

Peaceways

CENTRAL KENTUCKY COUNCIL FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE May 2015

Coalition for a Just Community: *New Beginnings*

By Megan Kottak

Coalition for a Just Community is working to bring restorative justice processes to schools and communities. Restorative justice processes help communities learn to problem-solve within the community, hold children accountable without sending them into the juvenile justice system, and help achieve equality among all members of the community.

Diana Queen, executive director of the Kentucky Center for Restorative Justice (KCRJ), heads the Coalition for a Just Community project. Diana got involved with restorative justice and the Coalition for a Just Community because of her previous career work that includes several trainings in restorative justice processes. She has worked with staff and students of the Lexington Day Treatment Center and in a division of the Fayette County Public Schools to train supervisors and managers in restorative justice techniques.

Recently, Diana began working in the city and community of Covington, Ky., to bring community justice and restorative justice to them. Her main goals include using restorative justice as a means to make communities stronger, leading to improved relationships within the community with an emphasis on ensuring that the children in the community feel safe and supported.

Linda Harvey is another member of the Coalition for a Just Community and has served as a mediator for 23 years. In her 50 years as a social worker, she has done restorative justice processes for over 20. Linda has received a number of awards for her work, including the University of Kentucky's Sullivan Award in 2007 and induction into the University of Kentucky Social Work Hall of Fame in 2002. On April 29, 2014, she received the "Amazing 8" award for community service from Camp Horsin' Around.

Linda has brought ROCK (Restoration Opportunities Connecting Kids) circles, conflict circles, and accountability circles to school systems.

ROCK circles create a place at school where students feel they can be heard and can connect with other students. The goal of conflict circles is eliminate miscommunication by allowing each person an opportunity to speak and be heard with respect. At the end of the circle, the group develops a contract that spells out how participants will treat each other. Accountability circles are used by court referred cases for situations in which the individual student needs to be held accountable for home and school behavior. These circles are handled much like conflict circles.

Linda believes her role with the Coalition for a Just Community is to work with schools and to help them determine how

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An easy way to provide financial support

CKCPJ has registered with the Kroger Community Rewards program. If you shop at Kroger, we encourage you to register at krogercommunity-rewards.com using number 16439 so Kroger will donate a percentage of your grocery bill to CKCPJ at no cost to you. The website will walk you through the process. Have your Kroger Plus card handy and link your card to CKCPJ. If you use your phone number at the register, call 800-576-4377 and select option 4 to get your Kroger Plus card number. This is a simple way to financially support CKCPJ by just buying groceries!



Concerned citizens of Central Kentucky gathered outside the Lexington office of Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) to demand the confirmation of Loretta Lynch as the U.S. Attorney General. Confirmed on April 23, Lynch is the first African American woman to serve as Attorney General.

Lexington native fosters the real and the natural

Obiora Embry is a Lexington native who grew up in a forward-thinking family in which local food—including a fruit and nut orchard, bramble garden, in the yard and food grown by his parents' friends—was the norm. He enjoyed spending time on his maternal and paternal family farms during his childhood.

As Obiora got older his focus changed. He received a bachelor of science degree in Industrial Engineering from the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. Through his formal education and co-operative employment at GE Appliances, Obiora developed a knack for designing, modifying, and implementing systems. He started coursework in computer engineering, and although he never finished has spent most of the past nine years working as a computer developer (and sometime software engineer).

Even though he has spent countless hours programming in the virtual world of the Internet, he has been passionate about what is real and natural. He has tried to maintain a balance between programming and nature.

In returning to his Lexington roots and coming full circle, Obiora has resurrected his business EConsulting™, an eco-conscious consulting business he started in 2006. The first year its product was a system Obiora had developed for a college tutoring lab but after getting his hands back in the soil while volunteering at community gardens, he decided to let his business evolve.

This transformation led EConsulting to design edible gardens, implement and maintain gardens as a personal gardener, and write and speak about a variety of topics.

Through studying ecosystems untouched by humans, Obiora realized that monoculture gardening and farming in rows is unnatural, inefficient, and wasteful. With this understanding, Obiora has decided to emulate nature in his gardens. He plants crops to attract beneficial insects and pollinators, companion plants, grows bio-intensively, and encourages biodiversity in the garden. Obiora understands that soil is a living organism and needs plants growing in it all year long. Therefore, he cover crops and allows pollinator-friendly, medicinal, and/or ed-

ible weeds in the garden.

Last year EConsulting brought back the You Reap What We Sow™, personal gardener service that allows participants to reap to the benefits of fresh food from their yards through the work of EConsulting.

Obiora is constantly changing and evolving. As such, so is his business. Yet one thing that remains constant is his belief that "...change takes time, forethought and knowledge, as well as an envisioned goal." Obiora has written articles that have been published in *Ace Weekly*, the *Lexington Herald-Leader*, *Peaceways*, and *North of Center*. He also co-authored *Whole Measures for Community Food Systems (WM CFS): Stories from the Field* between 2011 and 2012.



Obiora Embry nurtures plants as well as an eco-conscious consulting business.

In 2013 Obiora published his first book: *Expanding Horizons Through Creative Expressions: Reflections and Thoughts Related to the Struggle for Peace, Sustainability, Equality, and the Search for Humanity*. It is a forward-thinking book that provokes thought, challenges the mainstream, and is a revolution of the mind. It addresses subjects that may be uncomfortable but is needed for transformation.

A review of Obiora's book will be in in an upcoming issue of *Peaceways*.

Convocation honors Murphy, biographer

At the request of Billie Mallory, former CKCPJ Board member, the CKCPJ board donated \$200 to purchase books and print memorial bookmarks for an April 29 convocation honoring Isaac Murphy, the best-known black jockey from Lexington's East End.

Murphy raced at the original Kentucky Association racetrack and rode several Kentucky Derby winners.

Keeneland, William Wells Brown Neighborhood Association, the Lyric Theatre and other community partners hosted author Pellom McDaniels, author of the biography, *Prince of Jockeys: Isaac Burns Murphy*. Professor McDaniels visited Lexington the last week of April.

The convocation hosted six to eight local schools that are studying Murphy's legend and his contributions to the thoroughbred industry. The event also promoted the soon-to-be-completed Isaac Murphy Memorial Art Garden and its valued place in the East End of Lexington.

Billie coordinated the convocation, which was sponsored by the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government.

CKCPJ has donated copies of *Prince of Jockeys* to the library of each school that attended and provided bookmarks for each student.



Coalition for a Just Community

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they impact the community. She hopes that restorative justice processes can be developed for the community at large. However, she wants to honor what has already been happening in the community and collaborate with the existing services.

The Coalition for a Just Community will mobilize local stakeholders and leaders to give the community a voice by identifying needs, strengthening ties, and addressing concerns.

Megan is a student at the EKV School of Justice and an intern at the Children's Law Center.

Happy 129th Birthday!

by E. Joy Arnold

Central Kentucky Move to Amend (CKYMTA) will use a birthday party theme for its events and activities in 2015 to commemorate the May 10, 1886, Supreme Court ruling in the case of *Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad*. The case had nothing to do with corporate personhood, it was not a matter argued before the court, and the court made no ruling on that issue. So, how, you ask, did this case get credit for establishing that illegitimate legal fiction? Stay with CKYMTA through the year and learn all about it.

In its April meeting the CKYMTA steering committee determined to focus on raising public awareness about corporate rule through events, by writing op-ed pieces and letters to editors, stepping up use of social media, sponsoring films and speakers, appearing on talk radio, and applying to provide a seminar about the topic through the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Kentucky.

Also recognized as crucial to any social movement, the group hopes to diversify the reach of its message generationally, politically, economically and racially. Additionally CKYMTA is preparing a PowerPoint presentation for use by a speakers' bureau and looks forward to launching a book club.

Kicking off the "increase awareness" campaign, CKYMTA will show the documentary film "Shadows of Liberty" Friday evening, May 29. Venue is yet to be determined. See movetoamend.org for further announcements.

Joy is the chairperson of CKYMTA.

Peace is Possible

CKCPJ continues the sale of its artistic specialty Kentucky license plate that proclaims "Peace is Possible."

The lovely artwork for the license plate was created by local artist Jaqui Linder and features a flock of sandhill cranes. The crane is a centuries-old, cross-cultural symbol for wisdom, peace and longevity.

Locally, the ancient sandhill crane is recognized as a multi-cultural ambassador of peace. The sandhill migration is a wonderful sign, familiar to many Kentuckians.

In Japan, the crane is especially revered and thought to bring good fortune. It is believed that crafting 1,000 origami cranes grants the creator a single wish.

After World War II, author Eleanor Coerr published a moving children's book, *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes*, a tale of a young girl's failed attempt to fold 1,000 origami cranes before her premature death due to radiation exposure from the atomic bomb blast over Hiroshima. Folded origami cranes took on a powerful meaning after the book's publication in 1977 and came to symbolize peace through the title character's unforgettable perseverance.

"I envisioned several cranes in flight to communicate movement upward and outward toward hope," Jacqui said.

The lavender-purple on the plate represents transformation while the dramatic oranges, which blend to soft yellows, symbolize strength and light.

CKCPJ is one-third of the way toward the 900 reservations required for the license plate to be produced. To reserve a license plate, at a cost of \$25, please go to the CKCPJ website, www.peaceandjusticeky.org.

The Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice

Board of Directors: Rebecca Ballard DiLoreto, David Christiansen (co-chair), Bilal El-Amin, Mary Ann Ghosal (secretary), Marion Gibson, Heather Hadi, Randolph Hollingsworth, Rahul Karanth, Steven Lee Katz (treasurer), Susan Lamb, Richard Mitchell, Bruce Mundy, Kerby Neill, Steve Pavey, Nadia Rasheed, Alexandria Sehon, Rabbi Uri Smith, Teddi Smith-Robillard, Janet Tucker (co-chair), Craig Wilkie. *Peaceways Staff:* Margaret Gabriel (editor), Penny Christian, Gail Koehler, Betsy Neale, Jim Trammel (proof-readers). The views expressed in *Peaceways* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of CKCPJ. *Administrative Manager:* Brandi Davis

Member Organizations: ACLU-Central Kentucky Chapter; Ahava Center for Spiritual Living; Amnesty International, UK Chapter; Bahá'ís of Lexington; Berea Friends Meeting; Bluegrass Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO; Bluegrass Domestic Violence Program; Bluegrass United Church of Christ; Catholic Action Center; Central Christian Church; Commission for Peace and Justice, Catholic Diocese of Lexington; Gay and Lesbian Services Organization; Humanist Forum of Central Kentucky; Hunter Presbyterian Church; Islamic Society of Central Kentucky; Jewish Federation of the Bluegrass; Kentuckians for the Commonwealth; Kentucky Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, Central Kentucky Chapter; Kentucky Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights; Kentucky Resources Council; Lexington Fair Housing Council; Lexington Fairness; Lexington Friends Meeting; Lexington Hispanic Association (Asociación de Hispanos Unidos); Lexington Labor Council, Jobs with Justice Committee; Lexington Living Wage Campaign; Lexington Socialist Student Union; Maxwell Street Presbyterian Church; Newman Center at UK; North East Lexington Initiative; One World Film Festival; Students for Peace and Earth Justice (Bluegrass Community and Technical College); Peacecraft; The Plantory; Progress (student group at Transylvania University); Second Presbyterian Church; Shambhala Center; Sustainable Communities Network; Union Church at Berea; Unitarian Universalist Church of Lexington; United Nations Association, Bluegrass Chapter.



Peaceways is published ten times a year by the Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice, 501 West Sixth St., Lexington KY 40508. Deadline for calendar items for the June issue is May 10. Contact 859-488-1448 or email peacewayseditor@gmail.com.

Calendar for Peace & Justice

The council seeks to promote dialogue as a path to peace and justice. Consequently, we announce events that we do not necessarily endorse.

Sat., May 2

First Annual Peace Heroes Walk, RiverScape Metro Park, Dayton, Ohio, 9 am - noon. Participants from throughout the greater Miami Valley will honor peacemakers whose lives have inspired others to "be the change you wish to see in the world." You can get started today by choosing your Peace Hero, signing up to be a team captain and asking your family and friends to join up with you. HONORARY WALK CHAIRS: Neal Gittleman, Conductor, Dayton Philharmonic, and Robert Walker, President, Board of Education, Dayton Public Schools. For more information see daytonpeacemuseum.org.

Thurs., May 7

Humanist Forum, 7-8:30 pm, the Great Hall of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Lexington, 3564 Clay's Mill Road. Jane Calvert, professor of History at the University of Kentucky. Her subject, "Religious Views of the Founding Fathers."

At the same time, there will be Humanist Education for children aged 5-12 in the Green Classroom of the RE wing. Child-care provided for children four years old and younger.

Tues., May 12

Planned Giving with a Shoe-String Staff and a Shoe-String Budget, 2:30 pm - 4:30 pm, Hilary J. Boone Center, 500 Rose Street, Lexington. Presentation will be given by nationally-known planned giving officer Bryan Clontz. Exclusively for non-profits will present GoodGiving.net portraits. Seats are limited, so register now at www.bgcg.org/events.

Wed., May 13

CKCPJ Social Action Committee 7-8:30 pm, Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Discussion topics will include issues regarding immigration, racism and mass incarceration. For more information, contact Janet Tucker, jlynjenks@gmail.com

Fri., May 15

Raise the Wage Lexington, Lexington Working Families Campaign rally, 4 pm - 6 pm. Triangle Park, 400 W. Main St. Join the campaign to raise the wage in Lexington and learn what an increase will do for the community. The rally will include food, music and speakers.

Fri.-Sun., May 15-17

Moonshiners Ball, 1 pm Fri. - 3 pm Sun., HomeGrown Hideaways, 500 Floyd Branch Road, Berea. The three-day festival celebrates the art, music and poetry of the area, dancing, singing and drinking under clear, starry skies. Purchase tickets at themoonshinersball.com, where you can also choose to donate \$5 to Kentuckians for the Commonwealth.

Wed., May 20

CKCPJ Peace Action Committee, 7-8:30 pm, Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Discussion topics will include health care reform and climate change. For more information, contact Richard Mitchell, rjmq47@twc.com.

Sat., May 30

Training Workshop, Topos, an organization that works to transform the landscape of public understanding. Noon to ?? The Plantory, 501 W. Sixth Street, Lexington. Facilitator for the workshop is Margy Waller who has served as director of public policy at United Way of America. Sponsored by CKCPJ.

Your Event Here

Do you have an event that you would like to promote in Peaceways? Send information to peacewayseditor@gmail.com. Please send notification by the 10th of the previous month.

**Comfort the afflicted;
afflict the comfortable**

Sat-Sun., May 30-June 7

Mountain Justice Summer Convergence 2015 Kanawha State Forest just south of Charleston, West Virginia (about three hours from Lexington). Join over 100 environmental and community activists in a week-long event focused on mountaintop removal and stopping a proposed surface mine next to the beautiful Kanawha State Forest. This forest is a popular hiking and mountain biking spot for Charleston residents, yet mining companies propose to blow up a mountain directly adjacent to the forest. Low cost tent camping, all meals cooked on site. Workshop proposals are welcome and invited. For more information contact Dave Cooper, davecooper928@yahoo.com

Tues., June 23

Raise the Wage Lexington, Lexington Working Families Campaign rally. 11 am - 1 pm. Phoenix Park, 100 E. Main St. Join the campaign to raise the wage in Lexington and learn what an increase will do for the community. The rally will include food, music and speakers. Organizers hope to build on the progress that follows the May 15 rally.

Thurs.-Sun., Jul. 9-12

The Whippoorwill Festival, Skills for Earth-Friendly Living, HomeGrown HideAways near Berea, Ky. The fifth annual four-day outdoor festival includes workshops on primitive and old-time Appalachian living skills, backyard gardening, yoga, herbal remedies, fermentation, dutch oven cooking over the fire, making cheese, raising backyard chickens. Kids attend free and events are family friendly. There will be speakers, live music and dancing every night. The cost is low, tent camping, dinner and breakfast provided. For more information contact Dave Cooper, davecooper928@yahoo.com or see www.whippoorwillfest.com.

Thurs. Nov. 12

ACLU of Kentucky 60th Anniversary Bill of Rights Celebration Dinner, The Olmsted, 3701 Frankfort Ave., Louisville.

New Editors needed for H-Peace

H-Net is looking for some new editors to run H-Peace, preferably a team of people who know the field

H-Peace was recently overhauled, making it better organized, better looking, and easier to use. All are encouraged to poke around the site, and to check out H-Net's main page. The top half of that page contains news from H-Net, and the bottom half collects teaching and research resources, CFPs, and book reviews as they are posted across all H-Net networks.

With the update, H-Peace is poised to do what its move from list-serve to the current format was meant to do: develop and store meaningful content for scholars and others working in the field. Like other networks on H-Net, H-Peace is equipped to host blogs and forums, maintain databases of teaching resources, collaborate with other H-Net Networks, publish book reviews, build archives of resources, participate in discussions across multiple networks, all with uploaded and stored video, image, text, and audio content.

People interested in using the range of tools available to help build this valuable resource for the field are encouraged to apply. Applicants need not be tech-savvy — if you have an interest, H-Net will provide the training and support — but a person who is tech-comfortable would be ideal.

Ideally, multiple people will apply to form a team of editors: no one is expected to do everything. Editing H-Net networks provides invaluable service to the field and a unique line to your CV. Those who apply will find a blank slate to work with and a ready-made audience already in place.

If you are interested or have questions, contact Patrick Cox at vp-net@mail.h-net.msu.edu and we can talk about the position.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

CKCPJ Board Meetings 3rd Monday, 7 pm. More info: 859-488-1448 or peaceandjusticeky@gmail.com. All are welcome!

Interfaith Prayer Vigil for Peace Every Thursday 5:30-6 pm at Triangle Park (corner of Broadway and Main St) in downtown Lexington. Contact Richard Mitchell 859-327-6277.

Kentucky Migrant Network 1st Monday Noon-1:30 pm, Cardinal Valley Center, 1306 Versailles Road, Lexington. Contact Isabel Gereda Taylor, itaylor@lexingtonky.gov, 859-258-3824.

PFLAG Central Kentucky 2nd Tuesday 6:30-8:30 pm. LGBTQ individuals of all ages, family member, friends and allies are welcome. St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 2025 Bellefonte Dr., Lexington. info@pflagcentralky.org or 859-338-4393. Speakers followed by confidential support group meeting.

Bluegrass Fairness of Central Kentucky 2nd Tuesday 7:30 pm, Lexington Public Central Library, 140 E. Main St., Lexington. Contact Craig Cammack, Chair, 859-951-8565 or info@lexfair.org.

Wed Night GLSO discussion group 7 pm at the Pride Center, 389 Waller Ave, Lexington. GLSO operates Kentucky's only Pride Center, where they've been quietly providing services to the GLBTQQA community for decades. More info, hours Pride Center is open and other links at: <http://www.glsso.org>.

Humanist Forum of Central Kentucky First Thursday, 7 pm, Great Hall of the Unitarian Universalist Church, 3564 Clays Mill Rd, Lexington. The Forum is a Chapter of the American Humanist Association. Meetings are open to people of all beliefs willing to express their opinions in a civil manner. Childcare is provided. Contact President Staci Maney, staci@olliegee.com or 859-797-2662.

Kentuckians for the Commonwealth 3rd Thursday, 7 pm Episcopal Diocese Mission House at 4th St. and MLK Blvd, Lexington. Contact Ondine Quinn, 859-276-0563.

NAMI Lexington Support Groups Every Sunday 2:30-4 pm. Participation Station, 869 Sparta Court, Lexington. Call 859-272-7891 or go to www.namilex.org.

Christian-Muslim Dialogue Program 4th Saturday 10 am-noon. All are welcome. Locations vary, call 859-277-5126. The Christian-Muslim dialogue promotes understanding and mutual respect between Christians and Muslims. By exploring moral, cultural and political factors shaping the current context, it promotes personal and collective responsibility to build a more just and peaceful world.

Movies with Spirit 2nd Friday of every month. Unitarian Universalist Church, 3564 Clay's Mill Road, Lexington. Potluck at 6 pm, film at 7.

National Action Network 3rd Thursday of each month, 7 pm to 8:30 pm at the Central Library, Lexington.

Want your group's meeting listed here?

Contact peacewayseditor@gmail.com or call 859-488-1448.

Just who did we elect here, anyway?

by Jim Trammel

THE CYNIC: The Political Education of Mitch McConnell. By Alec MacGillis. 2014. Simon & Schuster Paperbacks. 137 Pages.

Kentucky's senior senator started out his political career a disciple of Sen. John Sherman Cooper. McConnell was moderate in his Republican philosophy, endeared to liberals, held endorsements from labor unions and *The Courier-Journal* (gasp!), supported Dr. King and reproductive choice, and didn't always first consider the next election before taking stands.

MacGillis interviewed 75 McConnell contemporaries and visited Kentucky twice (Fancy Farm and the Inez coal slurry spill) and consulted the work of official biographer John David Dyche to compile this profile over time. (Subject and wife didn't contribute.)

That McConnell shifted positions over his political lifetime is not surprising. We all change, who have lived so long. But MacGillis notes a somber theme to McConnell's changes: Every move he makes seems to be a move of strategy rather than principle.

MacGillis finds a clue in the Senator's archives in the University of Louisville library basement. "The overriding focus of the gallery is not on McConnell's achievements....but on the elections that got him into those positions." The author concludes, "What has motivated McConnell has not been a particular vision for the government or the country, but the game of politics and career advancement in its own right."

As a young candidate he was gawky and wonky, carrying his briefcase everywhere. He had none of the jocular Southern politician charisma. He wasn't even a native – he was born in Alabama, grew up in Georgia, and came to Louisville in high school. But he did have the earnest desire to win, win, win.

It's a chicken-and-egg situation whether the Senator's career-long cynicism has helped spawn the hardening of the Senate into uncommunicative ideological camps, or whether that national move has naturally selected him as its opportunistic leader.

The book establishes a pattern: McConnell adopts positions that will help him in the next election.

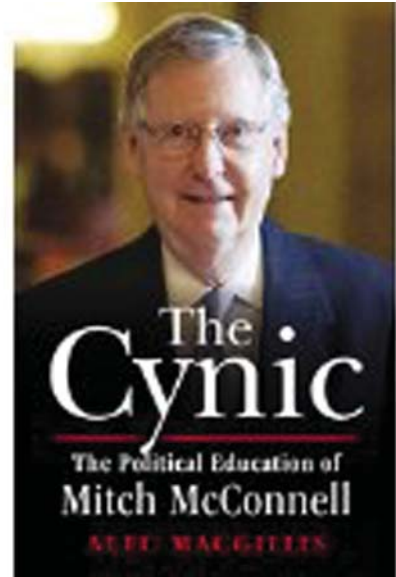
To defeat Walter "Dee" Huddleston (successor to Cooper) in his first statewide race in 1984, McConnell reached out to none other than Roger Ailes. Ailes, 12 years away from founding Fox News, was an image-maker for Republicans. Ailes created the famous "hound dog" TV ad that lifted McConnell from trailing status to a one-vote-per-precinct razor-thin win (in Ronald Reagan's second-term landslide year of 1984). The ad remains a classic of negative political advertising.

McConnell beat Harvey Sloane in 1990, Steve Beshear in 1996, Lois Combs Weinberg in 2002, and Bruce Lunsford in 2008 largely by exploiting negatives of the other candidate to render him or her unacceptable. Alison Lundergan Grimes certainly knew there was precedent for the level of attacks she had to endure.

Author MacGillis also wants to implicate McConnell in the early end of the investigation of the 2000 Martin County coal slurry spill, an environmental disaster bigger than the Exxon Valdez oil spill. The investigation was shut down early when George W. Bush was awarded the presidency by the Supreme Court and Elaine Chao (Mrs. McConnell) became head of the Labor Department and its mine safety apparatus.

Likewise oozing into different positions over the years were McConnell's opinions on campaign finance reform, "soft money" political financing, most-favored-nation trade status for China, increasing foreign aid to McConnell-favored nations such as Armenia, and even the symbolic issue of flag-burning. MacGillis sees the changes in all cases as reflections of either (1) where the contribution money is, or (2) whether the changes will help his party or hurt the other.

McConnell's change of heart from the usual Republican position against flag-burning makes more sense if you consider he had come to oppose limits on campaign financing. He argued that free speech includes money. Finance limits



could be more comfortably opposed on First Amendment grounds than naked greed.

The rest of the book follows McConnell's increasingly complex (and harder to comprehend and explain) rise through the power factions and electoral interplay of the Senate. Key to this rise is that he became a master of the rules, learning how to gum up the works for his ends.

Though he failed in his stated number-one priority of making Barack Obama a one-term President, he has done much to stymie Democratic initiatives, legislation, and even routine appointments of non-controversial nominees. The reasoning presented by MacGillis: Voters don't like partisan strife. It turns them off to government in general, which hurts the party in power, especially if that party is also in favor of more government.

McConnell's mentor, John Sherman Cooper, who quit after two terms because he said that was enough, impressed on his protégé that a good leader reads the polls but sometimes instead acts on principles: "There is a time to follow and a time to lead." More than either, says MacGillis, McConnell has made decisions through his six terms based on no principle more noble than survival – a strategy not likely to earn him a Cooper-like mantle of honor.

Reviewer Jim Trammel has often been compared to young Mitch, as described in paragraph 5.

NAACP speaks out to FCPS Board

by Janet Tucker

The Lexington NAACP has brought the voices of marginalized parents and students within the Fayette County Public Schools (FCPS) to the last couple Fayette County School Board meetings. It has focused on the inequities in diversity of personnel within FCPS and finances. In terms of personnel fewer Central Office positions (*i.e.*, human resources and finance) and teacher positions are held by racial minorities compared to the diversity of the students in the FCPS system. African Americans working within the public school system continue to be “pink slipped” or have their contracts terminated at an alarming rate.

The Lexington NAACP also argues that there is a maldistribution in the financing of FCPS. 702 KAR 3:246 declares that Section 7 funds should be disseminated based on student needs, for instructional purposes, and based on the achievement data that outlines the gaps for certain groups of students (*i.e.*, free and reduced lunch students, students with disabilities, African American and Hispanic students). If that money was disseminated as required, the Lexington NAACP believes that most of it should have been given to the lowest performance schools in the district. However, it appears that the funds designed to support low-performing schools are disseminated improperly and against the intention of the legislation.

For example, Veterans Park Elementary School receives more of these funds than William Wells Brown, the lowest performing school in the state. In addition, Paul Laurence Dunbar High School

receives more funds than Bryan Station High School (a persistently low performing school in the state). “The point is that all schools should be given the funds and resources to become high performing schools,” said Shambra Mulder, Kentucky chair of education for the NAACP. She believes Section 7 funds have been put in place for just that purpose. The NAACP has repeatedly and without success requested information on the policies and procedures for the use of these funds. The NAACP believes it is important to hold

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April Taylor, CKCPJ 2015 Peacemaker of the Year, addresses the school board.



William Saunders, president of the NAACP Lexington Chapter, addresses the rally held on Feb. 23 to address equity inequities in the Fayette County Public Schools.

Submissions to Peaceways

Articles submitted for publication in *Peaceways* should show an awareness of and sensitivity to the CKCPJ’s mission and concerns. Articles submitted by non-Council members are encouraged.

Articles of varying lengths are encouraged. News items (50-250 words) are welcome; announcements or reports of council-sponsored events (or events of council member groups) are likely to receive priority. Short personal essays reflecting an individual’s experience of peace and justice-related events and community action or activism are encouraged, as well.

Feature articles should be no longer than 500 words, unless you are willing to have the piece cut to fit one page of *Peaceways* text. Pieces will be edited for clarity.

Please include references in the text for all quotations, statistics, and unusual facts. End- or footnotes are not used. We

encourage submissions to be queried to the editor at peacewayseditor@gmail.com before writing a unique feature article intended solely for *Peaceways*.

For all submissions, the author’s name, address, and phone number should appear on the body of the submitted text. If you submit material that has been published or which you are also submitting to other publishers, be sure to indicate this. Also include information about your relationship to any organization or issue mentioned in the article for inclusion in a biographical reference at the end of the story. Submissions should be made in Word format via email. Book reviews are usually solicited by the editor; we welcome inquiries from potential reviewers.

Submission deadline is the 10th of each month. *Peaceways* is published 10 times a year.



School board member John D. Price and interim superintendent Marlene Helm.



The Central Kentucky Council
for Peace and Justice
501 West Sixth Street
Lexington, KY 40508

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FCPS equity

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the school board accountable for these issues.

The failure to hire and retain teachers of color and to successfully address the needs of schools that serve low income families are very much linked. This equity gap is not new but has persisted for too many years. Again we are seeing these communities delegated to the “back of the bus.” In the current “rezoning” process it appears that spreading the school assignment of low-income students will not be accomplished in the district. The education

“An activist is someone who cannot help but fight for something. That person is not usually motivated by a need for power or money or fame, but in fact is driven slightly mad by some injustice, some cruelty, some unfairness, so much so that he or she is compelled by some internal moral engine to act to make it better.”

Jody Williams

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of our children is a vital issue to the entire Fayette County community. It is important for students of color to have teachers that look like them and can relate to many of the problems that they and their families face. I had a friend who was a Latina and a fine teacher in another state. She passed a few years ago but at her memorial service, I was moved when several young adults of color came forward and said that because of her they stayed in school and were inspired to excel.

Again, these issues of inequity in the schools are important to all communities

in Lexington. They speak to the type of city in which we wish to live and raise our children. They directly impact Lexington’s economic viability and the ability of our schools to produce citizens who contribute to the workforce. A city that practices equity in all aspects of city life is one that represents diversity of all groups from the youngest to the oldest. It is a city where all can contribute and live their best life. This kind of city starts with how it educates its children.

Janet is CKCPI's co-chairperson.

Ensuring equity to Lexington schools

by Gail M. Koehler

I am profoundly unsettled by the fact that Lexington schools do not provide equal education to the youth of our city. On February 23 the NAACP of Lexington coordinated an action at the Fayette County Public School (FCPS) board meeting and held a press conference. Because of my concerns, I attended and made a public comment. Those who participated ranged from young activists to much older folks, some of whom remember the civil rights struggles of more than 50 years ago. I was impressed at the coordination of this direct action event, which demonstrated that Lexington’s NAACP chapter has a tremendous ability to bring together a coalition of folks desperate to see a change in our schools. Particularly powerful was the amount of information that was shared with those of us who wanted to speak at the board meeting. We were able to choose from an embarrassingly long list of areas that need improvement at FCPS. Everyone who wanted to speak to the board in solidarity with the NAACP’s demand for changes in these areas was welcomed and supported by the NAACP leadership; this group is doing

important coalition-building work.

The *Herald-Leader* is doing a good job of reporting on these actions and the long history of foot-dragging by the FCPS administration, even when faced with documented problems by their own Equity Council.

Interested in reading more about these issues? Here are some sources:

- CKCPI has a summary from the Feb. 23 press conference on the PEACE Leaders blog: http://bit.ly/CKCPI_NAACP
- See reporter Karla Ward’s piece on the Feb. 23 action here: <http://bit.ly/FebKWard>
- A follow-up piece on the NAACP’s focus on funding allocation can be found here: http://bit.ly/NAACP_Spears. Reporter Valarie Honeycutt Spears covers the NAACP discovery that Title 7 funds, meant to assist low-performing schools, have instead been used at high-performing schools in Lexington.
- Two important decisions face the board in the near future: redistricting and the hiring of a new superintendent. An excellent April 19 *Herald-Leader* editorial (available at <http://bit.ly/EconomicBalance>) said: “It’s in Lexington’s

best interest to have more schools that are regarded as high-performing. Plenty of data, along with testimony from Fayette County teachers, confirms that greater economic balance improves learning and achievement.

“But, as the committee recognized, lines on a map fall far short of what’s needed to educate Lexington’s future workforce. The committee made some good recommendations — including expanded pre-school and differentiated instruction for children performing below grade level — that would amount to resources well spent.”

- *The Key News Journal* is also following these matters: I want to draw your attention to an op-ed written by Astarre’ Gudino, of the Lexington-Fayette Human Rights Commission, on the redistricting matter (available at: <http://bit.ly/AGudino>), where she raises important questions.

NAACP meetings are open, and they’ll be planning more actions on these essential matters. You can find them on Facebook under the name of NAACP of Lexington Chapter- 3097.

Gail is a trainer with Lexington United: Building Community Cooperatively (www.lexingtoncommunitybuilding.org)