

PEACEWAYS



Issue # 205

February 2007

The Newsletter of the Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice
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Williams and Working Group continue efforts for safe destruction of KY weapons

by Kerby Neill

"Sarin is a deadly nerve gas. A few drops on a man your size could kill you in 3 minutes. The other nerve agent in rockets at the Bluegrass Army Depot is called VX. It's 10 times stronger than Sarin." Craig Williams, a resident of Berea, Kentucky and executive director of the Chemical Weapons Working Group, was explaining two decades of campaigning for a safe, rational elimination of hideous weapons of mass destruction built by our military and stored in 8 states. Those stored near Richmond, Kentucky pose a particular risk for destruction. The deadly nerve agents are not stored separately in bulk, but are in 77,000 rockets containing rocket fuel, warheads, and "burstors" to widely disperse the gas. In addition to rockets, 15,000 projectiles containing mustard gas and 12,000 projectiles containing VX are stored near Richmond.

In the early eighties, Richmond area residents received news that these weapons stockpiles were "aging" dangerously and the Army was looking at plans for disposing of them. "At what risk to the local population?" residents began to ask. The more they asked, the more they discovered risks could be high and that the Army was not forthcoming with critical information. Concerned citizens began to meet, but, as Craig Williams said, "We soon discovered that this was not a problem

that was going to be solved with monthly meetings and bean suppers." A few people needed to make a huge commitment to this problem. "I put my hand up and it has stayed up for 22 years."

A native of New York and a Vietnam Veteran, Craig has lived in Kentucky since 1975. He was attending law school here when he was divorced and needed to drop out of school and care for his children. He operated his own woodworking business for a number of years which gave him the flexibility he needed for his children and his activism. Since 1990 Craig has been executive director of both the Kentucky Environmental Foundation and the Chemical Weapons Working Group. With respect to chemical weapons Craig said that opposition from every man, woman, and child in Kentucky would not have moved the Army. Kentucky's elected Senators and Representatives became strong advocates in challenging the Army, but Craig also helped develop coalitions across all the states in which chemical weapons were stored.

For a long time the Army insisted that only incineration was appropriate for the destruction of their chemical weapons, although evidence was growing about risks to communities from incinerating such deadly weapons nearby. Neither were communities across the US clamoring for such vicious hazards to be transported

through their towns to a remote burn site. At last, the Army relented and agreed to chemically neutralize rather than burn bulk nerve agents stored in Maryland and Indiana. This opening made it more difficult to persist in incinerating the agents in Richmond that were already attached to functioning rockets and projectiles. Now the Army has agreed to a system of carefully and robotically dismantling the weapons and chemically neutralizing the nerve agents, although the fight for sufficient funds to complete the process and the need for careful monitoring continues.

For his efforts Craig Williams was awarded the Goldman Environmental Prize in 2006. The Goldman Prize

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Peaceways is published ten times a year by the Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice, PO Box 363, Lexington KY 40588.

Submissions of articles or items in the *Calendar* are welcome. Contact the editor, Michael Fogler, at (859) 299-3074 or michael@lexingtonquartet.com. Deadline: the first Wednesday of the month.

The views expressed in *Peaceways* are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice.

Commissioned officer resister leads the way

by Amy Goodman

You can jail the resisters, but you can't jail the resistance. George Bush, take notice as U.S. Army Lt. Ehren Watada is court-martialed this month. Congress, take heed. Young people in harm's way are leading the way out of Iraq. It is time you followed.

Watada was the first commissioned officer to refuse deployment to Iraq. He joined the military in March of 2003. He believed President Bush's claims that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction, connections to 9/11 and al-Qaida, and that Iraq was an imminent threat to the United States.

After signing on, he studied intensively to be well-prepared to lead troops in Iraq. His studies, and the daily news coming out of Iraq of civilian deaths and no WMDs, led him to the conclusion that the war was not only immoral, but also illegal.

On June 6, 2006, Watada said: "My moral and legal obligation is to the Constitution and not to those who would issue unlawful orders... As the order to take part in an illegal act is ultimately unlawful as well, I must, as an officer of honor and integrity, refuse that order."

He refused to deploy. The Army charged Watada with missing the troop movement, contempt toward officials and conduct unbecoming an officer. Watada hoped that his court-martial would be a hearing on the legality of the war. He was not claiming conscientious objection; rather, he says, he simply refused an illegal order. He offered to resign his commission. He offered to serve in Afghanistan. The Army refused his offers. A military judge ruled Watada cannot present evidence challenging the war's legality nor explain what motivated him to resist his deployment order.

On our "Democracy Now!" news hour, Watada said of his February 5 court-martial, "It will be a non-trial. It will not be a fair trial or a show of jus-

tice. I think that they will simply say: 'Was he ordered to go? Yes. Did he go? No. Well, he's guilty.'"

Several journalists to whom Watada spoke were subpoenaed in order to testify, first at his pretrial hearing, then at the court-martial. The journalists fought back, and in each case, the Army backed down. Sarah Olson, one of the independent journalists involved, said, "I am glad the growing number of dissenting voices within the military will retain their rights to speak with reporters."

Dissent within the military against the war in Iraq is growing. Iraq Veterans

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Chemical Weapons (cont.)

goes annually to one person from each continent who has made a major contribution to the protection of our environment. The Goldman citation notes that Craig's work won citizens, "unprecedented access to previously closed-door meetings where military, state, and federal officials made planning decisions about how to destroy chemical weapons." Craig also, "revealed leaked confidential documents that showed the Pentagon was defying Congressional mandates and holding up over \$300 million in federal funds for safe weapons disposal with the intention of directing those funds to existing incineration sites" to cover huge cost overruns.

Craig Williams is a former officer and current board member of the Vietnam Veterans of American Foundation. The Foundation shared the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize for its international campaign to ban landmines (although the United States has so far refused to sign the international treaty banning landmines). Craig is also a member of Veterans for Peace and, like many other wonderful peace advocates, a subscriber to *Peaceways*. We are proud and we are safer to have Craig in our midst.

To learn more visit the Chemical Weapons Working Group (cwwg.org). ■

The lesson of how King became an activist

by Steve Chase

For the last two years, I've broadcast a Martin Luther King Holiday special on WKNH, the Keene State College radio station. The segment that always gets the most listener comment is the little-known story about how King actually became an activist during the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

In 1955, King was fresh from seminary, only 26 years old, and new to town. His church was one of the smallest, wealthiest, and most conservative of the two-dozen African-American churches in Montgomery. His personal ambitions at the time were to run a solid church program, be well paid for it, have a nice house for his growing family, write theology pieces for his denomination's magazine, and do a bit of adjunct teaching at a nearby college. He was not dreaming of becoming a leader in the struggle for civil rights, economic justice, and a peaceful US foreign policy.

Indeed, if it had been left up to King, the Montgomery Bus Boycott would never have happened. The real organizer of this effort was E.D. Nixon, an experienced civil rights and labor activist who created the Montgomery Improvement Association and launched the Montgomery Bus Boycott within the first four days after Rosa Parks' arrest for refusing to move to the back of the bus. It was Nixon

who recruited King to the civil rights movement. After bailing Rosa Parks out of jail, Nixon went home and started calling local ministers to line up their support for his boycott idea. As Nixon later explained: "I recorded quite a few names. The first man I called was Reverend Ralph Abernathy. He said, 'Yes, Brother Nixon, I'll go along. I think it's a good thing.' The second person I called was the late Reverend H.H. Hubbard. He said, 'Yes, I'll go along with you.' And then I called Rev. King, who was number three on my list, and he said, 'Brother Nixon, let me think about it awhile, and call you back.'"

When King finally agreed to come to a meeting, Nixon chuckled and told King, "I'm glad you agreed, because I already set up the first meeting at your church." At this first ministers' meeting, King was very nervous about Nixon's idea of conducting an illegal boycott campaign. Several other ministers soon began to side with King against the campaign. In his own memoir on the Bus Boycott, King recalls how Nixon exploded towards the end of the meeting and shouted that the ministers would have to decide if they were going to be like scared little boys, or if they were going to stand up like grown men and take a strong public stand against segregation. King's pride was so hurt by Nixon's comment, he shouted back that nobody could call him a coward. Then, to prove his courage, King immediately agreed to Nixon's plan for an aggressive, community organizing campaign to build up the boycott. Everyone in the room quickly agreed with King and the matter was settled.

With that decision made, the group began to discuss who should lead the effort. Everyone present had expected Nixon to become the president of the newly formed Montgomery Improvement Association. But when he was asked about serving, Nixon answered, "Naw, not unless'n you all don't accept my man." When asked whom he was nominating, Nixon said, "Martin Luther King." Having just loudly declared

his courage to the whole group, King felt that he had to agree to take on this responsibility. Then, Nixon told King he would have to give the main address at the mass rally scheduled that very night to announce the boycott plan to the black community.

King rose to Nixon's challenge. Serving as the leader of the Montgomery Bus Boycott for the next twelve months changed King. Watching 42,000 poor and working-class black people stay organized and do without public transportation for a year, he discovered things about the courage and capacity of ordinary people to resist oppression and move toward freedom. Watching the conservative, rightwing city government finally cave in to the boycott, he discovered the power of mass nonviolent direct action campaigns to win real victories—even when they are opposed by powerful interests. By seeing his own power to inspire people to become active citizens for a noble cause, King discovered just what kind of person he wanted to be in this life. He now fully embraced his new mission as an activist leader for building what he called the "Beloved Community."

There is an important lesson here for all of us. We don't have to be born leaders. We don't have to know everything before we get started. We just have to get started. ■

"World peace through nonviolent means is neither absurd nor unattainable. All other methods have failed. Thus we must begin anew. Nonviolence is a good starting point. Those of us who believe in this method can be voices of reason, sanity, and understanding amid the voices of violence, hatred, and emotion. We can very well set a mood of peace out of which a system of peace can be built."

—Martin Luther King, Jr., December 1964

Resister shows the way (cont.)

Against the War has quadrupled in size in the past year. More than 1,200 soldiers have signed on to an "Appeal for Redress," with which active-duty soldiers can appeal to Congress for an end to the war with legal protections against retaliation from the military. The appeal simply reads: "As a patriotic American proud to serve the nation in uniform, I respectfully urge my political leaders in Congress to support the prompt withdrawal of all American military forces and bases from Iraq. Staying in Iraq will not work and is not worth the price. It is time for U.S. troops to come home." ■

Exploring the desert trek for immigrants

by Janice Sevre-Duszynska

Desert folk say that before one dies in the desert — from extreme heat and dehydration — she becomes delusional. She strips off her clothes and covers herself in the sand, heating herself up even further. As her body gives way, scorpions, spiders, insects, snakes and animals invade as the huge turkey vultures swoop down and begin their meal.

Since the passage of NAFTA in 1994, which keeps Mexican farmers from being able to make a living on their own land — over 3,000 bodies of undocumented migrants have been found in the desert on the United States-Mexico border in Arizona/Sonora. Each year more people have died succumbing to the unbearable temperatures above 100 degrees — 282 migrants died in 2005. Others are never found as they dissolve into that which is part of the desert.

We were 90 together from across the United States, Mexico, and Spain, of varying ages and backgrounds, who came to walk in solidarity with our migrant brothers and sisters from Mexico and Central America...Christ the Refugee. We would take what we learned back to our communities to raise awareness of the plight migrants face.

Our journey, the third Migrant Trail Walk, began on Memorial Day: a seven-day, 75-mile trek that started along the United States-Mexico border at Sasabe, Sonora, Mexico and ended in Tucson. I was part of the nine-member Christian Peacemakers Team delegation, one of many affinity groups that participated.

My Mexican students had told me about crossing over. Members of their families and even some of them had to swim through a river, or hike through treacherous mountains, or survive the Sonora Desert to get here. As I taught them English, they traversed my soul with their stories. "I am walking for you," I told them. We hugged and they warned me about the sun and cactus plants, rattlesnakes and scorpions, fierce "dust devil" storms and quick

flash floods called "washes" two to ten feet deep in the canyons.

In the desert, perspiration is a sign that you're taking in enough water. We knew that when we were sweating, we were okay. We tasted like the ocean, which flowed drop by drop into our mouths. Often it mixed with the sweat of my brow and flowed into my eyes, burning them.

As we wandered, however, further into the outward desert and the one inside our soul, we were haunted. All around us were signs of our migrant sisters and brothers, Christ the Refugee: bandanas, discarded clothing, shoes and boots, baseball caps and cowboy hats, ski hats for the sometimes cold nights, blankets, paper refuse from fast food places, and more, including empty plastic gallon jugs with ropes tied to them. To keep hydrated, we were to drink two to three gallons of water each day. A migrant, we were told, would need around eight gallons of water to barely survive the desert and cross over.

The white-painted wood cross I carried on the walk said simply "Unknown/Desconocida" — an unknown woman who died in the desert heat sometime during the year 2004-2005. Other crosses had a name and date of death. The man from Iowa next to me held up his cross: "August 2nd is also my daughter's birthday," he cried. Each of us knew that what we held in our hands represented the life and death of another human being.

The number of Mexicans making it across the border successfully and who acquire a job in the United States averages a half million per year. In the last 10 years this figure has gone up 300%. Twelve million people have migrated over the Mexican border. Over 700,000 people cross the border in Arizona alone.

More migrants are dying as they try to cross over because our government has transformed the border into a military zone. Now migrants cross in more remote areas of the desert. This has increased the number of migrant deaths. Meanwhile, our government is

increasing the militarization of the border: more Border Patrol agents, more surveillance and a wall. Have we so soon forgotten the Berlin Wall?

The nine-year-old Border Wall along the Border town of Douglas, Arizona is now 13-miles long. Soon it will be 54-miles long. It will be built by 100,000 members of the National Guard per year (that's 6,000 each week) using leftover steel landing pads from the Gulf War. Then Douglas may host the largest Border Patrol Station in the world. Its Border Wall is part of the \$1.2 billion signed into law in October for the 700-mile extension of walls to be built in sections of urban areas along the southwest border to prevent active migration.

In our wandering in the wilderness, we came upon a migrant not much older than my students. He had seen us leave Sasabe and enter the wilderness. Our leaders offered him water and the food we had in our backpacks. He had no medical needs and wanted to go to Portland, Oregon, but later changed his mind and wanted to return to his family in Mexico. We learned from a Chiapan economist, a Presbyterian minister who runs a community center on the Border, and a member of a coffee cooperative that Mexicans do not want to leave their land. "To leave one's land is to suffer," say Mexican farmers.

However, since 1994, under the North American Free Trade Agreement passed by the United States Congress, Mexican farmers no longer receive subsidies for growing their crops. Yet, United States and Canadian farmers still do. Cheap, highly subsidized crops from the United States and Canada are allowed into the Mexican market. Mexican farmers cannot sell their crops and make a profit — or compete with the open market.

This is what drives Mexican peasants from their farms. Then a Mexican family must develop survival strategies, so they send a family member — son, brother, husband or wife — from the land into the cities. If a job is not avail-

(Continued on next page)

There is dissent and variety among Jews

by Anne Karpf

I've just been talking on the phone to an aunt in Israel, a Holocaust survivor like my mother. After swapping news about the family, the subject of the Middle East came up. Though our views sometimes overlap they also differ because, despite her strong criticism of the current Israeli government and despair over their incursion last year into Lebanon, she's ultimately a passionate defender of the state.

Our conversation was heated but never less than amicable: what struck me was how long it is since I've had such a vigorous exchange of views about the Middle East with other Jews in Britain with whom I disagree that didn't end with me being accused of something—from being self-hating, to undermining the very future of Judaism. In fact, from what I've read and what my aunt described, I get the sense that the quality of debate is far

more frank and uninhibited in Israel than it is here. This is why I signed the Independent Jewish Voices declaration.

Growing up in Britain in the 1950s and 1960s as the child of Holocaust survivors, I learned not what some educators now like to glibly claim as “the lessons of the Holocaust” — be nice to your neighbour — but the opposite: lie low. The majority of British Jews either lived exclusively in Jewish communities or avoided drawing attention to their Jewishness.

This changed in the 1980s and 1990s, and a new confidence emerged, bringing an explosion of interest in Jewish identity and history. But as the situation in the Middle East has developed, it feels as if we're stepping back in time. Jews are under pressure, not least from many fellow Jews, to uncritically endorse everything that the Israeli government does, or else to

lie low, almost disavowing their Jewishness for fear of being identified with an occupying power.

I refuse both positions. I grew up in household where practically every meal was conducted to the sound of heated political argument. This isn't unusual: the yeshiva (an academy for the study of the Torah) is fundamentally a place where one Jew likes to shout his viewpoint louder than the other, where knowledge is advanced by the fierce contestation of conflicting interpretation. The idea of a single Jewish orthodoxy is a sign of weakness, not strength, of fear rather than confidence.

It's been hard for me to speak out about the Middle East: most surviving members of my family live in Israel, and for a long time my family's experience made me anxious about the repercussions that could come from speaking one's mind.

Yet the more that the Israeli government claims to act on behalf of all Jews, the more I feel obliged to make my dissenting voice heard. In this I draw inspiration from the long Jewish tradition of fighting for human rights, other people's as well as one's own: Jews have been prominent in virtually every major modern movement for civil rights and social equality.

I also refuse the idea of “our civil rights versus theirs,” as though justice for Israelis and Palestinians were not only divisible but also mutually exclusive. This is a form of polarization beloved by those unwilling to expose their arguments to counter-evidence, who prefer slogans to dialogue, and who promote a false idea of winners and losers. In my view this formulation has played a significant part in perpetuating the conflict in the Middle East.

I want my children to grow up proud of their Jewish identity, and to know that there's no contradiction between being Jewish and fighting for human rights. I've put my name to Independent Jewish Voices to defend and

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Solidarity with immigrants (continued)

able in the cities, they continue on to the United States. Before the border became tightened and militarized, Mexican migrant workers were able to work in the United States seasonally as needed and then return to their families in Mexico. Now the migratory pattern has ended. It is too expensive to return because of coyotes and the militarization of the Border. What is needed, these grassroots people say, is the opening of the Border to allow the movement of people for labor — in addition to eliminating the barriers of goods and capital. “Why does one person have to die responding to the natural supply and demand of labor?” asked the economist.

During the week of our walk, six bodies of migrants were found in the desert. On the Sunday morning after we trekked our last 6.7 miles in Tucson, some of us participated in a “die-in” on the sidewalks in front of the Border Patrol office in Tucson. About 15 of us mourned the “dead” as if they were our migrant mothers, fathers, children....I

was a mourner. Beneath me the “dead migrant” was Danielle of our Christian Peacemakers Team (CPT) group. Next to me was her “sister,” Renee, also from the CPT delegation. It was not difficult for me to feel the loss of a child. I had gotten to know Danielle, the precious human God-filled being she is — so mature and wise for her young age. Other CPTers had told me, “Wail, Janice.” I guess they knew. It did not take much to go from the death of my younger son at 18 in a car accident many years ago to the horrendous loss of a child in the Sonora Desert. Death is death. Loss is loss. I didn't know if I still had it within me. My soul did, however. As the trekkers passed by they saw and heard us, so did the people who worked for the Border Patrol. We were told the experience touched them and made the living and dying of the migrants real. We wail. ■

The author is a peace activist and ordained deacon in Roman Catholic Women-priests.

St. Francis meets Egyptian Sultan—3/25

by Patricia Griffin

The Franciscan Peace Center of Lexington is sponsoring a presentation by Kathleen Warren on March 25 in the form of a one-woman dialogue between an Italian Saint and an Egyptian Sultan.

The event will be Sunday, March 25, beginning at 3:00 PM at the Fellowship Hall at Lexington Theological Seminary, 631 South Limestone Street.

The attraction of Francis of Assisi to peoples of various religions, cultures, and races may be stronger today than ever in history. For over eight centuries he has been acknowledged as a peacemaker *par excellence*. Surely this is a time that needs his wisdom. In her presentation and dialogue with us, Sr. Kathleen Warren, OSF, will explore the poignant encounter between Francis, the humble *poverello* from Assisi and the distinguished Sultan of Damietta (Egypt), Malek al-Kamil. This rendezvous was an unprecedented venture of risk taking, respect, and discovery that offers a bold paradigm for inter-religious encounter today.

Peacemaking is indeed, the work of our time. In the midst of a world filled with intolerance and violence, how does peacemaking happen? What does peacemaking look like? Come and explore the powerful message offered in this exceptional encounter with its potent application to our lives today.

Presentation will be followed by Inter-Religious Panel Discussion: *How Can I be an Instrument of Peace in Today's World?* Panelists will represent several faith traditions and speak to the topic of peace. Questions from the audience will be fielded by our moderator, Bob Silvanik of Quadrant 2 Consulting; prepared questions are derived from the Prayer of St. Francis, *Instrument of Peace*.

The schedule will be as follows: 3:00 — Presentation; 4:15 — Panel Discussion; 5:00 — Reception with traditional ethnic foods.

About Sr. Kathleen Warren, OSF:

Kathleen Warren, OSF is a member of the Sisters of St. Francis of Roches-

ter, Minnesota. She holds a MA in Religious Education from Loyola University, Chicago; a Master's in Franciscan Studies from the Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University; and a Doctor of Ministry from the Graduate Theological Foundation, South Bend, Indiana.

Her doctoral course work was completed at the Gregorian University in Rome in 2004 at the Institute for the Study of Religions and Cultures. The title of her 2006 dissertation is: *Muslims, Christians, and Jews Encounter Francis of Assisi and Each Other: A Paradigm for Doing Peace and Rebuilding the World*.

Currently residing in Silver Spring, Maryland, she is a member of the Rumi Forum sponsored by Georgetown University. She serves as Coordi-

nator for Continuing Education for the Franciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure University and is a member of her Franciscan Congregational Leadership Team.

She is the author of *Daring to Cross the Threshold: Francis of Assisi Encounters Sultan Malek al-Kamil* (published 2003).

"I believe that the vision of St. Francis offers a powerful tool for the rebuilding of a world in need of healing and hope. His message of respect and reconciliation is a timely gift for all who are interested in listening to it." (Sr. K. Warren)

Books are available @ \$14.95 from Franciscan Peace Center: call 859.230.1986 or send an email to: FranciscanVision@aol.com. ■

Howard Zinn: War on Terrorism is immoral

Beyond the futility of armed force, and ultimately more important, is the fact that war in our time inevitably results in the indiscriminate killing of large numbers of people. To put it more bluntly, war is terrorism. That is why a "war on terrorism" is a contradiction in terms. Wars waged by nations, whether by the United States or Israel, are a hundred times more deadly for innocent people than the attacks by terrorists, vicious as they are.

The repeated excuse, given by both Pentagon spokespersons and Israeli officials, for dropping bombs where ordinary people live is that terrorists hide among civilians. Therefore the killing of innocent people (in Iraq, in Lebanon) is called accidental, whereas the deaths caused by terrorists (on 9/11, by Hezbollah rockets) are deliberate.

This is a false distinction, quickly

refuted with a bit of thought. If a bomb is deliberately dropped on a house or a vehicle on the grounds that a "suspected terrorist" is inside, the resulting deaths of women and children may not be intentional. But neither are they accidental. The proper description is "inevitable."

So if an action will inevitably kill innocent people, it is as immoral as a deliberate attack on civilians. And when you consider that the number of innocent people dying inevitably in "accidental" events has been far, far greater than all the deaths deliberately caused by terrorists, one must reject war as a solution for terrorism.

For instance, more than a million civilians in Vietnam were killed by US bombs, presumably by "accident." Add up all the terrorist attacks throughout the world in the 20th century and they do not equal that awful toll.

If reacting to terrorist attacks by war is inevitably immoral, then we must look for ways other than war to end terrorism, including the terrorism of war. Military retaliation for terrorism is not only immoral but futile. ■

Howard Zinn is a professor emeritus at Boston University and the author of "A People's History of the United States."

Jewish opinion (continued)

enlarge a public space for debate, to assert that there's more than one variety of legitimate Jewish opinion, and in rejection of the idea that you can be against either anti-semitism or Islamophobia but not both.

Lying low is no longer an option. ■

Events at a Glance

<i>Date/Time</i>	<i>Event Description</i>	<i>Contact</i>
Thursday, February 22 8:00 am - 5:00 pm	Kentuckians Value Fairness Day of Action , Frankfort. 8:00-9:00 Lobby Training Capitol Annex cafeteria; 9:00-12:00 Lobby meetings; 1:00-2:00 Rally in the Capitol Rotunda.	Kentucky Fairness Alliance 859-205-3239
Tuesday, February 27 9:00 am - 2:00 pm	Lobby Day for Restoration of Voting Rights , Frankfort. Meet at Capitol Annex Room 111. ●	Dave Newton, 420-8919
Monday, March 5 7:00 pm	Film: "Highway Courtesans" , Gaines Center's Bingham-Davis House, 218 E. Maxwell St. Presented by UK's Gender & Women's Studies Program. Film follows life in India along a highway where girls' innocence is bought and sold. Discussion following led by Patricia Ahmed, assistant professor in the Sociology Department, whose specialties include gender and development in India.	UK Gender & Women's Studies Program 257-1388
Sunday, March 25 3:00 pm	Presentation: An Exceptional Medieval Encounter between St. Francis of Assisi and Sultan Malek al-Kamil , with Kathleen Warren OSF. Fellowship Hall, Lexington Theological Seminary, 631 S. Limestone. ●	Pat Griffin 230-1986
1st Wed. of the month, 7:30 pm	CKCPJ Board Meeting , Friends Meeting House, 649 Price Avenue. All welcome.	Kerby Neill, 293-2265
Every Sunday 6:00 pm	Sustainable Communities Network , Third Street Stuff, on North Limestone near the corner of Third Street. www.SustainLex.org	Jim Embry, 312-7024
1st Wed. of the month, 4:00 - 6:30 pm	Franciscan Peace Center , 3389 Squire Oak.	Pat Griffin 230-1986
Every Thursday, 5:30 - 6:00 pm	Interfaith Prayer Vigil for Peace , Triangle Park in downtown Lexington.	
2nd Wednesday of the month, 7:00 - 8:30 pm	Humanist Forum of Central Kentucky (AHA) , Unitarian Universalist Church, 3564 Clays Mill Rd.	Dick Renfro, 255-7029
3rd Thursday of the month, 7:00 pm	Kentuckians for the Commonwealth (KFTC) , Episcopal Diocese Mission House, corner of 4th St. and Martin Luther King.	Janet Tucker, 389-8575
New meeting schedule TBA soon.	Lexington Living Wage Campaign , Community Action Council, Georgetown St., Lexington.	
4th Tuesday of the month, 7:30 pm	Bluegrass Fairness Steering Committee , Price Center, 389 Waller Avenue	806-4114 info@bluegrassfairness.org
4th Thursday of the month, 7:30 pm	Central Kentucky Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty , Central Library, downtown.	Will Warner, 278-9232
1st Monday of the month, 12:00 noon - 1:30 pm	Kentucky Migrant Network , Cooperative Extension Building, 1141 Red Mile Place.	Andrea Tapia, 268-3353

● *Denotes article in this issue containing more information.*



**The Central Kentucky Council
for Peace and Justice**
PO Box 363
Lexington KY 40588

"Peace is not the product of terror or fear. Peace is not the silence of cemeteries. Peace is not the silent result of violent repression. Peace is the generous, tranquil contribution of all to the good of all. Peace is dynamism. Peace is generosity. It is right and it is duty."

—Oscar Romero, Martyred Archbishop of El Salvador

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Bits and Peaces

Lobby Day for Restoration of Voting Rights for former felons

The Kentucky Restoration of Voting Rights Coalition is launching a focused lobby day to push HB 70 — a Constitutional Amendment to Restore Voting Rights to former felons who have served their debt to society. The day is Tuesday, February 27th, 2007 starting at 9:00 AM, lobbying until 2:00 PM. Meet in Frankfort in Capitol Annex Room III.

Last session, we were able to gather 18 legislators to the House as Co-sponsors for this legislation. This Session, House Leadership has expressed a strong interest in supporting this bill, which gives us a greatly improved chance of getting it passed.

You can make the difference!

We'll divide up into lobby teams, putting experienced lobbyists with first-time lobbyists and talk to legislators, telling them our stories and arguments in favor of Restoration of Voting Rights.

No previous lobbying experience is needed!

Allied organizations and individuals are welcome to join us. Were especially interested in bringing out Former Felons to speak on this issue from their own experience.

If you're interested in taking part in this lobby day, please contact Dave Newton with Kentuckians For

The Commonwealth (KFTC) at (859) 420-8919 or Dave_HN@yahoo.com.

Some quick facts and figures:

- Kentucky is currently one of only three states in the US that doesn't restore voting rights for any former felons automatically.

- 186,000 Kentuckians don't have the right to vote because of this.

- One in Four African Americans in Kentucky of voting age or older are disenfranchised - a higher percentage than in any other state.

- 56% of Kentuckians favor a Constitutional Amendment to restore voting rights to former felons who have served their debt to society. Only 40.4% say they are not in favor.

- Felons who vote are less than half as likely as felons who don't vote to commit another crime later in life. Restoring Voting Rights makes our Commonwealth a safer place to live.

Nobel Laureates call for Gandhian approach to world conflicts

Anti-apartheid icon Nelson Mandela joined top leaders, nobel laureates and elder statesmen on January 29 calling on the world to reinvent Indian freedom fighter Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent approach to solving conflicts. Mandela, who spent 28 years in prison for fighting white rule before leading South Africa to multi-racial democracy

as the country's first black president in 1994, said Gandhi's non-violent approach which won India freedom from British colonial rule 60 years ago was an inspiration.

"His philosophy contributed in no small measure to bringing about a peaceful transformation in South Africa and in healing the destructive human divisions that had been spawned by the abhorrent practice of apartheid," said Mandela.

"In a world driven by violence and strife, Gandhi's message of peace and nonviolence holds the key to human survival in the 21st century, said Mandela.

Sonia Gandhi, president of Indian National Congress which leads the ruling coalition, joined Mandela and calls by former Polish President Polish Lech Walesa, former Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda and Bangladesh Nobel Laureate Mohammad Yunus to promote Gandhi's values.

She told the some 400 delegates, which include heads of government, senior officials, religious leaders and parliamentarians that the end of the Cold War had not seen peace as was hoped for.

It was natural to question if Gandhi's philosophy was feasible in today's world, but that it was possible to use it as a tool and adapt it to conflict resolution. she said. "It would be a grave error to write-off the Gandhian approach as irrelevant to our age," she said.