

PEACEWAYS



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The Newsletter of the Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice
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Health Care Access: Citizen Action Needed

by Mary-Alice Pratt

When the Universal Declaration of Human Rights achieves its sixtieth birthday this December, the United States will be in violation of several provisions, among them Article 25: "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself [sic] and of his [sic] family, including food, clothing, housing and *medical care*..." [my emphasis].

While poverty is closely associated with lack of health care, Medicaid takes care of most needs of the impoverished. Medicaid eligibility in Kentucky, however, is limited to persons with *very low* incomes. And many—most—of those without any form of health insurance are working persons.

We're familiar with the statistics: 47,000,000 in the U.S., about 580,000 in Kentucky and about 38,000 plus in Lexington-Fayette County have *no* health insurance. Approximately 60,000 children, eligible for KCHIP (Kentucky Child Health Insurance Program), for various reasons are not receiving it. This does not include the number of persons with inadequate coverage.

Medicare covers hospitalization

for persons over 65 years and persons with disabilities. Persons who are Medicare-eligible may obtain coverage for physician care by paying an extra premium, "Part B." For any further health care needs, there is "supplemental" insurance per another premium. The catch, of course, is that many older persons have pre-existing conditions so obtaining supplemental insurance is available only at prohibitively high costs.

During the early 1990s, a group called Kentuckians for Health Care Reform (KFHCR) led by the Kentucky Council of Churches, the Catholic Conference of Kentucky, and joined by many professional health, religious, and civic organizations, proposed that everybody is entitled to health care. Through focused work with members of the General Assembly, and with the blessing of then-Governor Brereton Jones, the coalition worked toward passage of a bill, HB 250.

This bill assured that no one could be denied access to health insurance; insurance policies should be renewed without undue penalties for use in the prior coverage period; and insurance should be portable as persons moved from one employment to another.

The caveat was that this was private insurance, i.e., paid for by the insured themselves or by an employer. But the coalition saw this as a hopeful step toward more universal coverage.

Alas, a subsequent General Assembly dismantled the first two provisions within a few years. At least the feature of portability, having become federal law, was safe.

Given the continued need, it's surprising that a bill introduced by
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Submissions of articles or items in the Calendar are welcome. Contact the editor, Gail M. Koehler at 859.355.5701 or gmkkentucky@gmail.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.

Health Care Access: Citizen Action Needed

continued from front page

Rep. John Conyers of Michigan, H.R. 676, has had little publicity. This legislation, supported by dozens of nursing, medical, and other civic associations and 85 congressional co-sponsors, would guarantee health care to everyone as extended Medicare. It would include preventive, primary, acute care and mental health services—without the intermediary of insurance companies! Socialized medicine? No. Socialized funding. What seems even more surprising is that the Kentucky House of Representatives in February 2007 approved this bill unanimously!

Another effort by a small group led by Dr. Gil Friedell has been under discussion for about two years. Modeled on the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, it proposes *value-based principles* against which to measure the current system and guide its transformation. The Committee for Health System Transformation recognizes the complexity of this effort and plans broad representation of citizens for its development. Their work is just beginning and it is worth watching.

A Central Kentucky faith group, BUILD, (Building United Interfaith Lexington through Direct action) has spearheaded efforts resulting in the Lexington-Fayette County Health Department to expanding its primary care services to non-insured. [See *Peaceways* March issue for more details—if you don't have your copy, call our editor at 859.335.5701 or go to our archives

which are available online at www.peaceandjusticeky.org]. During 2007, the health department, with BUILD's encouragement, offered 700 additional appointments each month from July through December for uninsured persons' primary care. During 2008, BUILD negotiated with the health department and several other health providing agencies to form a task force to determine how to offer primary care to an additional 2,000 persons per year for the next three years.

With an estimated over 38,000 uninsured persons in Fayette County, the number may seem insignificant. But the persons who do receive care probably don't think it's insignificant.

Present systems of providing care are expensive and, as a result, often inaccessible. And the efforts mentioned here still leave unacceptable gaps in care. But people have begun to take actions. What appears necessary is a critical mass to demand that something be done on a national level.

The focus must be to recognize the significance of every person and his or her human right to health care.

As this is being written, Congress is wrangling about the economic crisis. Health and other social needs may fall victims to more political and or selfish interests. The need for citizen input and action becomes more urgent.

Mary Alice Pratt is a former CKCPJ Board member and local activist involved in reforming efforts to improve access to health care. You can reach her at 859.278.0833.

This is the cause of my life—new hope that we will break the old gridlock and guarantee that every American . . . will have decent, quality health care as a fundamental right and not a privilege.

—Edward M. Kennedy



October 19th at 7 pm at the
Lexington Theological Seminary

Join a Multifaith Panel Discussion to Consider: What Does Your Faith Call You to Do for the Environment?

Note: This panel is one of the Council's 20 Days for Peace and Justice events celebrating our 25th Anniversary. They continue through October 24th. For the most up-to-date details, see activities listings at our dedicated event website: www.twentydaysforpeaceandjustice.org.

The panel is co-sponsored by the Kentucky Council of Churches (KCC) and the Central Kentucky Jewish Federation. It will be moderated by Dr. Emily Askew, Professor of Theology at the Lexington Theological School, and will include representatives from four traditions: Catholic: Tim Durst, Director of Kentucky Interfaith Power and Light, KCC; Muslim: Dr. Suleiman Darrat, Professor of Islamic Studies at UK; Evangelical: Dr. Nancy Sleeth, Professor of Asbury College; and Jewish: Rabbi Uriel Smith, Emeritus Rabbi of Ohavay Zion Synagogue. Below, Rabbi Smith, a Board Member of CKCPJ, reflects on the personal experiences, motivations, and goals he brings to this work.

by Rabbi Smith

This May we learned that Lexington, Kentucky, has the largest carbon footprint of any U.S. city. In 2005, we spewed into our atmosphere greenhouse gases at a rate of 3.48 metric tons per person per year. The average footprint for all metropolitan areas was 2.24 tons. For Honolulu, the cleanest U.S. city, the number was 1.36 tons. So if we here in Lexington can help reduce our footprint, our individual efforts can have a major impact.

I worked for almost 20 years in the Department for Environmental Protection (DEP) of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. My colleagues have been of all kinds, of many different religions. Some had very colorful personalities. Most of them tried their utmost to help Kentucky develop sustainably while minimizing pollution.

But we operated under strict political restraints. Federal law says that no state may operate under laws that are *less* stringent than the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations. State law indicates that, unless authorized by the legislators or the governor, no regulation can be *more* stringent

than the federal laws. And the inspectors checking out the polluters operate under similarly strict guidelines.

Recently I retired. So I can now say openly that we can no longer completely stop global warming but only slow it down.

Many of you have seen the Doomsday Clock printed on the cover of the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*. It warns us of the dangers of nuclear warfare. This nuclear clock now stands at five minutes past midnight. In my opinion, if we drew a similar clock for global warming, it would be drawn at five minutes *past* midnight. The Arctic Sea ice at the North Pole completely melted this summer. And the sea level rise is beginning to accelerate.

We cannot wait for our government to bring us to a level of sustainable development. Instead, the pressures to act responsibly have to come from individual American citizens. The government is responsible *to us*, "We, the people."

All the major religions empower their members to act ethically and responsibly. All of them show a full compatibility with the most ad-

vanced scientific perspectives, once we allow ourselves to search for the truth.

Our religious perspectives vary a lot. In many ways we disagree with each other. But we will find that our religions agree in that they empower us in our search—asking each of us to act responsibly, and aiding all of us to work together to demand that both state and federal governments act responsibly to sustain our environment.

In our multi-faith panel discussion, we have assembled—here in the city with the largest carbon footprint in the U.S.—local religious scholars who can help Lexington be a center of hope and sustainability.

We intend to show that we can meet and work together to address the environmental challenges of global warming, air and water pollution, soil contamination, biological species extinction, and potable water depletion.

We need the religious enthusiasm that arises from individual empowerment. This will help us survive before we decimate ourselves through ignorance and indifference. There is much work to be done.

We cannot wait. ■

Some On-Line Voter Resources: A Survey

General Election Information

At <http://elect.ky.gov> published by the Kentucky State Board of Elections, the “Voter Information” button will take you to a “Voter Information Center” which provides information on polling places and legislators.

At www.lwv.org/Election2008 you can find the League of Women Voters’ presidential voter’s guide that contains the candidates’ responses to a range of policy issues. The league’s basic purpose, they say, is “to make democracy work for all citizens.” This information is also available at their site www.vote411.org.

Kentuckians For The Commonwealth (KFTC) has created the site www.kentuckyelection.org because they are “committed to creating an authentic participatory democracy in Kentucky and our communities.” They surveyed candidates on a number of key questions. You can see responses to those survey questions at the site and access websites for each candidate, too.

Religious Perspectives

A month before the elections, we have what the New York Times has called a “battle playing out nationwide in weekly homilies, pastoral letters and diocesan newspapers.” It is striking that various religious groups’ positions on their responsibilities in the politics of the nation can vary so widely.

At Christianity Today, www.christianitytoday.com, you can find “Endorsing from the Pulpit” written by Adelle M. Banks (posted 9/25/2008), analyzing the “Pulpit Initiative” organized by an Arizona-based conservative Christian legal group, challenging Internal Revenue Service rules that prohibit churches from politicking by supporting or opposing candidates.

In contrast, at the web site of the Interfaith Alliance, <http://interfaithalliance.org/clergypledge>, clergy can stand up for religious freedom by pledging “To resist using or soliciting the resources of [their] house of worship for the exclusive benefit of any candidate or party; To respect candidates whose religious beliefs are different from [their] own, and stand against the use of religion to divide our communities; To encourage members of [their] congregation to take an active role in civic life, including casting informed votes.”

In the January 2008 issue of *Friends Journal* available at www.friendsjournal.org/separation-church-and-state, you can find a Quaker perspective regarding the history of, and continuing necessity of, the separation of church and state.

At JTA, “The Global News Service of the Jewish People” found at www.jta.org, you can find a news item covering the the furor over Jewish groups disinviting all political candidate to an anti-Iran rally, due to fear that attendance by some candidates and not others would cause the IRS to impose financial penalties.

Sojourners’ website www.sojo.net includes links to their Vote Out Poverty campaign and a voter’s guide.

The website of The Muslim Public Affairs Council at www.mpac.org, has an “Activate 08 Voter Guide.”

At Tricycle’s blog <http://blog.tricycle.com>, editor Jeff Wilson’s entry “Voting Buddhist?” dated September 23, 2008, summarizes and analyses some voting trends among North American convert Buddhists.

Writing at Atheist Revolution, blogger “vjack” says: “All voters are ‘values voters.’ Using [the term] only to refer to conservative Christians is misleading at best and bigoted at worst. Personally, I am a secular values voter.” See the post at www.atheistrev.com/2008/09/atheists-as-values-voters.html.

Peace Sites

You can find a 2008 Peace Voter Guide titled “Obama vs. McCain: A Side-By-Side Comparison on Arms Control” at the site for the group Peace Action Maine <http://peaceactionme.org/2008-peace-voter-guide-o>.

At the Coalition for Peace Action out of Princeton, N.J., you can find a “Peace Voter 2008 Presidential Voter Guide” at www.peacecoalition.org.

And elsewhere on the web:

The ACLU is running a “Put the Constitution First at the Polls in November” campaign. Their seven-point pledge includes points such as:

- I believe that government officials, no matter how high-ranking, should be held accountable for breaking the law and violating the Constitution.
- I believe that the Constitution protects every person’s rights equally—no matter what they believe, how they live, where or if they worship, and whom they love.
- I reject the notion that we have to tolerate violations of our most fundamental rights in the name of fighting terrorism.

Other supporting material is available on their website www.aclu.org.

See Project Vote Smart www.votesmart.org for legislative voting records of incumbent candidates.

Immigration Petition—Welcome the Stranger

The Kentucky Faith Communities Immigration Coalition represents a number of faiths and a wide range of Christian denominations, including the Catholic Conference of Kentucky, the United Methodist Church, and the Episcopal Diocese of Lexington.

The Coalition is concerned about the heated and sometimes hateful language that is too often associated with the current debate about reform of our nation's immigration laws. They say "Our religious traditions teach us to welcome and help the stranger. We have created a petition that we hope you will sign and ask others to sign. Here is the wording:

- "We pledge ourselves as people of faith and goodwill to stand with our immigrant neighbors who have come to the United States from throughout the world.
- "Recognizing the moral imperative to welcome the stranger in our midst, we commit ourselves to support laws that affirm their dignity, preserve their families, and acknowledge the value of their presence among us."

While the Coalition has presented many of these signed petitions at press conferences and delivered copies to candidates and elected officials in Kentucky, this petition cam-

paign will continue through the first of the year.

To sign the petition go to www.gopetition.com/online/21513.html or print a copy from www.peaceandjusticeky.org/KFCICPetition.pdf and help the effort by collecting even more signatures.

For more information, contact Richard Mitchell at 859.327.6277. ■

Sometimes to be silent is to lie.

—Spanish philosopher Miguel Unamuno

Update on Campaign for Justice For Ana Romero—Stop the Raids and Deportations

If you came by the Council's table at the Festival Latino de Lexington 2008 you might have seen information on this campaign and even signed the accompanying petition. Or you may have received it online. As this issue of *Peaceways* went to press, local media reported recent developments.

Ana Romero died in August at the Franklin County Regional Jail while waiting deportation. Initial reports were that she hanged herself.

She had been arrested in January at her home and detained by state police for giving federal immigration officials a false identification card, along with a previous immigration-related violation. Prior to her arrest, she was living and working in Shelbyville cleaning houses in order to support her 92-year-old mother and two grown sons in college in El Salvador.

During her nearly eight-months imprisonment in the county jail while awaiting deportation, Ana was dis-

traught and suffered from medical ailments. Family and friends began the campaign to demand a thorough, transparent investigation of her jail treatment and her death.

They requested a second opinion because they did not believe she took her own life, given that she was waiting anxiously to return to her country and her family. As well, shortly before her death she was placed in solitary confinement for not eating.

Yet there were signs she had eaten before her death, reported *The Lexington Herald-Leader* in their October 5 edition. Further, the paper said that a final autopsy report confirmed the preliminary finding that she hanged herself, but that the Franklin County Coroner Will Harrod will "continue to scrutinize the case." The newspaper account noted that "the final autopsy report raised other questions."

As the search for the truth of what happened in Ana's case contin-

ues, the second half of the petition remains pertinent. In part, it demands moral, decent, and humane treatment of all persons in jail, regardless of their legal status, national origin, skin color, or language. It demands due process rights guaranteed in the United States Constitution.

Finally, it asks that public officials implement a moratorium on the raids and deportations of immigrants until such a time as we obtain the fair, humane, and comprehensive immigration reform that our country so badly needs.

The country has seen such a moratorium quite recently: one was granted to all immigrants in Louisiana who rushed in after Hurricane Katrina to do the back-breaking work of helping clean up New Orleans and the Gulf Coast.

The petition says: "Let's solve our broken immigration system in a way that benefits all and treats all fairly, in accordance with national and international standards of justice and human rights."

Full text of the petition is available online at the website www.anaromero.org. ■

UK's Department of Gender and Women's Studies Fall 2008 Film Series: Transgressions and Transformations

All films presented by the University of Kentucky's department of Gender and Women's Studies are shown free of charge and are open to the public. For more details, E-mail bpasley@uky.edu or call 859.257.1388.

Wednesday, Oct. 29, 7 pm: *The Education of Shelby Knox*. Location: The Gaines Center's Bingham-Davis House, at 218 E. Maxwell Street in Lexington.

"Shelby Knox is a brave, smart, independent high-school-age crusader for sex education in Lubbock, Texas...The movie...is a pungent civics lesson on what can and cannot be accomplished by one plucky, idealistic girl."—Stephen Holden, *New York Times*.

Commentary and discussion led by Lexington high school students Delaney Courtney-Gibbs and friends.

Friday, Nov. 14, 8 pm: *Girls Rock!* Note Location: Worsham Theatre, UK Student Center.

"[This] dead-clever doc lets the famous rockers who volunteer their time (Carrie Brownstein, Beth Ditto) fade into the background and focuses

on the amazing kids who grow and rock at camp...The film uses an aesthetic borrowed from zines, music videos and campy mental hygiene films, a Kathleen Hanna-heavy soundtrack and tons of sociological data. Most impressive, however, is the fact that they refuse to portray Rock 'n' Roll Camp as idyllic, exposing the flaws – catfights, pariahs – that exist even in a girl-positive space."— Sarah Liss, *Now Magazine*. [*Girls Rock!*] deftly explor[es] issues of empowerment, popularity, body image, anger and the enemy that is Britney Spears. Bring your daughters."—Moria Macdonald, *Seattle Times*.

A collaboration between Gender and Women's Studies and the Student Center's Late Night Film Series, this screening received generous support from the Student Center Director's Office for the public performance rights to this film.

Susan Bordo, Director of Gender and Women's Studies, Professor of English and Gender and Women's Studies and the Otis A. Singletary Chair in the Humanities will introduce the film and lead discussion afterward. Dr. Bordo often comments

on and writes about gender and film for both popular and scholarly publications.

Wednesday, November 19, 7:00 p.m. *Finding Christa* Location: Gaines Center's Bingham-Davis House, 218 E. Maxwell Street.

"In 1962 [the filmmaker] gave up her 4-year-old daughter, Christa Victoria, for adoption. Eighteen years later, Ms. Billops, who had since married and become a painter and sculptor, was reunited with Christa. ...[This film] is a densely packed amalgam of feminism, individualism, interracial relations, art and show business..[A] rich and haunting film."—Vincent Canby, *New York Times*. 1992 Sundance Film Festival "Grand Jury Prize."

Commentary and discussion led by Kathi Kern, Associate Professor of history, whose research focuses on the ways in which politics, gender, and religion have mixed to create new ideological positions and social change in the United States. She also has a particular interest in the history of adoption in the U.S. which is rooted in her own adoption. ■

October is GLBT History Month

GLBT (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender) History Month is endorsed by GLAAD, the Human Rights Campaign, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, the National Education Association, and other national organizations.

In 2006, the Equality Forum assumed responsibility for GLBT History Month.

The celebration ...“sends an important message to our nation's teachers, school boards, community leaders, and youth about the vital importance of recognizing and exploring the role of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people in American history,” says George Chauncey of the History Department at Yale University.

The celebrations include a project to collect stories of “icons.”

Shelia Kuehl, a California politician and featured icon, says: “The hardest thing I ever did, coming out, turns out to give me a reputation almost instantly for honesty and courage, which any politician would kill for.”

For more information, profiles of more icons, and to share your story, you can go to the website www.GLBThistorymonth.com ■

Events at a Glance

<i>Date/Time</i>	<i>Event Description</i>	<i>Contact</i>
October 16 th Thursday 7 - 10 pm Kentucky Theater 214 E Main St.	The Ordinary Radicals: A Conspiracy of Faith on the Margins of Empire: This film screening is a charitable fundraiser for Kentucky Refugee Ministries. Jamie Moffet, director, will be present for a Q & A after the film.	For tickets: call the Kentucky Theatre, at either 859.231.7924 or 859.231.6997.
October 23 th Thursday 7 pm Kentucky Theater	Concert for Peace and Justice: Benefit for CKCPJ. Featuring George Ella and Steve Lyons (folk), Alma Gitana (Flamenco fusion), Reel World String Band. Come celebrate!	Tickets: \$20; \$15 with student I.D., call the Kentucky, above.
November 5 th at 6 pm Woodland Park Gazebo	Community Hug: Post-Election community event with music, dancers, and a general good time. Tabling opportunities for organizations. Sponsored by: NewMorningWorld.	E-mail: newmorningworld@gmail.com for more information.
1 st Wednesday 7:00 pm	CKCPJ Board Meeting , in our offices at 112 N. Upper St. All are welcome.	Nabeel Jawahir, Co-chair 859.619.3369
Every Thursday 5:30 - 6:00 pm	Interfaith Prayer Vigil for Peace , Triangle Park in downtown Lexington.	Richard Mitchell 859.327.6277
1 st Monday 12:00 noon - 1:30 pm	Kentucky Migrant Network , Cardinal Valley Center 1306 Versailles Road	Miguel Rodriguez, Chair miguelug929@yahoo.com
1st & 3rd Tuesday 5 pm	U.K. Socialist Student Union in the Center for Student Involvement in the UK Student Center. We have a Facebook Group! Join us there at "U.K. Socialist Student Union."	Joan Braune standinsolidarity@yahoo.com
2 nd Tuesday 7:30 pm	Bluegrass Fairness of Central Kentucky , KCCJ office, 112 N Upper St.	Paul Brown, Chair, hemer1588@yahoo.com
4 th Tuesday 5:30 pm	Lexington Living Wage Campaign Meeting Community Action Council, 710 W. High Street	Richard Mitchell 859.327.6277
1 st Wednesday 4:00-6:30	Franciscan Peace Center , 3389 Squire Oak. FranciscanVision.org	Pat Griffin 859.230.1986
2 nd Wednesday 7:00 - 8:30 pm	Humanist Forum of Central Kentucky (AHA) , Unitarian Universalist Church, 3564 Clays Mill Rd.	Dick Renfro 859.255.7029
3 rd Thursday 7:00 pm	Kentuckians for the Commonwealth (KFTC) , Episcopal Diocese Mission House, 4th St. and Martin Luther King	Ondine Quinn ondine@kftc.org
TBA -- call John Walker, right, for details	Gardeners of the Bluegrass , Unitarian Universalist Church, 3564 Clays Mill Rd.	John Walker 859.225.3866
Every Sunday 2:30-4:00pm	NAMI Lexington Support Groups -- Faye Morton Center, Eastern State Hospital, Lexington, Wendall Building basement	call 859.272.7891 or go to lexington.nami.org for



The Central Kentucky Council
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We in America suffer from what I call a democracy myth. The myth is that, somehow, democracy is magically self-replenishing and we don't have to do anything.

— Naomi Wolf

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Bits and Peaces

FootPrints for Peace Prisoner of Conscience Walk



The 7th Annual Prisoner of Conscience Walk took place on September 13, and encouraged people to join any part of the day's event. The starting walkers are pictured here, left to right: Rebecca Glasscock, John Toren, Janice Sevre-Duszynska, Jon Blickenstaff, Larry Crane, Marcus Atkinson, Kerrie Ann Garlick (KA), Ammon Russell and Jim Toren. Rebecca Glasscock notes; "Most of this group has been arrested for civil disobedience. Janice Sevre-Duszynska is the most 'infamous' having been arrested during the School of America's protest back in 2001. The first of the Prisoner of Conscience events happened in 2002 and started at the Federal prison in Lexington where Janice was serving her time and ended at the Federal prison in Manchester Kentucky where Erik Johnson was doing his time. It was a great honor to have Janice with us." See the September issue of *Peaceways* for more on the walk or go to: <http://footprintsforpeace.tripod.com>.