

Peaceways

CENTRAL KENTUCKY COUNCIL FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE July 2019

PTA—Not what you think

by Margaret Gabriel

Peaceways committee member Penny Christian served as a Kentucky delegate to the 2019 PTA Convention and Expo in Columbus, Ohio, June 20-23. Penny, president of the 16th District PTA Kentucky, was one of about 45 members of the Kentucky delegation.

Although Penny's involvement in PTA started when her youngest daughter, Kimberly, started kindergarten at Glendover Elementary, advocacy for her children began when her daughter, Que, was a first grader. Que was reading on a fifth grade level when she started school, but she was shy and didn't like to read aloud. "Her teacher was going to put her in the second level reading group and told us, 'We don't want to push her.'"

Penny and her husband, Claude, also an education activist, told the teacher Que needed to be pushed. "We didn't want to limit Que's ability and that's when I realized I was dealing with an old white woman who was about to retire," Penny said. "We have little black kids who need our attention."

Penny was active in many school activities when her older daughters

attended Morton Middle School and Lafayette High School as well as Glendover. "Then when Kimberly started kindergarten I went to a cookout when school was starting and I saw only one other parent who looked like me. She told me, 'You're going to join PTA.' Well okay, then, I said."

Kimberly will enter Lafayette in August in SCAPA and pre-engineering, and will play flute in the marching band. During Penny's years in PTA, first on a local level then on the district and state levels, she has learned that PTA means much more than fundraisers and bake sales.

"PTA [founded in 1897] is the oldest children's advocacy organization in the United States. PTA is responsible for mandatory vaccinations, hot lunches, and child labor laws. That advocacy marks the difference that parents can make," she said

At every level, PTA has the same mission: to make every child's potential a reality. Although the national PTA provides support, the needs of individual states and districts dictate the activity of each of those groups.

In Kentucky, Penny said, the delegates choose a legislative platform every year. "For us this year, the platform is full funding for public schools, holding back charter schools and vouchers, and funding early childhood education."

Making sure that parents know their rights and empowering them to advocate for their children is an important component of the work of PTA. "If parents don't feel they can advocate or don't know how, we'll help them," Penny said.



A recent survey revealed that many parents are reluctant to advocate for their children because they feel intimidated by teachers and administrators who often surpass them in educational attainment.

"Manny [Caulk, FCPS Superintendent] has a theory, though — seven/17. Schools have kids seven hours a day. Parents have them for 17 hours. Now, who's going to know your kid better?"

Penny's term as president of the 16th District is two years. By the time Penny finishes her term as immediate past president, Kimberly will be graduating from Lafayette and it will be time for Penny to complete her work as an active PTA parent.

"But I tell people all the time, you don't have to have a kid in this building to participate. If you're retired, volunteer at schools. Meet with teachers for parents who have to work during school meetings. Address the community about school needs. Listen. You're impacting families, schools and the whole community."

Gun Violence In America as of 6-26-19 (excluding suicide)

2019 (year to date)

Killed	6,909
Wounded	13,337

2018 (annual)

Killed	13,321
Wounded	25,734

Source: www.gunviolencearchive.org

A teachable moment becomes less so

by Father John Rausch

The slogan, "Make America Great Again," appearing on caps worn by students from Covington Catholic High School figured prominently in the January 2019 incident between those students and a Native American Elder on the Lincoln Mall. Most people remember one student from the school standing in opposition to a Native American beating a drum. The analysis exploded. Some said the student was arrogant, cynical, and disrespectful. Others saw the Elder as aggressive and threatening. The incident gripped the news cycle for days.

Cut to the aftermath. Mary Herr and I facilitate a five-day introduction to Cherokee spirituality each year. Horrified by the event, we reached out to Covington Catholic High School trying to encourage reconciliation and dialogue. Mary sent a letter and brochure inviting Covington Catholic staff to our 2019 Cherokee program, March 19-24. She got no response. I chose the clerical route.

I emailed a dozen priest buddies, "Who can I contact at CovCath?" I had met Robert Borrero, a Native American and a leader of the Indigenous Peoples' March, last year at a New York conference. He knew Nathan Phillips, the Elder of this story, who he said was willing to come to Covington Catholic to dialogue. Could we make this happen?

I finally got four names from my contacts with their email addresses. Using my best persuasive style, I wrote the high school principal, the diocesan Vicar General and two other priests associated with the school. "Teachable moment," "on your terms," "reconciliation" dripped from the page. I cited my background with helping labor disputes, organizing co-ops, and being Teacher of Peace with Pax Christi. No response. Then the announcement came that the boy's father was suing CNN, NBC, the Washington Post, and others for millions of dollars. Now, total silence!

Folks with money and power can exercise their greatness by suing. Whatever happened to the gentle Gospel admonition to confront your brother's wrongdoing, then call in

others or even the church, if he refuses to listen (Matt. 18:15-17)?

In a TV interview, the most prominent CovCath student of the incident said he had a right to stand where he was facing Elder Phillips. But, the NRA's Stand Your Ground theology is not Catholic social teaching. Catholic theology says when confronted with a potentially violent situation, a person has a responsibility to defuse the danger if possible, even by withdrawing.

The drum, alleged as threatening, is not a weapon, but an instrument of peace. The rhythmical banging invites a harmony with the earth's heartbeat, humanity's connectedness, and creation's all-inclusiveness. Has Catholic education forgotten that the diversity of cultures is needed to reflect the richness of the Creator?

A participant at this year's Cherokee spirituality program said, "Make America Great, but not again," altering the 2016 campaign slogan of Donald Trump. She understood the U.S. policies of genocide and colonization of Native Americans. The United States gained great wealth from stealing the land of Native Americans and expropriating the labor of captive African slaves. Add to these the exclusion of Chinese, the exploitation of migrants and immigrants, plus the colonization of minerals in Appalachia, and the facts reveal an unpopular history of what "great again" probably means.

The institutional church, represented by Covington Catholic High School, missed a unique opportunity to compare and contrast the ways of the world with the spirit of the Gospel. The "great" of the Gospel are the humble, serving and compassionate. They stand in opposition to the prideful hubris of the world. "Make America Great," but not again.

Father John Rausch is Glenmary priest who lives in Stanton, Ky. A Roman Catholic, John has immersed himself in the culture of the Appalachian region for most of the 50-plus years of his ministry.

The Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice

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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 Aug. 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.

Wed., July 3

Lexington Fourth of July Festival, 12 noon-1 p.m. Fifth Third Bank Pavillion, 251 W. Main St., Lexington. Lexington gets a jump on the festivities with the Great American Pie and Ice Cream Social. Free and open to the public.

Wed., July 3

Lexington Fourth of July Festival, 8 p.m. Patriotic Music concert. Morrison Lawn, Transylvania University.

Thurs., July 4

Lexington Fourth of July Festival, 7 a.m. Bluegrass 10,000 Foot Race. 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Downtown Street Festival, including arts and craft vendors, entertainment, and concessions. 11 a.m. Community reading of the Declaration of Independence. 2 p.m. Main Street parade featuring the Big Blue Marching Band. 10 p.m. Fireworks at the R.J. Corman Railroad Yard. For more information see downtownlex.com.

Tues., July 9

PFLAG Central Kentucky, 6:30-8:30 p.m., St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 2025 Bellefonte Dr., Lexington. Information about the volunteer organization Free Mom Hugs, stepping up to provide love and affirmation for LGBTQ+ youth and adults. There will be discussion and Q and A for the first hour, followed by our confidential support group meeting.

Sat., July 13

LFUCG, Free trash disposal for non-hazardous household waste, 6 a.m.-1 p.m., Bluegrass Regional Transfer Station, 1505 Old Frankfort Pike. Construction and demolition debris as well as any items larger than the curbside cart will not be accepted free of charge, but can be dropped off at the regular gate rate during the event. Participants must present a valid Fayette County driver's license.

Mon., July 15

CKCPJ steering committee meeting, 5 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., July 16

Lyric Theatre and Cultural Arts Center, 300 E. Third St., 7 p.m. *Central Park Five* and *When They See Us*. 7 p.m. The Lyric, in partnership with the Urban League of Lexington, NAACP of Lexington and the ACLU of Kentucky will present these films free of charge. See <https://www.aclu-ky.org/en/events/co-sponsored-screening-central-park-five-pbs-documentary-ken-burns>

Fri-Sun., Aug 2-4

Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, Annual Meeting. Berea College, 101 Chestnut St. Registration begins at 4 p.m. on Friday; the meeting finishes with a closing session at 11:45 a.m. Sunday. Activities include workshops and a tour of Sustainable Berea's urban farm. Keynote address by Ashlee Woodard Henderson, Executive Director of Highlander Research and Education Center. For more information contact Carissa Lenfert, (502) 208-1696, carissa@kftc.org.

Tues., Aug. 13

PFLAG Central Kentucky, 6:30-8:30 p.m., St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 2025 Bellefonte Dr., Lexington. Speaker will be Carter Sickels, Faculty Advisor for the ECU Alphabet Group which is composed of LGBTQ+ students and allies. Discussion will center on the issues students are facing. There will be discussion and Q and A for the first hour, followed by our confidential support group meeting.

Mon., Aug. 19

CKCPJ steering committee meeting, 5 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. 3

CKCPJ Peace Action committee, 5:30 p.m. Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington. Ongoing discussions of training for trainers of nonviolence, nonviolence efforts in schools, youth summer jobs program, and other peace-related activities.

Tues., Sept. 10

CKCPJ Single-payer health care committee, 5:30 p.m. Quaker Meeting House, 649 Price Ave., Lexington.

Tues., Sept. 10

PFLAG Central Kentucky, 6:30-8:30 p.m., St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 2025 Bellefonte Dr., Lexington. There are gains as well as various kinds of losses when someone acknowledges their gender identity or sexual orientation. This topic will be addressed by our panel of LGBTQ individuals and parents.

Mon., Sept. 16

CKCPJ steering committee meeting, 5 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.

Fri-Sun., Oct. 25-27

PFLAG 2019 National Convention, Kansas City, Missouri. The registration fee for the convention is \$275, \$350 for non-members. The two-day event will include learning, relationship building, and honoring those who are making the PFLAG difference in the community. Register and/or become a member at the PFLAG website.

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

Applying math formulas to squishy reality

**HOW NOT TO BE WRONG:
The Power of Mathematical
Thinking.** By Jordan Ellenberg. 2014.
Penguin Books. 466 pages.

Reviewed by Jim Trammel

With Presidential election season coming up, and this election seen as much more crucial than others before, it would be nice to know we have a way to prove that what we feel is right.

The appeal of mathematics has always been that its answers are demonstrably correct. Two plus three is five, not four, not six. Nothing squishy like in literature class.

Professor Ellenberg seeks to apply math quantifications to the equally squishy matters of politics, lottery numbers, deciding how much to armor war planes, and, yes, the formula to determine the existence of God.

But the higher realms of math re-introduce uncertainty, and Ellenberg often reprises the theme that cold numbers have to be interpreted, and sometimes invalidated, by human, non-numerical common sense.

The warplanes story that opens the book is the best example of this. (Spoilers coming.) Experts who were tasked with armoring warplanes with the proper protection faced the problem that too little armor would

be ineffective, and too much would ground the planes. They studied the locations of bullet holes of planes that returned from combat. The engines were hit fewer times than other parts of those planes. The figures would then suggest the engines shouldn't be as well armored as other more frequently hit parts of the planes, but expert Abraham Wald realized that planes hit in the engine weren't among those that came back. That's a commonsense observation that no formula can delineate.

This *Freakonomics*-style stuff is my nonfiction catnip. My favorite story here is the one about the Baltimore stockbroker. I don't have the space or inclination to explain it here, but it illustrates the same theme of math supplemented by common sense.

There are valid math approaches to real-world problems. Every line is a curve, and it's important that we look at graphed projections with this in mind. Projections of future obesity among Americans based on an upward-slanting straight line established in the last 30 years, you can conclude (wrongly) that all Americans will be obese by the year 2048. This is obviously not possible. The fallacy is that the straight line on the chart won't go on straight forever when extended; it will curve, likely



Margaret Gehring

The editor chose to use a picture of reviewer Jim Trammel with his grandson rather than the one she has of him posing with Miss Kentucky.

flattening out. It might even fall.

A lot of geometry is in play here (always my favorite branch of mathematics, because I understood lines and planes lots more than algebraic quadratic equations). It also goes into lots of X-and-Y-axis four-quadrant diagrams, which I understand less well but which are useful to organize information into categories.

There is also a lot of saluting of math pioneers by name whom I didn't recognize (except Nikolai Lobachevskii, and him only because of the Tom Lehrer comedy song). A few dense sections of formulas would have earned me a C-minus at the very best for my limited comprehension.

But thankfully you don't need a math degree, or even a strong math background, to appreciate the application of precise ideas to the gray areas of personal life, as this book guides us to apply the formulas of relative certainty to our courses of daily action.

Reviewer Jim Trammel has no business speaking up in math class; he will just gratefully take his C-minus and go home.

..... *A salute to Rev. Peoples*

Civil rights champion and lifelong Lexington resident Rev. T. H. Peoples died June 7, 2019. Friend and congregant Kathleen Coffey offers this reflection.

I first attended, then joined, First Baptist Church Bracktown in the 1960s. I gave my life to Christ under the influence of Rev. T. H. Peoples, who was pastor at that time.



The thing I remember most about Rev. Peoples is his relationship with the children. He always took the youth choir with him

whenever he would preach at other churches on Sunday afternoons. He would pile all five of us in his greenish-blue Buick Skylark and we would sing and he would preach, and on the way home he would always stop and get us ice cream or some other treat. Rev. Peoples was always so appreciative of us supporting him, even though we were not strong in number. He would always brag about how well we could sing, and he really enjoyed the children of our church.

My sister would babysit for Rev. Peoples, and after his twins, David and Betina, were born, I would help.

In my adult years I cared for his mother. Fixing meals, cleaning, and just spending time with her were part of the experience. Rev. Peoples would always come in and say, "Coffey, I really appreciate what you're doing for mother." I would just smile and say, "Yes sir."

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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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.



The Central Kentucky Council
for Peace and Justice
1588 Leestown Rd., Ste. 130-138,
Lexington KY 40511

Issue #322 • July 2019

*I think the first duty
of society is justice.*

~ Alexander Hamilton

City officials visit Lexington camp

by Margaret Gabriel

Members of the Lexington Fayette Urban County Government (LFUCG) Council were part of a group that toured a camp that provides shelter for Lexington residents on June 12.

The group included several members of the Catholic Action Center (CAC) community who have lived in such camps in the past, as well as Steve Gahaffer of the Department of Code Enforcement; Janice James, deputy executive director of the Hope Center; and Charles Bowers, who has set up, lived in, and administered camps. Today Bowers lives in a CAC home and is a core volunteer.

After the tour, the group returned to the CAC gathering room to hear stories from people who are experiencing homelessness about the realities of life in outdoor camps.

On July 9, the General Government and Social Services Committee of the LFUCG Council will present a proposal that will require that camps receive at least 21 days' notice before the dismantling of any camp.

The LFUCG group included committee chair Susan Lamb and members Angela Evans, Chuck Ellinger, Richard Maloney, and Kathy Plomin, along with Josh McCurn.

Joseph Bailey told the group that before becoming a resident of the CAC, he lived outdoors for two years after losing his home to fire. All his money burned in the house fire, so Joseph spent two weeks in a hotel room paid for by the Red Cross, then spent every night behind a grocery store with his dog, Natasha.

"There was a guy who let me shower at his house; that was the one

fortunate thing I had while I was living behind the grocery store," he said.

In cold weather, Joseph and Natasha cuddled together under a blanket that he folded and left every day. After Natasha died, Joseph carried her to the Humane Society so she could be buried with dignity. Not long after, a friend told him about the CAC community.

Charles advocated for camp residents, explaining the special needs of residents to government officials, social service workers, and community members. Those needs include fighting substance abuse and addiction, and coping with mental health issues. "Some people can't just stay inside a building," Charles said.

Any camp resident, former resident, or advocate will be welcome to attend and speak at the July 9 council meeting, Susan Lamb said.

Prompted by a question from council member Chuck Ellinger, director Ginny Ramsey explained the mission and ministry of the CAC.

"We're not a shelter, we're a community, aren't we Joseph?" Ramsey said.

The CAC is based on the model of the Catholic Worker Movement, which was established in 1933. Part of its mission is providing hospitality to people experiencing homelessness, which they provide at 1055 Industry Road in Lexington.

In exchange for four hours of community service, residents of the CAC reserve a bed and a locker for a week, a commitment that can be renewed every Sunday.

"CAC stands for care, accountability, connection," Ramsey said. "Part of our call is to give our community a voice."

Ramsey also told of the importance of community awareness. "Sometimes people forget that our community is made up of human beings who have the same kinds of joy and sadness they have."

The July 9 meeting will be followed by discussion about camps in other cities regarding public health and safety, and the best way to provide services for residents. The results of those findings will be presented to the full council on Aug. 13.

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Follow CKCPJ on Facebook

Engagement on the CKCPJ Facebook page held steady through the early summer months. Posts by a variety of people focused on local, national and international issues.

Within two days after the Kentucky.com post about Lexington police not assisting with ICE raids, the story had been shared 68 times.

Father Pat Delahanty posted the NPR story about the Trump administration violating the human

rights of migrant children.

A post from commondreams.org highlighted the Poor People's Campaign and its demand for an end to "this systemic policy violence against poor and low-income people," according to Rev. Dr. William J. Barber.

Comments, posts and videos on the CKCPJ Facebook page are always varied and enlightening. Check them out and be sure to share!