

# Peaceways

CENTRAL KENTUCKY COUNCIL FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

August 2018

## Kentuckians join march on Washington

by Margaret Gabriel

Tayna Fogle estimates that more than 50 people from Kentucky participated in the Washington, D.C., rally of the Poor People's Campaign on June 23. The rally was the culmination of 40 days of protest and civil disobedience that took place in more than 35 states.

Tayna, an organizer for Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, was one of three Kentucky ambassadors, and was selected to address the huge crowd gathered at the Mall, the same place where Rev. Martin Luther King led a rally of the Poor People's Campaign in 1968. Tayna said she was inspired by the remarks of Rev. William Barber, co-chair of the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival.

"He said that the rally wasn't a commemoration of Dr. King's work 50 years ago, but a reenactment and reinauguration," Tayna said.

The week in Washington began on June 18 and included workshops on topics addressed by the campaign: arts and culture, systemic racism, poverty, ecological devastation, and the war economy.

Each state ambassador was given three minutes to address the crowd and Tayna was originally asked to address the topic of ecological devastation

because of the effects of coal mining in Eastern Kentucky. "About 12:30 the night before I was supposed to speak, I got a call and was asked to talk about poverty in Kentucky instead of ecological devastation. I started by telling people I was from the land of the Kentucky Derby, the Wildcats and bourbon, and got a lot of cheers. Then I gave a disclaimer about Mitch McConnell, Rand Paul, Hal Rogers, and Matt Bevin."

Because she was asked to change her topic, Tayna was given additional time and used some of it to address the difficulty of restoring voting rights to ex-felons in Kentucky and how the issue affects poor people and people of color in Kentucky. "One out of five African-Americans in Kentucky doesn't have the right to vote," Tayna said.

As her allotted time was coming to a close, Tayna asked "Did you come all this way to watch?" and led the crowd of thousands in a cheer: "Forward together, not one step back!" and then "Whose

house? Our house," the chant that the Kentucky delegation used when they were denied access to the Capitol in Frankfort.

Tayna took her 16- and 10-year-old sons with her so they could "see what history looks like" and called the week phenomenal. "We met people from other states and saw that they're just like us," Tayna said. "The boys saw that nothing has changed since the campaign in 1968, and now we have a governor who took vision and dental benefits away from poor people because he didn't get his way about the pension."

After the speakers, the delegates marched to the Capitol and Tayna took the opportunity to speak to and hug all of the Kentuckians.

Ninety-eight delegates, including Kentucky co-chair Rev. Megan Houston from Bowling Green, were arrested for trying to get access to the Capitol. "It rained and it was hot, but it was all worth it," Tayna said.



KFTC organizer and Poor People's Campaign – Kentucky co-chair Tayna Fogle (right) and Rev. William J. Barber (center), co-organizer of the "2018 Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival," at a Frankfort protest following the group's denial of access to the state Capitol.

### Gun Violence In America as of 7-29-18

(excluding suicide)

**2018** (year to date)

Killed	8,354
Wounded	16,144

**2017** (annual)

Killed	15,612
Wounded	31,217

Source: [www.gunviolencearchive.org](http://www.gunviolencearchive.org)

# School safety, gun presence, suicide

by Penny Christian

In the July issue of *Peaceways*, Steve Olschewsky addressed some concerns regarding my statements in the June issue on gun violence in schools. Specifically, he wanted to discuss the unfortunate statistics on suicides carried out by guns. While we all realize the importance of this issue, the incidence of suicide was not the charge nor focus of the Fayette County Public Schools Safety Advisory Council.

However, many of the problems and potential solutions identified could indirectly affect those suicide trends. That said, I absolutely stand by my contention that school violence is a symptom of greater issues that occur OUTSIDE of the school building; this does not diminish, however, in any way, the problems that arise due to the easy availability of guns.

As a member of the FCPS Safety Advisory Council, it became obvious relatively early in our discussions that we all understood that, on the level of the council, we would not be directly responsible for changing gun laws. To be sure, our directive was to identify other factors besides just guns that contribute to violence in our schools. It was a given that we would request changes to gun laws (availability, age limits, etc.), but that would not be enough. Hence, our strategy recommends increased mental health screening, counseling, treatment and community safety. Based on the suicide

statistics mentioned in Steve's article, I believe addressing these issues could and would, on some level, reach kids who feel suicide is the answer.

The White Paper, our culminating document, was directed at our lawmakers. This is because they will have responsibility for enacting any legislative changes in regards to gun laws. In the document we stressed the importance of addressing such changes, with the warning that episodes of gun violence will only increase.

Following the decision of the FCPS board to recommend an increased property tax to raise the needed money for the proposal, I would like to thank Fayette County for its support. We fully expected the petition that is being circulated to place the tax increase on the ballot. We do not believe that the petition will gain the needed number of signatures, and also believe that public support for the tax increase to increase safety in our schools will continue.

My hope, and that of the Safety Advisory Council, is that we will not cherry-pick potential solutions, but embrace a more comprehensive mindset to protect our kids.

*Penny is a member of the Fayette County Public Schools Safety Advisory Council. She is a long-time member of the state PTA and a member of CKCPJ's Peaceways committee. She and her husband, Claude, are the parents of four daughters.*

## Gentrification Task Force Established in Lexington

A task force made up of LFUCG council members, city developers, planners, historians, and residents of Lexington is identifying ways to protect vulnerable residents from the impact of neighborhood transformation. Its goal is to lessen the impact of gentrification on current residents and to preserve the culture of older, diverse neighborhoods. Meetings began in July and are open to the public; for more information, contact James Brown, 859-258-3216.

## The Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice

*Board of Directors:* Rebecca Ballard DiLoreto, Rick Clewett, Bilal El-Amin, Mary Ann Ghosal (secretary), Heather Hadi, Randolph Hollingsworth, Rahul Karanth, Steven Lee Katz (treasurer), Richard Mitchell, Bruce Mundy, Steve Pavey, Nadia Rasheed, Rabbi Uri Smith, Teddi Smith-Robillard, Craig Wilkie.  
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*Peaceways* is published 10 times a year by the Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice, 1588 Leestown Rd., Ste. 130-138, Lexington KY 40511. The next issue of *Peaceways* will appear in September. Deadline for calendar items is August 15. Contact (859) 488-1448 or email [peacewayseditor@gmail.com](mailto:peacewayseditor@gmail.com).

ACCESS TO GUNS RAISES THE RISK OF SUICIDE		
VARIABLE	States with the Highest Rates of Gun Ownership	States with the Lowest Rates of Gun Ownership
Average population 2001-2005	49 million	50 million
Percent of households with guns	47	15
Total firearm suicides	16,577	4,257
Total nonfirearm suicides	9,172	9,259

*This chart illustrated Steve's comments in the July issue.*

# 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., Aug. 4**

**Back To School Rally** 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Various locations, Lexington. Sponsored by the YMCA, the rally at Shiloh Baptist, 237 E. Fifth St., is one of 16 rallies that will be held throughout Lexington that day. They will include such activities as bingo, inflatables, guest speakers, crafts and games. Distribution of backpacks and school supplies will take place from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. For the location of a rally near you see ymcaky.org.

**Mon., Aug. 6**

**Lexington Advocacy Team** 6 p.m. Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Discussion of the lobbying efforts needed for the end of 2018 and the beginning of 2019.

**Tues., Aug. 7**

**CKCPJ Peace Action committee**, 5:30 p.m. Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Ongoing discussion of schools, non-violence training, the summer youth jobs program planned for 2019 and its effectiveness in past years, and other peace-related activity.

**Tues., Aug. 14**

**PFLAG Central Kentucky**, 6:30-8:30 p.m., St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 2025 Bellefonte Dr., Lexington. Psychologist David Pascale Hague will lead a discussion about family communication and how to address difficult topics. The discussion will be followed by a confidential support group meeting.

**Tues., Aug. 14**

**ML King Neighborhood Association meeting**, 7 p.m. Living Arts and Science Center, 362 N. Martin Luther King Blvd, Lexington.

Support CKCPJ by linking your Kroger Plus card to #16439 at [krogercommunityrewards.com](http://krogercommunityrewards.com)

**Tues., Aug. 14**

**CKCPJ single-payer health care committee**, 5:30 p.m. Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Discussion will include promotion of the single-payer health care concept, how it will benefit citizens, and how it can be promoted to lawmakers.

**Wed., Aug. 15**

**Back to School, Fayette County.** Varied times, by school. Here's one more reminder that it's time to set the clocks and get the kids up for the school bus.

**Thurs., Aug. 16**

**William Wells Brown Neighborhood Association meeting**, 6 p.m. William Wells Brown Community Center.

**Fri.-Sun., Aug. 17-19**

**East End Family Reunion.** The 15th annual event includes games for children, food, vendors, live entertainment and the opportunity to connect or re-connect with family and friends. For details, see [eastendfrc.com](http://eastendfrc.com).

**Mon., Aug. 20**

**CKCPJ steering committee meeting**, 5:30 p.m. Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Discussion will include planning for the upcoming committee meetings, proposals for new initiatives, and continuing action.

**Tues., Sept. 4**

**CKCPJ Peace Action committee**, 5:30 p.m. Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Ongoing discussion of schools, non-violence training, discussion of the summer youth jobs program and its effectiveness, and other peace-related activity.

**Fri.-Sun., Sept. 7-9**

**Roots and Heritage Festival.** The festival will be celebrating its 30th anniversary with weekend events and activities at the Lyric Theatre and along Elm Tree Lane.

**Tues., Sept. 11**

**PFLAG Central Kentucky**, 6:30-8:30 p.m., St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 2025 Bellefonte Dr., Lexington. Meghan Buell will address the group concerning her experiences traveling the country educating rural communities about transgender issues. The presentation will be followed by a confidential support group meeting.

**Tues., Sept. 11**

**CKCPJ single-payer health care committee**, 5:30 p.m. Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Discussion will include promotion of the single-payer health care concept, how it will benefit citizens, and how it can be promoted to lawmakers.

**Mon., Sept. 17**

**CKCPJ steering committee meeting**, 5:30 p.m. Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Discussion will include planning for the upcoming committee meetings, proposals for new initiatives and continuing action.

**Tues., Oct. 9**

**Voter Registration Deadline** for the November 6 election. In order to vote in the upcoming elections, registration must be filed by this date. If you know someone who is not registered, or has recently moved (and young people move all the time!) encourage updating registration. Tell him or her that every vote counts! Also, if you know someone formerly registered who intends to vote for the first time in a while, have them call the Fayette County Clerk at (859) 255-8683 to make sure they haven't been purged from the voter rolls.

*Afflict the comfortable; give comfort to the afflicted.*

# Everything Bad Is Good For You:

*How Today's Popular Culture is Actually Making Us Smarter.*

By Steven Johnson. Penguin Books, 2005. 238 pages.

*Reviewed by Jim Trammel*

On the heels of "Factfulness," in which we found that the world is better than we thought and improving in many areas, I discovered this work, that insists our electronic habits and our TV and movie popular culture is actually making us smarter. I guess by next month I'll be watching Fox News, stroking my chin and going "True, how true."

No, that's not fair. Johnson makes a good case documenting the gradual improvement in the thought processes behind our entertainment and how the best of it, at least, is making us lean forward and engage, rather than lean backward and passively consume.

Johnson notes, for example, how the structure of the most popular sitcoms have evolved from the "I Love Lucy" days. Back then, a sitcom episode was typically one main plot, easy to follow, undemanding of unraveling. These days, there are often three plots going along in the same episode; viewers follow as the narrative cuts back and forth, having to track a lot more mentally than before.

Johnson often cites "Seinfeld" as a new-and-improved sitcom. It rewards its faithful viewers with references to inside jokes from previous episodes, so that a seasoned listener chuckles every time "Art Vandelay" is mentioned. They know from past experience that the character of George citing Vandelay means that George is up to another of his deceptive tricks. You would never have gotten that with

earlier, self-contained sitcoms of, say, the 1950s or 1960s.

With a dramatic series, we see an even more pronounced shift: Plots string on for several episodes, and you really have to bring some thought to it. Remember "The West Wing," and how you had to track what was happening through several episodes, interpreting the present through the past. "Breaking Bad" or "Mad Men" is almost impossible to fully comprehend if you start in the middle.

Reality-TV games such as "Survivor" also develop the social intelligence of the viewer, who tries to out-think the players and predict which social gambits will be successful. When it was new, I noted with some alarm the game show "Weakest Link," in which the object, for the first time, was not to win the game by earning points, but by surviving six rounds of vote-offs by the other players. Indeed, game excellence meant that somewhere about the middle of the game, the other players would realize that you had to go, or else you would win the final showdown.

And movies have pretty much long since abandoned the concept of the "flashing arrow," the visual or auditory tip-off that something should be remembered for later (a zoom-in on an unlocked doorknob left by a soon-to-be-imperiled actress, for example). Many movies now withhold plot information altogether and let you discover it along with the characters, or even give you incomplete

or misleading plotting details and dare you to figure it out. Just goes to show that entertainment is informative, boosting our brain power without our even realizing it.

Likewise, computer games assist in brain development; the games now often exist in a created world without a clear path through them, and it's up to the player to determine a strategy, tactics, and methods. One must direct oneself, probing, hypothesizing, trying out solutions, and re-thinking what doesn't work, in order to progress in the most challenging games now.

Computer use outside gaming has given rise to social networking, which is definitely lean-forward in aspect. Users generate their own content, and interpret the contributions of others, to keep up. More participation is demanded and less is left to passive consumption.

And lest you protest that this is all a massive rationalization, Johnson cites studies that show that the average intelligence of the population has risen over the past decades. (You probably know this from personal home experience: Which member of your family can best program home electronics? Probably the ten-year-old.)

Specifically, the study by psychologist James Flynn showed that from the 1930s to the late 1970s, the American population gained almost 14 points of average IQ. Absent any other change in stimulation, Johnson's hypothesis is that the improving pop culture played the primary role in this improvement.

Johnson has written other examinations of our brains and how they react to emerging technology, and is coming out this year with "Farsightedness," an exploration of how we input information and come up with long-term decisions.

*Reviewer Jim Trammel will return now to playing "Zuma," his favorite computer game, which he now sees teaches time management skills.*

I have two photos of my then-toddler daughter that I failed to locate to illustrate the lean-forward concept Johnson often cites. The two shots were taken five seconds apart. In the first, Ellen smiles, making eye contact with the camera. Then a nearby TV catches her eye, and in the second shot her expression is slack and she's looking past me to the screen. I thought, "Uh oh, she's leaning back and being passively manipulated by shallow pop culture that is filling up her brain with sludge."

Johnson has now set me straight: She was in fact leaning forward, engaging with and figuring out what she was seeing, and making brain-building connections.

Not that playing with Daddy isn't important; kids need both. But, as she is now a happy, intelligent, well-adjusted 27-year-old about to mother her own child, I see I shouldn't have worried.

# Learning about lies, 1968

by Peter Berres

We sat silently, private and colonel, staring onto the D.C. National tarmac. My mind was racing with questions. Before boarding, the seasoned soldier whispered: "Son, you're likely to face ethical dilemmas this year. ... Trust your faith and God's law over any man's immoral command."

We embraced. I boarded for Vietnam. My dad, recently returned from his own tour — his third war and third set of combat-valor medals — headed to work at the Pentagon.

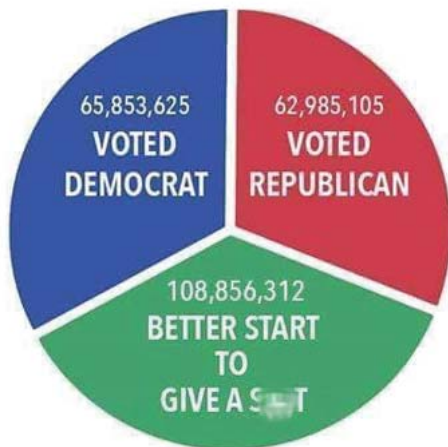
I respectfully reflected on his parting words. They bolstered my moral courage and guided my decisions and actions through the "fog of war" that was Vietnam.

This year marks a morally-infamous 50th anniversary in U.S. military history. In March 1968 at My Lai, American soldiers under the command of Lt. William Calley slaughtered over 500 civilians in an unprovoked attack. Many killings were accompanied by rape, torture and mutilation of women, children, babies, and elderly men clearly beyond combat capability.

While some reveled in the slaughter, Calley threatened and berated reluctant soldiers to join in. This failure of military, and humane, conduct implicated the system

*continued on page 6*

## Worth consideration . . .



MONTHLY MEETINGS

**CKCPJ Steering Committee Meetings**, third Monday, 5 p.m., Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave. More info: (859) 488-1448 or [peaceandjusticeky@gmail.com](mailto:peaceandjusticeky@gmail.com). All are welcome.

**Interfaith Prayer Vigil for Peace**, every Thursday, 5:30 - 6 p.m. at Triangle Park (corner of Broadway and Main Street) in downtown Lexington. Contact Richard Mitchell, (859) 327-6277.

**Migrant Network Coalition**, first Monday, noon - 1:15 p.m., GLOBAL LEX, 1306 Versailles Road, Lexington. Contact Lindsay Mattingly, [lmattingly@lexpublib.org](mailto:lmattingly@lexpublib.org), (859) 231-5514.

**PFLAG Central Kentucky**, second Tuesday, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. LGBTQ individuals of all ages, family members, friends and allies are welcome. St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 2025 Bellefonte Dr., Lexington. Visit [info@pflagcentralky.org](mailto:info@pflagcentralky.org) or (859) 338-4393. Speakers followed by confidential support group meeting.

**Bluegrass Fairness of Central Kentucky**, second Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., Lexington Public Central Library, 140 E. Main St., Lexington. Contact Craig Cammack, chair, (859) 951-8565 or [info@lexfair.org](mailto:info@lexfair.org).

**Wednesday Night GLSO "Heart to Heart" discussion group**, 7 p.m., Pride Center, 389 Waller Ave., Lexington. GLSO operates Kentucky's only Pride Center, where they have quietly provided services to the GLBTQQIA community for decades. More info, Pride Center hours. and other links at [www.glsso.org](http://www.glsso.org).

**Humanist Forum of Central Kentucky**, first Thursday, 7 p.m., 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. Child care is provided. Contact President Staci Maney, [staci@olliegee.com](mailto:staci@olliegee.com) or (859) 797-2662.

**Kentuckians for the Commonwealth**, third Thursday, 7 p.m., Episcopal Diocese Mission House at Fourth St. and MLK Blvd, Lexington. Contact Beth Howard, (859) 276-0563.

**NAMI Lexington Support Groups**, every Sunday, 2:30 - 4 p.m. Participation Station, 869 Sparta Ct., Lexington. Call (859) 272-7891 or visit [www.namilex.org](http://www.namilex.org).

**Christian-Muslim Dialogue Program**, fourth Saturday, 10 a.m. - 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, the program promotes personal and collective responsibility to build a more just and peaceful world.

**Dance Jam**, every Tuesday, 5:30 - 7 p.m., Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave. Move to the extent you are able. Sponsored by Motion Matters, \$7 per session to cover space rental. Contact Pamela, [info@motionmatters.org](mailto:info@motionmatters.org), (859) 351-3142.

**Movies with Spirit**, second Friday of every month. Unitarian Universalist Church, 3564 Clays Mill Road, Lexington. Potluck at 6 p.m., film at 7.

**National Action Network**, third Thursday each month, 7 - 8:30 p.m. at the Central Library, Lexington.

**Showing Up for Racial Justice**, second Tuesday of the month, 5:30-7:30 p.m., Wild Fig Coffee and Books, 726 N. Limestone, Lexington.

To include a regular meeting of your organization in this space, contact Margaret Gabriel, [peacewayseditor@gmail.com](mailto:peacewayseditor@gmail.com).

# PEACEWAYS



The Central Kentucky Council  
for Peace and Justice  
1588 Leestown Rd., Ste. 130-138,  
Lexington KY 40511  
Issue #314 • August 2018

*“If you want to make peace  
with your enemy, you have to  
work with your enemy. Then  
he becomes your partner.”*

*~ Nelson Mandela*

that selected then under-prepared Calley for combat leadership and the command structure that created a body-count fueled environment wherein unlawful orders flourished and battle-fatigued soldiers took out anger and frustration on civilians.

In March 1968, I was a battlefield censor. Every field-intelligence report was scrutinized for anything that might “embarrass or compromise the American war effort.” A censor-worthy report might include disproportionate numbers of Vietnamese killed and weapons captured; a negative correlation, in My Lai’s case 504 to 0, “might be interpreted” as civilian deaths. Bags of unspeakable truths were incinerated daily, without making it to the historical record or American consciousness.

I resurrect these ugly truths, 50 years later, not to assign blame, but to debunk myths of American moral superiority or even moral equivalency between us and our enemy, which is too generous. The conduct of both was, sadly, an immoral equivalency.

The Vietcong and North Vietnamese indeed committed horrific crimes: assassinations, murder, kidnapping, torture, forced conscription, rape, mutilation, endless unmentionable acts.

But, so did we — in approximate measure, enough to negate our self-serving, false good-bad dichotomy. Contrary to international and military law, Buddhist and Christian principles, both sides committed crimes against humanity.

Like the war, My Lai has been tragically simplified as an aberration, obscuring the saddest truth: American atrocities were not infrequent and

inadvertent, but commonplace and inevitable, given the worldview of American soldiers.

Culturally rooted, explicitly sharpened in basic-training, racial arrogance played the defining role in formulating soldiers’ worldview. Central to which: the linguistic degradation “gook.” This dehumanization granted license for personal misconduct and set the stage for indiscriminate, disproportionate human destruction, dishonoring our principles, undercutting our cause, and dooming the war to unwinnable.

This dehumanization was calamitous for the people we called “gooks.” Civilian casualties were several million more than combatants. It was, likewise, catastrophic for American veterans. The inevitable cost of dehumanizing an enemy is a dehumanized self, an impetus toward future atrocities and foundation for post-traumatic stress.

Unintentional atrocities happen; intentional ones are more prevalent and preventable. We can train differently by establishing clear standards for battlefield conduct, not neutralized by fear of disobeying or group pressure, and by making absolute demarcations between civilians and combatants, uncompromised by dehumanization of an entire people which severs common human ties, precipitating future atrocities.

Command protocol must ensure that unethical orders can be resisted, even reversed; reporting unlawful activities is protected; investigations are sincere; tactical language is void of euphemisms like “free-fire zone;” soldiers are properly treated after

traumatic experiences.

At war’s end, Americans, eager to move beyond its divisiveness, ignored our mistakes, depriving ourselves of valuable questions: What in the socialization by parents, society, military training and field command instructs some to commit acts devoid of humanity, while others choose not to participate and others bravely try to stop such insanity?

It’s critical to comprehend that the “natural” military impulse is defensive, initially covering up My Lai, subsequently establishing a committee to study atrocities, not to prevent them, but to figure how to protect or “manage” the revelations.

Protecting our troops — our children and grandchildren — necessitates we instill in them firm moral compasses, confident judgment of right and wrong, strength to disobey immoral orders, and even courage to intervene.

Learning from history to avoid repeating it is critical to fortify future soldiers and veterans from such behavior. Most important, defending our troops requires sending them for only legitimate reasons and just cause. Our current wars suggest we still have much to learn.

*Peter Berres of Lexington, a retired educator and Army veteran who volunteered to serve during the Vietnam War, is writing an occasional series of op-eds about 1968, a year that changed America. Peter is also a member of the CKCPI steering committee.*