

Peaceways

CENTRAL KENTUCKY COUNCIL FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

October 2018

Peace-building in New Zealand

by Randolph Hollingsworth

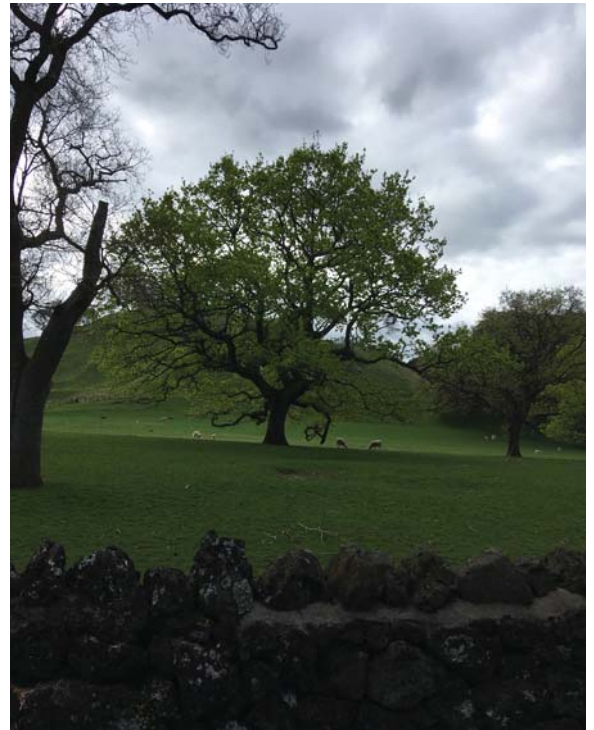
My husband and I recently emigrated to New Zealand. We had lived together in Lexington for 35 years, raising a family and building our careers in the politics of higher education in Kentucky. Since I was born in Lexington, growing up on a farm that once existed at the bottom of Beacon Hill Road, I felt a need to see it evolve. I used my New York liberal arts education for a good purpose: participating in the peacemaking and activist-scholar communities as part of a shared commitment to making the world a better place for us all.

Our elder daughter needed us, so we packed up what we could take, gave away the rest, and traveled to Auckland within just a few weeks after selling our house. Here, on the other side of the world, I have found a nation that values at every level the basic tenets of tolerance and fairness. It is an astonishing discovery. I can see these national attributes at every turn: in corporate and civic advertisements, in community conversations about political activities, in company policies about the health and well-being

of employees, in the way people react to each other during rush hour traffic.

We got here during the final days of preparation by the Ministry of Women for the celebration of the 125th anniversary of women winning the vote in New Zealand. They were the first self-governing country in the world to grant women the vote. I have been working on the centennial commemorations of the 19th Amendment and the history of Kentucky in the U.S. suffrage movement, and it was a joy to see how the whole nation here came out to celebrate their winning of universal suffrage. It makes me cringe when I describe to my Kiwi friends the U.S. history for this same victory – where American citizens chose racial and ethnic segregation rather than “liberty and justice for all.” As David Hackett Fischer wrote in his 2012 monograph ‘Fairness and Freedom: A History of Two Open Societies, New Zealand and the United States,’ the two nations share “a deep concern for human rights and the rule of law” but differ in fundamental ways in protecting and engendering fairness among its people.

I have learned that New Zealand has a long history of peacemaking and peacekeeping activities at home and abroad. Did you know that it was a founding member of the United Nations? Their biggest deployment of soldiers in this millennium has been in Afghanistan



as a UN peace-support effort which, as a government site asserts, was “an important part of restoring the bilateral security relationship with the U.S., which had been strained after New Zealand adopted nuclear-free policies in the 1980s.” They train local police forces in peace operations, rebuilding authoritarian militarism into community-based peacebuilders. The national efforts for conservation of the land, flora and fauna of Aotearoa (Māori word for this land) is as important to the people and their government as is their national fiscal stability. We share the same dream.

Randolph is a CKCPJ member whose current home makes the Council’s effort international. How cool is that!

Gun Violence In America as of 9-23-18

(excluding suicide)

2018 (year to date)

Killed	10,636
Wounded	20,821

2017 (annual)

Killed	15,612
Wounded	31,217

Source: www.gunviolencearchive.org

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.

Tues., Oct. 2

Mayoral Public Forum, 6 p.m. Farish Theater, Lexington Public Library, 140 E. Main Street. Debate by mayoral candidates Ronnie Bastin and Linda Gorton, hosted by Fayette County Farm Bureau, Fayette Alliance, Lexington Public Library, and WKYT. Moderated by Bill Bryant.

Tues., Oct. 2

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.

Thurs., Oct. 4

Kentuckians for Single-Payer Health Care, 7 p.m., Hotel Louisville, 120 W. Broadway, Louisville. Dr. Margaret Flowers, a national leader in the single payer health care movement will speak at an event that will broaden understanding of the issue and examine the type of reform needed to extend health care to everyone in the U.S. while containing the cost.

Tues., Oct. 9

PFLAG Central Kentucky, 6:30-8:30 p.m., St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 2025 Bellefonte Dr., Lexington. The meeting this month will feature a clergy panel. The panel discussion will be followed by a confidential support group meeting.

Mon., Oct. 15

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-Thurs., Oct. 16-18

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land of Appalachia, Beginning in Stanton, Ky. For more information, contact Fr. John S. Rausch, jsrausch@bellsouth.net, (606) 663-0823.

Thurs., Oct. 18

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

Sun., Oct. 28

Christian-Muslim dialog, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., Temple Adath Israel, 124 N. Ashland Ave., Lexington. Topic TBA. There will be a potluck meal following the presentation. Please bring a side dish or dessert to share. Coffee and tea will be provided.

Sat., Nov. 17

Christian-Muslim dialog, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., Masjid Bilal Ibn Rabah, 1545 Russell Cave Rd, Lexington. Topic: Hinduism. There will be a potluck meal following the presentation. Please bring a side dish or dessert to share. Coffee and tea will be provided.

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 November. Deadline for calendar items is October 15. Contact (859) 488-1448 or email peacewayseditor@gmail.com.

Tuesday, October 9

Voter Registration Deadline

Oct. 9 is the deadline to register to vote in the Nov. 6 mid-term election. You cannot vote in the upcoming elections unless your registration and correct address is filed by this date. If you know someone who is not registered, or who has recently moved (and young people move all the time!), encourage updating registration. Tell him or her 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. Don't be on the sidelines for this important election.

A progressive majority exists now. Today. We can win the elections next month. Here's how.

Brown Is the New White:

How the Demographic Revolution Has Created a New American Majority. By Steve Phillips. First edition 2016; revised and updated edition published March, 2018 by The New Press. 304 pages.

Reviewed by Jim Trammel

A progressive can sure feel alone in most of Kentucky. So it's comforting to note Steve Phillips' speculation that voters of color and progressive whites together already make a 51 percent voting majority nationally, and this group will only grow in total percentage of voters. The growth will take place almost exclusively in the non-white segments of this coalition, because for every 1,000 white voters added to the nation's population there are 7,000 incoming non-whites every year.

I interviewed Kentucky state statistician Ron Crouch in the late 20th century, and even then all the population growth in the western United States was among Latino and Latina people.

Phillips mentions that in Arizona, 600,000 Latinx (the gender-inclusive reference that is coming to be used more frequently) voters eligible to vote didn't cast ballots in 2014. Those voters were mostly still there for the wooing (probably more than 600,000, after two intervening years for population growth), but the Democrats didn't go after them with any significant effort, and Hillary Clinton lost the state by only 91,000 votes.

Phillips, an activist, civil rights attorney and national Democratic Party strategist, says elections don't swing because of any undecided white voter, though the parties spend time, money, and attention trying to persuade this illusory group. His statistical arguments are convincing: No Democratic candidate for President has captured the white male vote since 1964.

In Barack Obama's two elections, Phillips reminds us, a sleeping giant mass of voters of color rose up and put Obama over the top, inexplicably to most of the pundits. (I remember thinking upon hearing of Obama's nomination that it was

a good thing but a doomed gesture; the electorate would never put him into office, and certainly wouldn't re-elect him.)

Minority voters have not been heard from so strongly since, and Democrats are this year incredibly failing to spend campaign funds on special mid-term outreaches to minorities. Minority voters were unmotivated to return for mid-term elections in 2010 and 2014, and the Democrats lost first their House majority, then their Senate leadership.

An effort to cultivate non-white voters could have game-changing results. In both Wisconsin and Michigan in 2016, Jill Stein polled more votes than Hillary Clinton's margin of defeat. This wouldn't have happened, Phillips says, had voters of color been mobilized to anywhere near Obama-year levels. The party hasn't learned its lesson yet; culturally competent appeals for black, brown and Asian voters are going un-done and under-funded.

And this effort, even if made, cannot be led by what politician and diplomat Andrew Young once undiplomatically called "smart-ass white boys" unschooled in cultural competence. Fair enough; broad-brush television ads just don't connect and deliver the goods in this demographic.

Indeed, do you know anyone whose mind has been changed by a political television ad? (I will grant you that negative ads sometimes motivate a voter to stay home, which is still a net gain of one vote for the side placing the ad.) In our house my wife and I are muting ads from both Sixth House District parties and their PAC groups, without fear or favor – they're all equally irritating by now.

Phillips' logic isn't perfect; he glosses over some weak spots. To achieve this 51 percent majority he assumes that all members of one bloc would vote for a single candidate, an unrealistic assumption (hi there, Bernie Sanders!), or react the same way toward a single issue such as immigration reform. And in his policymaking chapter when he talks about the need for reparations, well, oops, I've gone past my stop. (Reparations would neither punish the

Composition of the New American Majority
(Percentage of All U.S. Eligible Voters)

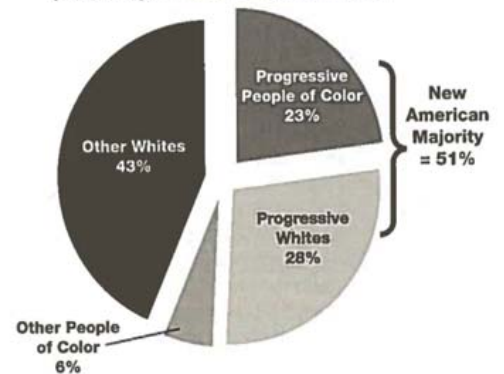


Figure 1. Source: Based on American Majority Project Research Institute (AMPRI) analyses of the Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP) Special Tabulation from the 2009–2013 5-Year American Community Survey by the U.S. Census Redistricting Data Office, and the National Election Pool Exit Poll, 2012.

appropriate wrongdoers nor reward the appropriate victims. Something has to be done to better equalize opportunities and circumstances, but a big random payday ain't it.)

He strongly argues that progressive minority voters and progressive whites will respond to bold policy initiatives put forth by candidates rather than a non-motivating middle-of-the-road approach. Indeed, here in Kentucky we have seen many times that Democrats running like Republicans-lite don't earn victory (hello, Allison Grimes! hey, Ben Chandler!).

The question in my mind, though, is whether the rush toward the candidate making such proposals would equal the rush away, by voters of any race or progressive stance. I guess the upcoming Sixth District House race will show us more about that, as incumbent Andy Barr has poured on the negative attacks on Amy McGrath being "too liberal for Kentucky."

Democrats are said to be highly motivated for the upcoming midterm elections, because of dissatisfaction with Donald Trump. But Kentucky is without parallel as Trump country, or at least it was in 2016. Which view will prevail this time? Perhaps someone ought to send this book (or at least this review) to Sixth District and state Democratic strategists and get their reactions.

Reviewer Jim Trammel, during his elementary school years in the late 1950s/early 1960s, with his horn-rim glasses and Young Sheldon attitude, was poster child for smart-ass white boys.

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

Vietnam 2018: What has been learned in 50 years?

by Peter Berres/

*"We gotta get out of this place,
/ If it's the last thing we ever do. /
We gotta get out of this place. / Girl,
there's a better life for me and you."*

Those lyrics, recorded by Eric Burdon and the Animals, were not written as anti-war. But 50 years ago, soldiers in Vietnam made the song their anthem.

The year 1968 violently exposed deep social fractures in America over race and war. Replacement troops inevitably imported those fractures to Vietnam.

Many of the draftees, the new arrivals, had been inducted and trained after the confidence-shaking TET debacle, assassinations of leading anti-war figures, violence on streets and campuses, and exponential growth of the black-consciousness and anti-war movements.

The times they were a-changing: By summer's end, many soldiers viewed the war as pointless. *The Things They Carried*, Tim O'Brien's novel, included counter-cultural questioning of authority and sharply different racial perspectives.

Also, music. This citizens' army brought folk, blues, soul, rock, country and popular songs of protest. Armed Forces Radio blasted the subversive sounds of '68 through our ubiquitous transistor radios.

In-country, a total absence of information (not spun through military news) made us value our music as more than a connection to home. Even songs that never mentioned war moved us to question beliefs that undergirded the war and to comprehend Vietnam's counter-realities.

Official "reality," particularly for black soldiers, had been profoundly debunked by the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. the year before on April 4, 1967 in his "Beyond Vietnam: Time to Break the Silence" speech. He connected racism and Vietnam and pointed out that black soldiers were disproportionately drafted, assigned combat, wounded and killed.

Three weeks later, Muhammad Ali refused to be drafted, explaining that no Vietcong had hurt him. Ali posed the quintessential question: Why would black Americans go 8,000 miles to kill brown men to protect democracy, freedom, and basic rights that black soldiers were denied at home?

Black soldiers, no matter their background or military status, could not help but wonder likewise.

When news of the assassination of Dr. King on April 4, 1968, reached us, I was sharing guard duty with several soldiers, whose elated and appalling comments unmasked the deep racial fissures that were present and accounted for in Vietnam.

I was on guard duty again when my sergeant-in-charge's gleeful reaction to Robert F. Kennedy's assassination ("elite-liberal-antiwar-chicken") on June 5 portended a deepening rift over the war amongst soldiers, particularly enlisted vs. "lifers." Both assassinations intensified racial and political tensions until the bitter end.

Throughout the deadly summer, "we-gotta-get-out-of-this-place" feelings turned defiant, initially with peace symbols and profane acronyms suggesting what the military could do with its war, and later with mounting insubordination and resistance toward incompetent authority and commands perceived as worthlessly risky or morally indefensible.

Army testimony before Congress cited "fraggings" (attempts by one soldier to kill another) incidents: 126 in 1969, 271 in 1970, and 333 in 1971.

Vietnam was a policy quagmire. For soldiers, it was a moral swamp, largely because our moral authority, our churches, were silent about the war. Many soldiers seeking moral guidance from chaplains found little support; like many others, I got a pep talk to stay the course.

Failure to speak against this moral morass made another Animals' song, "Sky Pilot," my favorite: play, rewind, play on my friend's cassette player in a tin warehouse-barracks where 50 GIs clustered their bunks by music genres.

Each listen fortified my repulsion. Military chaplains (Sky Pilots) who "bless" the war by silence, elevating national loyalty over moral tenets, "will never, never, never... reach the sky."

"You're soldiers of God, you must understand. / The fate of your country is in your young hands. / May God give you strength. Do your job real well. / If it all was worth it, only time it will tell."

Fifty years tells much; we've learned little. The war machine, however, learned well: Wage war, but manage domestic narrative by controlling information and images. Orchestrate emotional symbolism distracting from war realities. Disengage most citizens with an all-voluntary military. Create a more homogenous mindset among troops by making the Army less pluralistic.

Though not representative of America (heavily loaded with poor, rural/urban and color), "citizen soldiers" contributed profoundly to ending the war through their resistance in Vietnam and their antiwar actions at home. Politicians were unable or unwilling to act; the armed services remained committed to military solutions until Congress began cutting funding, finally ending the insanity in 1975.

Growing resistance among soldiers and veterans greatly influenced that decision. Which raises the question: With churches still silent, Americans disengaged, protest music faint, and a homogenous military culture, what is gained and lost by today's all-volunteer vs. Vietnam's drafted army?

Who acts to end our current wars' unhalting march toward record length, cost and destruction?

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This commentary originally appeared in the (Lexington) Herald-Leader. Peter, a CKCPJ member, is a retired educator and military veteran who served in Vietnam. Reach him at peterberres@gmail.com.

Submissions to Peaceways

Articles submitted to *Peaceways* should show an awareness of and sensitivity to the CKCPJ's mission and concerns.

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-notes or footnotes are not used.

Please query submissions to peacewayseditor@gmail.com before writing a 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, but we welcome inquiries from potential reviewers.

Submission deadline is the 10th of each month. *Peaceways* is published monthly except January.

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your Kroger Plus card
to #16439 at
krogercommunityrewards.com

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. 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, lmatingly@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 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.

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 GLBTQQA community for decades. More info, Pride Center hours, and other links at 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 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.

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, (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.

PEACEWAYS



The Central Kentucky Council
for Peace and Justice
1588 Leestown Rd., Ste. 130-138,
Lexington KY 40511
Issue #316 • October 2018

*“Peace cannot be kept by force;
it can only be achieved
by understanding.”*

— Albert Einstein

Group works to transition Wild Fig

By Margaret Gabriel

Wild Fig Books and Coffee is Kentucky's only black-owned bookstore, and one of fewer than 50 in the country. It has served as a safe space for many people in the Lexington community.

When owners Crystal Wilkinson and Ron Davis announced earlier this month that Wild Fig Books and Coffee would close at the end of September, the community stepped in. April Taylor helped the community launch an IndieGoGo fundraising campaign, hoping to raise the \$25,000 necessary for the community to purchase the business and restructure it as a worker cooperative. Restructuring would allow Wild Fig to remain open while also ensuring that its legacy is protected by those who see it as a safe space for the community to gather, organize and build.

In a relatively short amount of time the group raised just over \$3,000. They have also receiving an offer for financing that, if accepted by all parties, will allow them to rent-to-own the current building and borrow initial operating capital at a very low interest rate with a 5-year repayment term.

A dozen people gathered at the Plantory on September 22 to discuss the offer from Griffin VanMeter and consider the best way to proceed.

April opened the discussion, saying “Co-ops are about relationships” and asked everyone to explain his or her connection to the bookstore. As the introductions continued, it became clear the Wild Fig is more than just a bookstore. The black-owned business was described as a safe, sacred space, an inclusive community and the “heart of the neighborhood.”

Members of the group pointed out that Wild Fig's current business model is not sustainable, but with increased marketing it could transition into a location for events as well as a bookstore and “remain

a sacred space, especially for black people,” April said.

The rapidly-forming Wild Fig Worker Cooperative group has 15 active members and involvement from an additional 75. The group is diverse and has a wide variety of skills, including equity and justice organizing, business development, co-op development, finance, investment, legal expertise in co-op development, marketing, media, and event planning. Many in the group have viable ideas on re-tooling the business model to make it profitable and above all the sacred space that April describes.

April suggested finding sponsor institutions and individuals that would commit to donating an undetermined amount of money, either as a lump sum payment or paid in installments. “All of the workers in the Wild Fig Worker Co-op are owners, but not all owners are workers,” she said. “Some people will actually staff the store, some will work in other ways.” Priority shares will be given to people who experience the ramifications of gentrification, specifically the north side of Lexington where Wild Fig is currently located.

“We are an inclusive, equitable movement, organized by April, our longtime unpaid black social justice organizer,” said Sara Day, who was present at the Sept. 22 meeting. “April has experienced trauma,



Margaret Gabriel

Discussion of Wild Fig's transition to a work-owned co-op took place at the Plantory on September 22.

abuse and bias at the hands of police, been over-criminalized and incarcerated for minor infractions, and subjected to more trauma than I can describe here. Yet she continues to rise and lead for her community, organizing and working out of the Wild Fig. If we lose this space, not only does our community lose, but April loses the one safe space that welcomed her when she was released from jail. We can't let this happen. Join us in saving and transitioning our sacred space.”

Decisions are still outstanding concerning the final outcome, but April said Wild Fig Worker Cooperative will continue its efforts to create a business with a just business structure, so Lexington will have a space where groups who might otherwise feel marginalized can and will feel safe.

As the October issue of *Peaceways* was going to press, the story of the Wild Fig Worker Cooperative was still changing. For ongoing progress, please watch the CKCPJ Facebook page.