larger quantities of melanin in their skins. I remember when I told this to a kindergarten class, a little boy, freckled, with red hair, went home and told his mother, 'look I have melanin in spots!'"

After she spoke, stories arose from the

audience. An older woman said "I was a foster mother to a bunch of kids, and I had these two white kids who thought they could lick me and the color would come off and then we'd be the same. This was a teachable moment. I said see my color and embrace it."

Denise has her own vibrant story. "I was born in NYC three years before Rosa Parks sat on the bus. When I was 11 our family took a trip south. We stopped at a gas station and there I first saw the three doors: bathrooms labeled women, men and colored...I began to understand why my father drove us through the night to a black B&B, or to stay with friends" to avoid rejection at white only lodgings. "At that age I decided to become an activist for justice. Later, our family moved to Roosevelt, Long Island, and I experienced 'white flight' in real time...we were living in the middle of it..."

Denise will be leading more discussions at ECHO in the week to come. Check the ECHOvermont.org website for date and time.

■ Panel Discussion

The 2:00 Panel Discussion: Let's Talk About Race! was moderated by UVM professor Dr. Emily Bernard and its goal was to "lead visitors in a conversation about whats, whys and hows of talking about race."

Here are some points that I came away with:

- One should not curtail one's curiosity about a person's ethnicity, but try to proceed without being offensive.
- Race is a universal illness. Denise said that by not acknowledging it, it festers and leads to invisibility and marginality. Matt Kolan added that as a white male hearing or observing racist comments, he feels a "moment of obligation" to address or confront the perpetrator.

A question was asked concerning the anti-racist protests at Burlington High School last spring. Mercedes Mack responded that it was an opportunity to learn about race and racism. "The most vulnerable people took a stand, and in doing so they spoke for others who could not talk. The students who protested were amazing. We had a great learning

Reading to End Racism

Reading to End Racism is a community-based organization that started in Boulder, Colorado in 1998 with the support of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. It spread to Central Vermont with the energy and direction of WILPF member Pajj Wadley-Bailey. It is now flourishing in Chittenden County under the direction of Denise Dunbar, and the support of the Burlington School District.

MISSION: Reading to End Racism's goal is to raise awareness of the harm racism causes and to help develop skills and strategies to actively counter racism in order to create a supportive and welcoming environment for all children. Classroom presentations are led by volunteers who are concerned with racism. They may be artists, elected officials, police officers, board members, parents, high school students and other community members. If you are interested in taking part, contact Denise Dunbar at justtransformations@me.com or 802-482-4353.

experience afterwards; a kind of freedom school. It opened such an amazing space: we have to step up to what the students are saying.”

Denise added that this isn't a new history. Two reports on racial harassment in Vermont schools have been issued: in 1999 and 2003. “But there has been institutional amnesia since then. Students led this movement. It took students of color to open Pandora's box...”

Are we immune to racism? Several panelists pointed out that Vermont suffers from a peculiar brand of progressive ‘glutan free’ racism. Hal Colson gave the final comment: “We can't be immune to racism as long as whites are immune to white privilege.”

The next discussion will take place Sat. Nov 10. This daylong event will focus on Burlington's changing community, including a conversation about the relationship between changes in Burlington's demographics and the community's neighborhoods, urban planning, social services, and business infrastructure. 

From the ECHO Center web site:

Talking about race: are we so different?

“Current science challenges the idea that we are in fact different, and even questions the very concept of race. Many of us were taught in school that there were a certain number of races. Science now shows that racial groups are a scientifically inaccurate way of grouping humans. It's not about categories, but rather about migration, genes and adaptation. The story of race is complex and may challenge how we think about race and human variation, as well as the differences and similarities among people.”

Esperanza continued from page 1

In 1988, a couple from the United States came to visit La Esperanza and wanted to find a way to get the women organized initially to provide health care services to the children from 0-5 years old. Angela says that even when they could take the children to a clinic they could never afford the medication.

UPAVIM started with three women making very simple items like hair clips and headscarves. The demand for products kept increasing and more women joined the group. The journey for the women in La Esperanza has been long and hard. The women had worked to change the culture of machismo in the community and in advocating for basic services. Fair Trade has been crucial to the survival of many families in this community. “When men realize that women can earn a living and support themselves and their children, they start changing,” Angela says.



Angela Mercedes Bailon

Currently UPAVIM has more than seventy women working. Most of the women that started in UPAVIM did not know how to read or write or had only attended first grade at school. The women recognize the need for education in changing the future of their children and now the work of the cooperative supports an elementary school providing scholarships for 450 children, a childcare, a medical clinic, a bakery and a soymilk production program that provides work for the youth in the community.

La Esperanza continues to struggle with poverty and now with strong violence from the gangs and drug dealers, but there is a constant presence of hope and peace through the work of UPAVIM. All the programs and services that the cooperative supports are open to the whole community and opportunities for workshops and more jobs continue to support change and esperanza (hope) in the community. 

Ethical Outsourcing

By Patrick Carton, PJC Intern

As Americans, we know that many of our household items are made in overseas factories. When we think of the manufacturing of our goods we imagine child laborers toiling over an assembly line of Xbox's for minimal compensation in poor conditions. While this is not always the case, it is certainly still a reality. We know this and feel guilty, but what are we to do? We can't exactly restructure our entire economic system. But this is only true to some extent. Consumers can't dismantle our current capitalist system, but we can choose an alternative. Fair Trade provides an ethical alternative.

Fair Trade supports cooperatives in other countries, providing them with livable wages, ensuring safe work conditions and promoting social equality. In this model, goods are still produced overseas, but in a responsible, ethical way. And more than that, they are made in a way that allows for the worker to have pride in his/her own culture and work.

The Peace and Justice Center supports exclusively Fair Trade for precisely these reasons. The store carries products made by cooperatives from all over the world, including the Burlington based *Dolma*, *U.S. Sherpa International* and the Kenyan based *SMOLA*. Each of these cooperatives has their own unique story and they are as follows.

■ Dolma

Dolma, founded by Burlington resident Melinda Haselton in 2006, is a small company specializing in fair trade accessories and home décor products. The products are made by female artisans in various parts of Northern India in towns such as Dharmasala and Jodhpur. This company allows women in India to gain control of their lives by learning intricate trade skills and gaining economic independence.

This assertion of independence is especially important in India because of the prevalence of the caste system. Although the lowest level of caste, the

untouchables or Dalit, was abolished, many are still treated as second-class citizens. Participation in fair trade allows women of the lowest caste to gain some liberties unknown to them before. They are provided a foreign market for their skills that is mostly denied to them at home. Dolma is comprised of four artisan groups: Table linens, Silk Scarves, Cotton Scarves, and a partnership with Ganesh Himal. The table linens are made by block printing and are decorated with artistic representations of the natural world. An Indian NGO set up the Silk Scarf project



to help these women begin to weave sustainably. Dolma donates 15% of its proceeds to education for girls and women in India.

■ US Sherpa International

US Sherpa International is a family owned and operated business specializing in Nepalese handcrafts and treks in the Himalayas of Nepal. Champlain College graduate, Ongyel Sherpa, founded the business in 2005. Most of their products are woollen hats, mittens and scarves. But they also craft cotton shawls/scarves, prayer flags, hemp accessories and various paper products such as journals.

Ongyel Sherpa was born in Nepal and always dreamed of coming to America to start a career for himself. Geoff Tabin,

former professor of ophthalmology and surgery at the University of Vermont, helped to realize Ongyel's dream. While working in India, Tabin called the Sherpa family from Tilganga Eye Hospital because he had a gift for Ongyel's uncle who had served as his guide through the ascent of Mt. Everest. Ongyel answered the phone and then drove with his father to see Dr. Tabin. After their first interaction, Tabin learned of Ongyel's ambition to leave Nepal and offered to write him a sponsor letter, virtually guaranteeing him a visa and acceptance to another country.

Ongyel then moved from Nepal to Burlington and lived with the Tabin family who supported his high school and college educations. Ongyel eventually graduated with a business degree from Champlain College and founded U.S. Sherpa International in 2005.

■ SMOLArt

SMOLArt is an acronym for "Small, Medium and Large Art." This refers to the size of the art, not the size of the artist. SMOLArt is based out of the rural village Tabaka, Kenya. These artisans specialize in carving soapstone into decorative fixtures. The soapstone is mined from around Kiisi, Kenya and is very rough in its crude form. After much work with wet sand paper, the soapstone becomes extremely smooth and can range in color from white, pink, brown to black.

SMOLArt was established in 1990 and quickly became a part of the World Fair Trade Association (WFTO.) All the products are handmade with household tools such as screwdrivers, hand drills and switchblades.

■ Educated Consumers

The power really does lie with the consumer. We are not helpless in this economy. Although we cannot deconstruct capitalism and the traps therein, we can put our money to better use. We can choose to support the system that supports the people. Fair Trade products provide an ethical alternative; the power lies with you. ☺

Vermont Immigration and Asylum Advocates Celebrates 25 Years

By Michele Jenness, VAAA Executive Director

Vermont Immigration and Asylum Advocates (formerly known as Vermont Refugee Assistance) was founded in 1987 as an outgrowth of the sanctuary movement. Many Vermonters generously sheltered and transported Central Americans who were fleeing civil wars in their own countries so that they could safely access the Canadian asylum system. Many Central Americans sought refuge in Canada during the 80's because the US government denied over 95% of Salvadoran and Guatemalan asylum applications while routinely granting applications from people fleeing countries whose governments the Reagan administration opposed such as Nicaragua and Cuba.

Over 25 years, what started as a grassroots volunteer organization – which included hundreds of volunteers helping thousands of refugees from Latin America, Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East – has metamorphosed into an immigration legal services organization committed to helping the most vulnerable and indigent immigrants with their legal needs.

VAAA's Detention Program, launched in 1994, is the only immigration legal

services program providing legal orientations and assistance to detained immigrants who are in the custody of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, ICE, and who are currently being held either in a Vermont state correctional facility or in Clinton County Jail, Plattsburgh, NY.

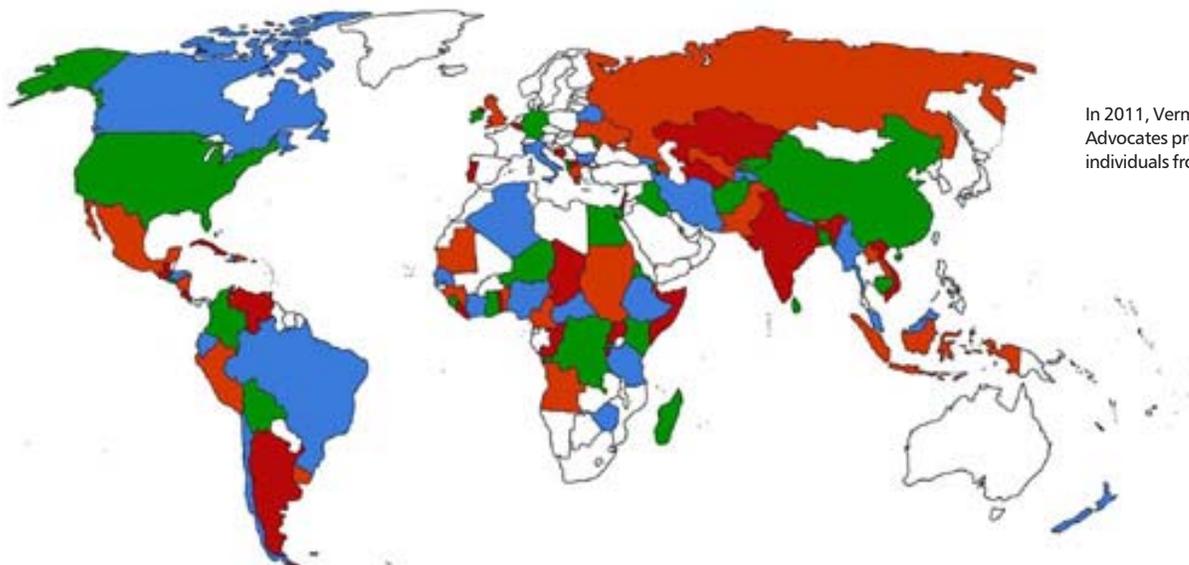
Because immigration violations are civil in nature, no public defenders are afforded to immigrants in the high-stakes removal proceedings. VAAA's Detention Program strives to address this inequity by ensuring that detained individuals have access to counsel, understand their rights under immigration law, and are treated humanely by immigration enforcement and the detention facility. The Detention Program endeavors to raise public awareness of the need for immigrants in removal proceedings to access due process. It works to build public opposition to the detention of asylum seekers and the majority of immigrants who pose neither a security nor flight risk.

Since its founding, asylum issues have been the cornerstone of VAAA's work and mandate. Many of VAAA's asylum claimants are torture survivors and the legal process for asylum is often com-

pounded by psychological and medical factors that cannot be ignored. Therefore, the VAAA Torture Survivor Program partnered with Connecting Cultures, a nonprofit segment of the Behavior Therapy and Psychotherapy Center at the University of Vermont, to form the New England Survivors of Torture and Trauma Program (NESTT). The NESTT program is designed to coordinate and meet the psychological, legal, social and physical needs of survivors of torture. The overall goal of the program is to provide survivors of torture with holistic, integrated and effective services in a culturally relevant context. VAAA's program, legal assistance for survivors of torture, is of utmost importance to the overall wellbeing and security of survivors of torture and their communities in Vermont.

Today, VAAA is a busy legal services organization, providing legal representation and assistance to 729 individuals from 100 different countries in 2011 alone. VAAA serves torture survivors; refugees; asylum seekers; unaccompanied minors; victims of crime, domestic violence and trafficking; and others with limited or no resources. With your help, VAAA can continue to meet the meet the burgeoning need for free legal services for Vermont's most vulnerable immigrants.

VAAA is a 501(c)(3) not for profit organization and donations are tax deductible. Visit VAAA at vtimmigrationandasylum.org, or call 802-864-3200. Mailing address: 241 North Winooski Ave, Burlington, VT 05401. 



In 2011, Vermont Immigration and Asylum Advocates provided legal services to 729 individuals from 100 different countries.

CALENDAR

October 2012

[10/19-11/1] Friday – Thursday

• **Island Stones: The Early Christian Mosaics of Peace Activist Marmete Hayes** at The Gallery at Burlington College. Burlington College is honored to present the mandala-like mosaics created by the late Marmete Hayes (11/8/24 – 6/17/12). 32 of the mosaics will be on display together with posters and memorabilia from her life and commitment to the Catholic peace organization Pax Christi Burlington. The gallery is open 9am to 7pm, Monday-Friday.

[31] Wednesday

• 3:30 pm **Fair Trade Halloween PJC Kids Costume Party** at the PJC. Music, games, snacks, and fair trade chocolate.

November 2012

[4] Sunday

• 12-1 **Will Miller Green Mountain Chapter of Vets for Peace live call-in show on Channel 15**. Vets For Peace lunch meeting in Montpelier, 4th or 5th Saturday of the month, at Angelinos Restaurant, 2pm. New members or observers welcome. Check with Bert Thompson for exact date and directions: itsbert2@comcast.net

[5] Monday

• 6:15pm **Burlington-Bethlehem-Arad Sister City Committee** meeting at Burlington College.

[10] Saturday

• 12 noon. **Local Vigil to Close the School of the Americas**. Meet at Burlington's City Hall. Walk to the top of Church St. and back to City Hall for the Closing Presente! Ceremony. Sponsored by Pax Christi Burlington.

[12] Monday

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

• 6:30-7pm **PJC Annual Meeting** at Palace 9, just before the film.

• 7pm **PJC Cost of War Series film: *The Welcome***. At Palace 9, South Burlington. \$5 students & seniors; \$10 adults. See page 5.

[14] Wednesday

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

[28] Wednesday

• 7pm **PJC Cost of War Series film: *The Invisible War***. Mildred Livak Room (419), Davis Center, UVM. See page 5.

December 2012

[2] Sunday

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

[3] Monday

• 6:15pm **Burlington-Bethlehem-Arad Sister City** Committee meeting at Burlington College.

[10] Monday

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

[12] Wednesday

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

■ New Staff at PJC: Kyle Silliman-Smith, Program Manager

I love the Peace & Justice Center! My first "internship" was in middle school as an office assistant at the PJC. Fifteen or so years later I am thrilled to move back to the area and join the Center's passionate and dynamic staff.

My background is in peace work through education, direct action and the arts. I have created programs and events that engage the community in a variety of ways. Over the years I have helped organize workshops, lectures, protests, classes, sit-ins, meetings and performances to nurture a culture of peace through education. More recently I have worked specifically on art education programs that focus on self-expression, understanding and kindness. My passion for building a world of peace through the arts is something that I look forward to bringing to The PJC.

I am also the Interim Vice President for a union that is currently organizing in NYC. Workers are uniting to fight for safe working conditions and dignity in the workplace. I am involved with The Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program and Diversity Rocks!, a teen program for new Americans in the area. I look forward to continuing to build a community of peace and social justice in Vermont and the world. 



Kyle Silliman-Smith

Save Our Skies VT (SOS VT)

By Katie Kirby & Michele Parlardy

Save Our Skies (SOS VT) is an alliance of Vermonters opposed to the basing of F-35A Joint Strike Fighters at Burlington International Airport. We are homeowners, renters, and landlords; real estate agents and appraisers; doctors and nurses; veterans; educators; artists; business owners; designers; tradespeople; homemakers; retired seniors; and parents. We value the natural beauty of Vermont, the growing diversity in our local communities, and the freedom we all enjoy to shape meaningful lives for ourselves and our loved ones. And we have great respect and gratitude for those who devote their lives to protecting these things, most especially our Vermont National Guard, who responded heroically after both 9/11 and Hurricane Irene. Like every Vermonter, we want to see the National Guard, both Army and Air, serve essential missions for our state and country. They have always had a mission, and we believe that the excellence of our Guard will ensure its future health.

Save Our Skies took shape this past summer, after the Air Force released the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). It started with a group of individuals in Winooski, who were very concerned about the negative impact on residents living around the airport. We began working with the Stop-the-F35 Coalition, and meeting on our own as “the Winooski Group.” Soon, people from towns all around Chittenden County become involved.

Save Our Skies believes that Vermont is not the right home for the F-35A's. While Burlington Airport is located in *the most densely populated area of our entire state*, the other 5 basing options are located in much more remote areas. At these other bases, few if any residents will be negatively affected by the exceptionally high noise levels of the F-35A's, and in most places, the noise level *improves* for a large number of

residents. In Vermont, more than 7,000 residents will be living in a noise zone that the FAA and the Air Force DEIS deem “not compatible with residential use.”



We agree that the preservation of jobs is essential for the health of our local economy; therefore, we are concerned by reports that maintenance jobs will be *lost* if the F-35A's come or that most of the jobs created will be part-time. And we feel strongly that the impacts on the real estate market and people's life savings should be weighed more fairly alongside the possible impact on jobs. We also agree with the studies on education and on health that argue that even

momentary exposure to extreme noise levels impedes learning in schools, damages hearing, and even causes high blood pressure and other serious physical ailments. We are concerned about the reality that the greatest negative impacts of the basing of the F-35A's at BIA will fall disproportionately on low income and minority communities, as clearly stated in the DEIS.

Save Our Skies is committed to grounding our judgment on the facts. We are engaged in on-going investigations into some potentially significant errors in data collection/reporting in regard to the impact on residents and properties in Winooski, South Burlington, Williston, Burlington, and Colchester. We are continuing to expect, and ask for, absolute transparency from the Air Force and our elected Congressional delegation. We think it is unacceptable that the recent Freedom of Information Act request, asking for scoring data, filed by the *Burlington Free Press*, was denied by the Air Force. So we are advocating, on behalf of Vermonters, for the truth to be revealed to us. And we are advocating, on behalf of Vermonters, for our leaders to base their judgments on what is fair and just.

If you are interested in learning more, or if you are ready to volunteer, please contact us at: sosvt.org 

Note: SOS VT is the PJC's newest Allied Member. Welcome!



Carmen Solari

■ New Staff at PJC: Carmen Solari, Assistant Store Manager

Hello! I'm Carmen, the new volunteer coordinator and assistant store manager. I'm so grateful to have an opportunity to work with such an amazing organization!

I was introduced to the fair trade movement in 2005, when I began volunteering for Ten Thousand Villages in Richmond, Virginia. I moved to Vermont in the fall of 2007 to pursue a dual degree in English and Religion from the University of Vermont, which I received in the spring of 2011. During my time there I was lucky enough to live in the Global Social Justice House, work with Students Against the War, and study in Tamil Nadu, India where I worked with the children of the village and their mothers leading women's empowerment groups. In the time since, I've earned a massage therapy degree, as well as accreditation to practice Reiki and Healing Touch.

At the present I am dividing my time between Crow Bookshop, which helps support my literary addiction, and working at the Peace & Justice Center, which fulfills my moral propensity to be the change I wish to see in the world. While my scope of activism has broadened, the importance of fair trade remains close to my heart, and I can't wait to put my passion to work at the Peace & Justice Center's Store! 



GET THE NEWS!

YES! I / we would like to join the peace and justice community and receive a **free subscription** to *peace & justice news*.

- I / we wish to make a contribution.**
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Make tax-deductible checks payable and mail to:

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60 Lake St #1C, Burlington, VT 05401

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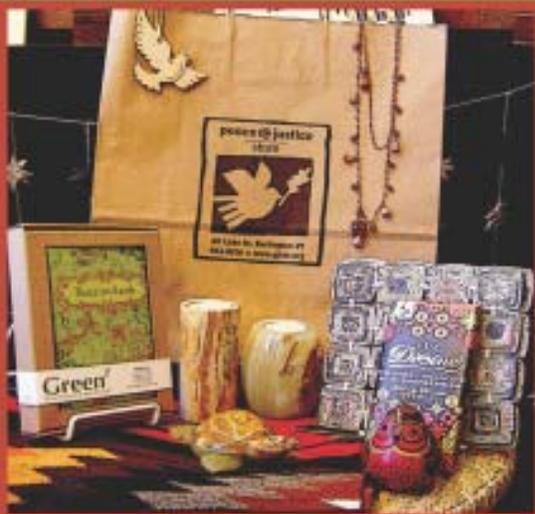
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I want to volunteer; please contact me.

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Fair Trade Bag Sale!



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