



peace & justice news

A PUBLICATION OF THE PEACE & JUSTICE CENTER

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■ In the News

Spring is bringing many things to do!

**Check out the
PJC 2008
Annual Report**

New Poll on Paid Sick Days and H. 382 Introduced to Make It a Reality

By *Colin Robinson*

On February 27, Representatives Sarah Edwards, Mike Fisher, and Paul Poirier introduced H. 382, the *Paid Sick Days Bill*, in the Vermont House of Representatives. The bill provides that employees will earn one hour of paid leave per 30 hrs worked, accumulating time over the course of the year until a maximum of 56 hours or 7 days are earned. These paid sick days can then be used in the case of:

- Physical or mental illness or injury.
- Obtaining professional diagnostic, preventive, routine, or therapeutic health care for the employee.
- Caring for a sick or injured child, parent, parent-in-law, etc
- Obtaining services for the employee or the employee's child, parent, parent-in-law, etc, when the absence is directly related to social or legal services associated with domestic violence.

Now the VLWC needs your help to support the Paid Sick Days Bill in order to move the Paid Sick Days Bill forward in the House. Show your support by writing a letter to your Representative and to the editor of your local newspaper. Check out the website <www.vtlivablewage.org> to learn more about the campaign. Email <livablewage@pjcv.org> or call 802-863-2345 x8, the VLWC, for information to get started on your letter.

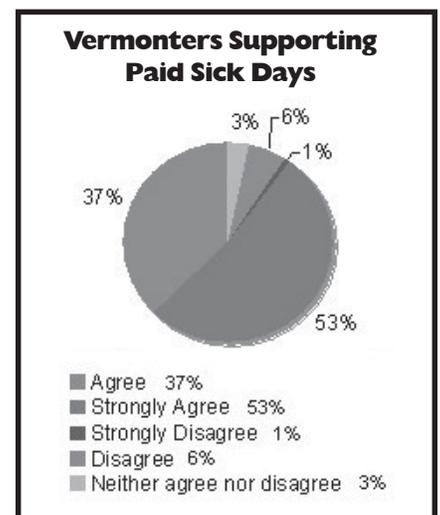
UVM Center for Rural Studies

During the fall of 2008 the Center for Rural Studies worked with Voices for Vermont's Children and the Vermont Livable Wage Campaign to conduct a statewide telephone survey on paid sick days. 405 registered voters were asked about their current sick time situation and the prospect of a legislated paid sick days standard. Both employees and employers were represented.

Key findings

Nearly 9 in 10 Vermonters think paid sick days are a good idea. 89.9% agree or strongly agree that "having a basic workplace standard would help ensure that working Vermonters aren't forced to go to work sick or forced to send sick children to childcare or school."

Sick Days continued on page 2





Sick Days continued from page 1

Vermonters across political parties support paid sick days legislation. Democrats, Republicans and Independents agree: it's time for a paid sick days standard.

Support of Paid Sick Days by Political Affiliation

	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Total
Approve or strongly approve	86.9%	69.0%	75.2%	78.7%
Disapprove or strongly disapprove	8.2%	25.5%	14.7%	14.1%
Neither approve nor disapprove	4.9%	5.5%	10.1%	7.2%

Only 49.4% of workers making under \$25,000 and 43.9% of part-time workers have paid sick days. Low-wage and under-employed workers are the least able to lose pay, but they are the most likely to be without paid sick time off. In tough economic times such as these, every dollar in your paycheck makes even more of a difference.

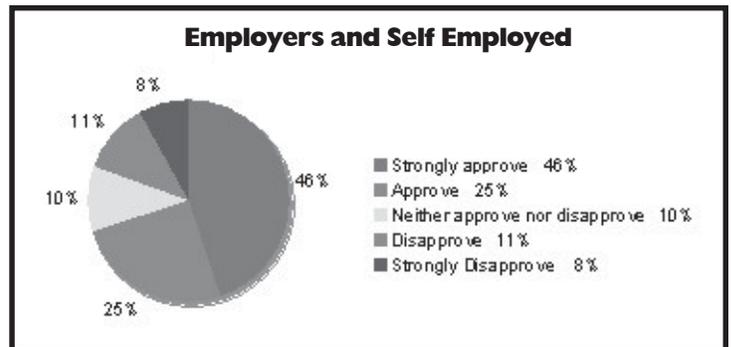
31.1% of Vermonters were very or somewhat worried “about not being able to afford to take time off from work to recover from an illness, or to care for a sick family member.” Making ends meet can be stressful enough without worrying about losing pay or your job as a result of illness.

Employers and self-employed workers support paid sick days legislation, too. In these tough economic times, businesses are searching for ways to cut costs. Paid sick days policies do just that by reducing turnover and increasing productivity: analysis by the Institute for Women’s Policy Research found that implementing a paid sick days standard would result in net savings of more than \$100 per worker per year.

The message is clear: Vermonters want a paid sick days standard. Support H-382!

Thanks to Sam Gilbert and Carlen Finn of Voices for Vermont’s Children for preparing the information on this poll.

The survey has a margin of error of 5% and a confidence interval of 95%.



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

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PJC MISSION

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



Congolese Women get Support from Vermont Legislature for International Violence Against Women Act

A feisty group of Congolese women, goaded to action by the violence facing their families back in the eastern Congo, led some 30 supporters in a march to the Vermont State House on Thursday, March 19, 2009. State Rep. Keshia Ram arranged for them to testify in Room 11, and later they were introduced to legislators in the well of the House. It was a very moving moment when all the legislators stood up and turned towards the women and applauded. They also unanimously passed a resolution urging Congress to support the International Violence Against Women Act!

photo: Robin Lloyd

■ PJC Development Update

Phonathon Update and Thanks

Thank you to our volunteer callers who helped out with the March Phonathon. We'd also like to thank Parima, Three Tomatoes, City Market, and Ben & Jerry's for providing dinner and dessert for our volunteers. Our callers raised over \$9500 in pledged donations this year and helped make the Phonathon a success.

Volunteers needed

The PJC will once again host our *Rock the Boat* event this September 11th, and we are looking for volunteers to participate in the planning committee. We will meet once a month over the next few months then more regularly during the summer leading up to the event. This committee will tackle all the logistics for this event including volunteer recruitment, solicitation of silent auction items, music, and refreshments.

We have also re-established our Development Committee to investigate new ways of connecting to our existing members and recruiting new members, along with exploring creative ideas for fundraising.

If you would like to participate in either committee please email Anise at arichey@pjcv.org or call 863-2345 x6. ☎

Helen Caldicott VT Tour, April 7-10

- 4/7 at 12:00, Middlebury College's Bicentennial Hall
- 4/8 at 7:00, UVM's Davis Center
- 4/9 Montpelier
- 4/10 Brattleboro

Dr. Helen Caldicott, noted physician and author, will be speaking in Vermont during the week of April 7-10. Dr. Caldicott co-founded Physicians for Social Responsibility, an organization of 32,400 medical professionals committed to educating their colleagues to the dangers of nuclear power and nuclear weapons. The international umbrella organization, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985.

Dr. Caldicott is an articulate and passionate advocate of citizen awareness regarding the nuclear and environmental crisis. Over the last 35 years she has lead an international campaign to educate the public about the medical hazards of the nuclear age and the necessary changes in human behavior to prevent environmental destruction. Her lecture, "If You Love This Planet and Your Health," speaks to these important subjects.

Trained as a physician and thoroughly versed in the science of nuclear energy, during the 1970s Dr. Caldicott was an instructor in pediatrics at Harvard Medical School and served on the staff of the Children's Hospital Medical Center. One of the most influential women of the 20th century, she has received many awards for her work. She is the author of seven books, including *War in Heaven* (published in March 2007), *Nuclear Power is Not the Answer* (2006), *If You Love This Planet: A Plan to Heal the Earth* (1992), and *Nuclear Madness: What You Can Do* (1979). She has also been the focus of several films, including *Eight Minutes to Midnight*, nominated for an Academy Award in 1981, and *If You Love This Planet*, which won the Academy Award for best documentary in 1982.

Dr. Caldicott's lectures are free and open to the public. For additional information please contact Marketing Partners at 802-864-6710. ☎

Sign up for the Youth Activist Institute June 26 - 28

Join the Youth Activist Institute taking place this summer, hosted by the Peace & Justice Center. We hope to engage high school aged youth in activism through community organizing and education. Our goal is to have 20 youth for the weekend institute, held at Castleton State College from Friday June 26th through Sunday the 28th. Thanks to generous grant funding, this weekend is FREE to all participants.

The goals of the Institute are to:

- Enhance peer-to-peer connection and peer-to-peer learning
- Build a community of youth activists that will sustain and support each other over time
- Cultivate tools and confidence for youth to go forward and build campaigns.

For more information or to download an application, visit our website <http://www.pjcv.org/youthactivistinstitute.htm>

Application Deadline April 17th, 2009

Many thanks to Michael Nedell and David Vid Miller for graphic assistance on the Youth Activist Institute poster. ☎



YOUTH ACTIVIST INSTITUTE
Learn how to make youth powered radical change influence

peace justice center
www.pjcv.org

When: June 26-28, 2009
Where: Castleton College challenge

PEACE & JUSTICE CENTER 21 Church St. Burlington VT
Jen Berger: peace@pjcv.org 863.2345 x 5
Coin Robinson: lvablewage@pjcv.org 863.2345 x 8



Peace & Human Rights

Our Village is Global

We need to continue to work with each other, for each other.

By Jen Berger

Certainly we can all give a big sigh of relief with our new administration, but not a full one. There are still many US foreign policies to be addressed. As I sat down to write why it is so important for the anti-war/peace community to keep working toward peace, I found this open letter from Iraq Veterans Against the War, Military Families Speak Out, and Veterans For Peace; we are basically saying the same thing.

The PJC continues to collaborate with veterans and military families towards a peaceful world. I'm encouraging you to work with all of us, too.

Our Troops and Iraqis Are Still Dying

An Open Letter to the Peace/Anti-War Movement from Iraq Veterans Against the War, Military Families Speak Out, and Veterans For Peace

After six years of war and the historic election of a new President, we as veterans, military and Gold Star families felt an urgent need to reach out to the larger peace/anti-war movements to make our position on Iraq clear during this time of political and economic uncertainty. Iraq Veterans Against the War, Military Families Speak Out, and Veterans For Peace continue to stand together in our demand to Bring the Troops Home Now! We ask all those who have stood with us in the past to stay faithful to the cause.

President Obama has announced a plan to gradually reduce troop levels in Iraq. Many in the peace/anti-war movements are breathing a sigh of relief, and suggesting that it is time for us to scale back our efforts to bring an end to the occupation of Iraq. But for our troops on the ground, their families and the Iraqi people, the nightmare continues. They need all of us to stay in the struggle. IVAW, MFSO and VFP have been long

united in our call for an immediate and complete end to the occupation of Iraq and will not shift our stance under any circumstances.

President Obama's plan will result in more casualties and suffering for U.S. troops, their families and Iraqis. To the American public facing hard times here at home, two and a half more years of occupation may not sound like that long — but for our troops and their families it means two and a half more years of fear, pain, and separation in a war and occupation based on lies. Hundreds of the troops deployed in the next two and a half years will not come home alive. Many more will return forever scarred by deep wounds to their bodies, minds, and spirits. Well over a million Iraqis have died as a result of this war — many more will be killed as the occupation continues.

We cannot afford the cost of empire. Today we are in the midst of the worst economic crisis most of us have seen in our lifetimes. Yet our government continues to allow the occupation to drain \$10 billion a month from our nation's coffers. Meanwhile, veterans and military families struggle to put food on the table and get decent housing and adequate medical care. Women and men who risked their lives for this country are often forced to fight tooth and nail to get health care from an underfunded and overburdened Veterans Administration. Hundreds of thousands of veterans are homeless.

The occupation of Iraq is the source of the violence not the solution. Living under occupation the people of Iraq are held back from taking control of their own lives to determine their destiny. The continued U.S. military presence there is a cause of the violence they face, not its solution. U.S. continued interference contradicts the principles of democracy and self-determination our country was founded on.

IVAW, MFSO and VFP will continue to keep pressure on Congress and the

President to bring all our troops home from Iraq NOW, ensure that veterans receive the care they need and deserve, and that the U.S. provides resources to rebuild a country we destroyed. But we cannot do that alone. We need your help to reach out to the vast majority of the American people who are completely isolated from the realities of this war. Please don't abandon this struggle or shift your position before the occupation is over and our veterans and the Iraqi people are on the path to healing. 

CONTACT:

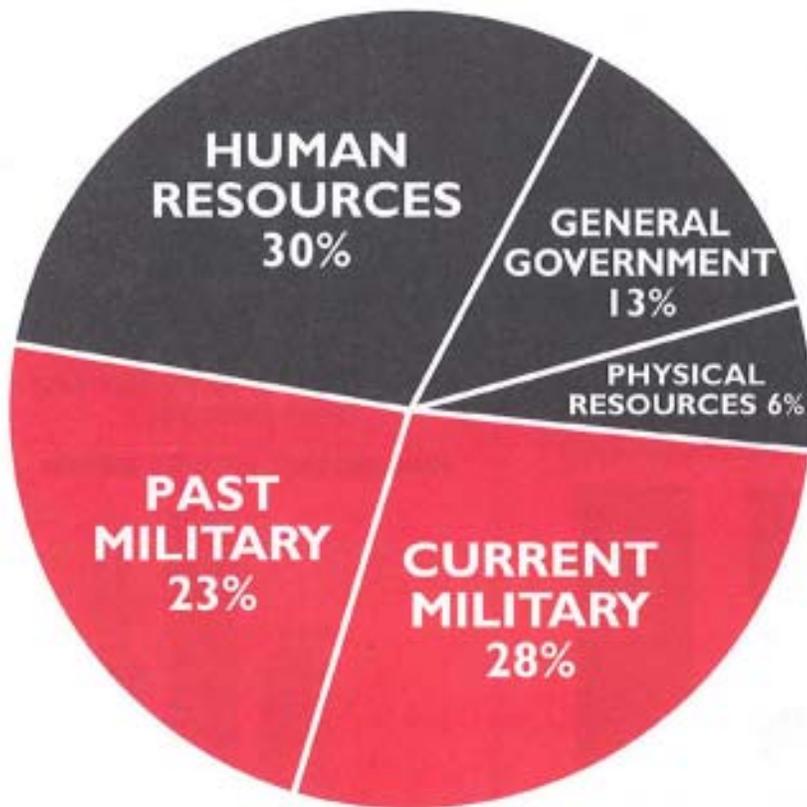
Iraq Veterans Against the War —
215-241-7123 media@ivaw.org
Military Families Speak Out —
617-983-0710, 573-303-1203,
press@mfsso.org
Veterans for Peace — 314-725-6005,
419-360-3621, vfp@veteransforpeace.net

Military to Phase Out Forced Extensions by 2011

The Pentagon has announced it will begin to phase out the controversial "stop loss" policy; a policy that involuntarily extends a soldier's length of active duty service. More than 13,000 troops are currently involuntarily serving in the military under this policy, imposed in 2004. Stop-loss is often described as a backdoor draft. During his announcement, one day before the 6th anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, Robert Gates admitted that the military has forced soldiers to serve "against their will."

Gates says the Pentagon intends to end "stop loss" across the entire armed forces by March of 2011 (currently only the Army is utilizing the stop-loss policy), leaving open the right to continue it under what he called "extraordinary circumstances." Soldiers under "stop loss" will also now be paid an additional \$500 per month, retroactive to October 2008 when stop-losses were supposed to begin receiving the pay. Many have not. 

WHERE YOUR **INCOME TAX** MONEY REALLY GOES



51% TO WAR

Each year War Resisters League analyzes federal funds outlays as presented in detailed tables in "Analytical Perspectives" of the *Budget of the United States Government*. Our analysis is based on federal funds, which do not include trust funds — such as Social Security — that are raised separately from income taxes for specific purposes. What you pay (or don't pay) by April 15, 2009, goes to the federal funds portion of the budget.

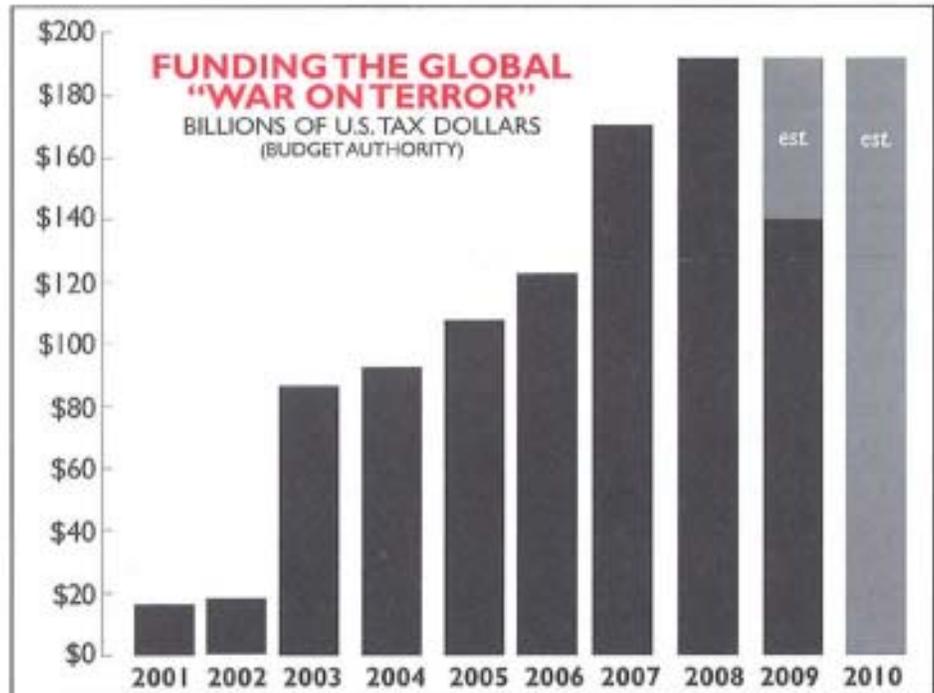
The pie chart here highlights 51% average annual military spending based on our research over 20 years. The Obama administration is releasing the 2010 budget in late March and the new analysis will be posted on our website in April 2009. Over the summer Congress will debate the budget details and is mandated to pass a final budget by October 1, 2009.

While we do not expect the military percentage to change much, Obama's 2010 budget presentation should include funding for the bank bailout, takeover of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, and the stimulus package. The Bush administration (with little Congressional opposition) refused to budget for the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the wider war on terror, intentionally hiding the full monetary costs of their criminal activities. We must demand that all future administration present a more complete and honest budget than we have seen in recent years.

See www.warresisters.org/tiechart.htm for an analysis of the 2010 budget after it is released in March. There are also more details on our methodology and the assumptions behind it.

“The largest spending bill in history is going to turn out to be the war in Iraq. . . . I don't understand why . . . building a road, building a school, helping somebody get health care, that's wasteful spending, but that war in Iraq . . . is going to cost us over \$1 trillion before we're through. . . .”

Congressman Barney Frank
 “This Week with George Stephanopoulos,” ABC, 2/1/09



2001 to 2008: Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, armscontrolcenter.org. 2009: \$69B was approved in June 2008; \$70B is expected to be requested and approved early in 2009. WRL has chosen to hold the funding at 2008 levels for 2009-10 because there is no clarity on troops withdrawals from Iraq, the build-up in Afghanistan, or the ability to make solid estimates from incomplete DoD figures. A key source is the Congressional Research Service report to Congress, “The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11,” updated October 15, 2008, by Amy Belasco.

CALENDAR

April 2009

[4] Saturday

- Anti-War demo on Wall St, NYC

[5] Sunday

- 2pm Vets for Peace meet at PJC.

[7] Tuesday

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

[8] Wednesday

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

[9] Thursday

- 7-8:30pm "Conversation on Race Series" with Dan Balon, Director of Diversity and Equity for the Burlington School District. Dan was the Director of the Office of Multicultural Involvement & Community Advocacy at the University of Maryland. He hopes to share his "...passion and knowledge of ways to foster growth and development on issues of diversity, social justice and global engagement." First Unitarian Universalist Society, Burlington. More info: Vivian Mason: (802) 324-5612.

[13] Monday

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

[17] Friday

- 8pm Entrain's Drums for Peace: a multi media event focusing on the theme of peace, love, unity, and a greener world. At Higher Ground.

[18] Saturday

10am-3:30pm **A Day With Dorothy Day**. Sponsored by Pax Christi Burlington at Mater Christi School Cafeteria, Mansfield Ave, Burlington. Day's granddaughter, Martha Hennessy will speak: "Reflections on My Grandmother". Chris Doucot of Hartford CT will speak about working and raising a family in a Catholic Worker House. Film: "Don't Call me a Saint". Soup & breadline. Free. More info 862-0068.

[22] Wednesday

- 7pm PJC presents: "Afghanistan: Obama's Vietnam" with Joseph Gerson, Director of AFSC Programs in New England. Gerson has focused on education, organizing, and mobilization to end the US war and occupation in Iraq, preventing nuclear war, and advancing the struggle for nuclear weapons abolition, the establishing of the global "No Bases Network," and peaceful resolution of the US-DPRK and US-Iran nuclear confrontations. At the Fletcher Free Library Community Rm, Burlington.

[23] Thursday

- 7-8:30pm "Conversation on Race Series" film: "Blue Babies". This true story is a heartfelt, thought provoking account of one man's journey of skill, intelligence and the reality of what racism and exclusiveness can

evoke in the minds of the observer, yet witness and rally the perseverance of one's monumental contribution to medical research, surgery and society as a whole. First Unitarian Universalist Society, Burlington. Info: Vivian: (802) 324-5612.

- 7pm Afghanistan: Obama's Vietnam with Joseph Gerson at the North Country Coalition for Justice & Peace monthly meeting at the North Congregational Church, St. Johnsbury VT.

[25] Saturday

- 9am to 3:30pm Conference: Building a Vermont Peace Economy. Bethany United Church of Christ, 115 Main St., Montpelier. Keynote Speaker – Jo Comerford, Executive Director, The National Priorities Project: "A Militarized US Economy". Workshops. Admission Free, donations accepted at the door. More info: Joseph Gainza, American Friends Service Committee VT, 802-229-2340 or jgainza@afsc.org, www.afscvt.org

[29] Wednesday

- 8-10am Using *The Livable Jobs Toolkit*: A workshop for businesses to manage and retain employees in hard economic times. Sponsored by Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility, Peace & Justice Center and Co-Sponsors VTSHRM. Main Street Landing, 60 Lake Street, The Great Room, 7:30am registration, Networking, Coffee, Pastries, 8:00-10:00 Livable Jobs Toolkit Workshop.
- 7pm *America's "Good War" in Afghanistan: Occupation, Oppression and Resistance* with Sonali Kolhatkar as part of the Will Miller Social Justice Lecture Series. Livak Ballroom, Davis Center, UVM. See page 7.

May 2009

[1] Friday

- 12 noon Healthcare Is A Human Right Rally at the Statehouse. Organized by the Vermont Workers' Center. The VWC launched the Healthcare Is A Human Right grassroots organizing campaign last summer and it has been endorsed by dozens of organizations across the state including the PJC. Be a part of changing what is "politically possible" for healthcare reform in VT. Help stop the Douglas budget cuts and support single-payer healthcare legislation. Transportation is being coordinated. More info: workerscenter.org/healthcare or call 861-2877

[7] Thursday

- 7-8:30pm "Conversation on Race Series" with Robert Walsh. A noted author, graduate of Colgate University and MA from UVM, Bob retired from the USMC as Lieutenant Colonel, served as a member of the VT House of Representatives from 1983-1989, adjunct faculty at UVM, and taught African American history at South Burlington High School from 1980-1995. First Unitarian Universalist Society, Burlington. More info: Vivian: 324-5612.

Become a Fair Housing Tester and Help Prevent Housing Discrimination

The Housing Discrimination Law Project, a HUD-funded project of Vermont Legal Aid, is seeking fair housing testers. Testers are volunteers who can convincingly assume the role of someone seeking housing and then be neutral, objective, and thorough reporters of what they observe during the process.

We particularly need testers who are in a protected class, but anyone 18 or older can be a tester. Protected classes under federal law are race, color, religion, national origin, sex, familial status, and disability.

Testing is a great way to contribute to your community and make the dream of equal housing choice a reality for everyone. To become a tester you must complete a two-hour training session and a practice test. You will receive a cash stipend and mileage for each completed test.

For more information, please contact Rebecca at (800) 747-5022. 

April at the Flynndog: Freedom in Creation

An exhibition of drawings & paintings by northern Uganda's children. Freedom in Creation is a community-led, arts-based, psychosocial, education and water-development program aimed at empowering war-affected children in Northern Uganda, while educating about the "global village" and celebrating the role of the arts within humanitarianism. FIC addresses the socialization and reintegration of children (non- and ex-combatants) into their communities and access to clean and safe drinking water. Following a simple process, the children, through their creative power, are able to bring access to fresh drinking water to their communities and consequently feel both empowered and valued as stakeholders in the process. More info: www.freedomincreation.org or <http://www.flynn-dog.net/calendar.html>. Flynndog, 208 Flynn Ave, Burlington. 

"A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death."

– MARTIN LUTHER KING



Mow Down Pollution
3rd Lawn Mower Exchange Sale
 Saturday April 25, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Save big on Neuton Cordless Electric Lawnmowers
 19-inch mower **\$379** (reg. \$499)
 14-inch mower **\$279** (reg. \$399)
 Plus batteries and trimmers 30% off
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 More details at www.CityMarket.com

Partners:



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 82 S. Winslow Ave., Downtown Burlington
 We welcome EBT, SNAP, and other government assistance programs.

Building a Vermont Peace Economy Saturday, April 25, 2009

Bethany United Church of Christ, 115 Main St., Montpelier. 9am – 3:30pm

Keynote Speaker – Jo Comerford, Executive Director, The National Priorities Project: "A Militarized US Economy"

Workshops:

Transition Towns, Carl Etnier, Peak Oil

Planning for Sustainable Cities: Gwen Hallsmith, Director of Planning, City of Montpelier

Local Food Security: Joseph Keifer, Martin Kemple: FoodWorks

A Renewable Energy Based Economy: TBA

Vermont's Military/Industrial Complex, Economic Conversion: TBA

Organizing Youth for Peace: TBA

Immigrants and Human Rights in Vermont: TBA

VT State Development, Tax and Funding Policies for a Peace Economy: TBA

Abolishing Nuclear Weapons Begins at Town Meeting – A Truly Historic Moment: Joseph Gainza

Vegetarian Bag Lunch available for sale. Music. Displays by groups working to build a sustainable, just, peace economy.

Admission Free - Donations will be accepted at the door.

More info: Joseph Gainza, American Friends Service Committee, 802-229-2340 or jgainza@afsc.org, www.afscvt.org 

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 

"America's 'Good War' in Afghanistan: Occupation, Oppression, and Resistance." Sonali Kolhatkar at UVM April 29th

Sonali Kolhatkar is a long-time advocate for Afghans, working as an activist and author to expose the reality of the US occupation of Afghanistan and to improve provisions for Afghan refugees. She co-authored with James Ingalls the book *Bleeding Afghanistan: Washington, Warlords, and the Propaganda of Silence*, which has been critically recognized as a well documented definitive account of contemporary Afghanistan and the devastating impact of foreign intervention.

Afghan parliament member Malalai Joya said of the book "*Bleeding Afghanistan* is without a doubt the most realistic and sincere reflection of the ongoing tragedy in my ill-fated Afghanistan, covering every aspect of life under the US domination and its fundamentalist criminals and warlord hirelings...the book breaks the silence on many hidden agendas of the US administration in Afghanistan."

In particular Kolhatkar has spoken out about women's rights in Afghanistan, working with the Afghan Women's Mission and RAWA. She has critically examined the way that women's liberation was used as a pretext for the US invasion, and how the occupation has done nothing to improve the lives of most Afghan women.

She is also the host of "The Uprising Show"—an hour-long program of news and analysis on KPFK-FM, a Pacifica radio station in Los Angeles. Her work has also been published on Common Dreams and Z Magazine.

Her talk, the latest in the Will Miller Social Justice Lecture Series, is called "America's 'Good War' in Afghanistan: Occupation, Oppression, and Resistance." 7pm on April 29th, in the Livak Ballroom in UVM's Davis Center. 



GET THE NEWS!

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 - \$250
 - \$500
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 - other _____

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- I want to volunteer;** please contact me.
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 - planned giving opportunities
 - donating stocks and securities
- Please sign me up as a monthly donor:**

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 Expires: _____
 Signature: _____

good things for good causes! **peace & justice** store

Any 3 Greeting Cards for only \$5!
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