



Fall 2003 Volume 21, Issue 2

## Mid-South Peace & Justice Center

An interfaith, interracial membership organization  
for education, collaboration, and nonviolent action

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Officers 2002-2003 Chair: Sandy Furrh Secretary: Lawrence Jordan Treasurer: Allan Lummus

## Coalitions

### Living Wage Campaign

Several groups in the Memphis area, including the Mid-South Peace and Justice Center, Mid-South Interfaith Alliance for Economic Justice, and the Memphis Labor Council, are proposing a Living Wage ordinance. It would require all city departments, all businesses receiving tax freezes or abatements, and all companies subcontracting with the city to pay a living wage to their employees—a minimum of \$12 an hour without benefits, or \$10 an hour with benefits. We have received verbal support for the ordinance from most city council members, and are now in the process of obtaining their written commitments. We plan to submit the ordinance after the city elections this fall. Tell your City Council representative that you support a living wage in Memphis. (See candidate survey on page 3.)

<http://www.cityofmemphis.org/defaultcc.asp>  
(901) 576-6786 city council phone number.

### Nobel Peace Nominee at Peace Forum

Kathy Kelly, who has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, will be the Peace and Justice Center's featured speaker at our next Peace Forum, on Monday, October 6<sup>th</sup> at Christian Brothers University. Founder of the Chicago-based "Voices in the Wilderness," Kathy has gained international respect for her courageous witness and humane actions to alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people over the past decade of sanctions and war. She was present in Baghdad when the bombs began falling on March 19<sup>th</sup>. She will have returned from another visit to Iraq shortly before arriving in Memphis. Her talk is co-sponsored by Christian Brothers University and Pax Christi. Monday, October 6<sup>th</sup>, CBU Spain Auditorium, 7:00 p.m.

### Center Issues Call to Collaboration

Alarmed by the current political climate and the threat of still more war, the Mid-South Peace and Justice Center has invited religious leaders and organizations in the Memphis area to share information and resources on actions for peace and social justice. The Center issued this Call to Collaboration this past summer together with the School of Servant Leadership and the Memphis chapter of Pax Christi. We are inspired by Dr. King's dream of the Beloved Community, and energized by the outpouring of peace activity last spring attempting to prevent the war against Iraq. In response to the initial Call, fourteen people gathered on August 18<sup>th</sup> at the Ruth Hyde Chapel to begin the process of sharing. A continuation committee of Dr. Paul Brown, Ms. Cartina Perkins, Janice and Gerry Vanderhaar, and Rev. Billy Vaughan, is formulating next steps.

### Peacemaker Awards Dinner

When: Thursday, November 6<sup>th</sup>  
Reception 6:00, Dinner 7:00 p.m.

Where: Lindenwood Christian Church  
2400 Union, at East Parkway

Award Recipients:

Environmental Justice—**Rita Harris**  
Interfaith Outreach—**Muslim Society of Memphis**  
Community Development—**Steve Lockwood**  
Human Rights—**Marquita Bradshaw**  
Labor and Economic Justice—**UNITE**  
Immigrant Rights—**David Lubell**  
Social Justice—**Staff of 1<sup>st</sup> Congregational Church**  
Socially Responsible Business—**Diamond Printing**  
Community Service—**Rose Klimek**  
Lifetime Achievement—**John and Mary Ann Spence**

Tickets: \$30

Information and Reservations: MPJC, 725-4990

## Actions

### Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride

The Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride is stopping in Memphis on Sunday, September 28 at the Civil Rights Museum. The purpose of the Freedom Ride is to highlight the need to protect those who reside in the United States from abuse and harassment in the workplace, and protect their civil liberties generally. The Mid-South Peace and Justice Center joined with Tennessee Immigrant Rights Coalition to support the Freedom Ride's appearance in Memphis. The Ride started on the west coast, and will travel on to Washington, D.C. before concluding in New York City.

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This newsletter is the collaboration of Gerry Vanderhaar, George Grider, and Allan Lummus. Printed by unionized labor at Diamond Printing

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### Fred's, Inc—Local Labor Trouble

In recent months Fred's, Inc., a popular discount chain store found in the southeastern Unites States, has come under close scrutiny on an international level. Following the harassment and eventual dismissal of union activists at the company's distribution center in Memphis last year, Fred's has drawn fire from both labor and civil rights communities for its apparent disregard of labor rights around the world. Amidst the swirling allegations of harassment, racism and unfair labor practices domestically, Fred's tacit support of the brutal military regime in Burma has come to light, adding to the company's dismal labor record. Act now to tell Fred's that the world is watching what they do:  
<http://www.unionvoice.org/>

*British Prime Minister Winston Churchill's preferred term for government lying was "terminological inexactitude." But a lie, by whatever polysyllabic obfuscation, is still a lie. Like what's happening in Washington.*

--GV

### Speakers Tour: Stop the FTAA

The Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) is the Bush Administration's effort to envelope the whole western hemisphere in an economic arrangement that will benefit global corporations of the North and harm struggling workers in the poor South. Three speakers from Mexico—an activist, a worker and an academic—are traveling through the United States to point out the disastrous effects the FTAA will have, and urge that it be stopped.

In Memphis a local activist, worker, and academic will join the speakers from Mexico. They will conduct public forums on Monday, November 9<sup>th</sup>—during the morning at LeMoyne-Owen College, the afternoon at the University of Memphis, and in the evening at Metropolitan Baptist Church. On Tuesday the 10<sup>th</sup> they will appear on a morning television show, followed by a press conference at the empty Firestone plant.

The Tennessee Industrial Renewal Network (TIRN) is sponsoring the Memphis events, in conjunction with the Mid-South Peace and Justice Center, the Sierra Club, the Central Labor Council, and the Mid-South Interfaith Alliance for Economic Justice.

Three vans from Memphis will accompany the Tour across the state of Tennessee. It will continue on to Miami for the FTAA ministerial meetings, and conclude at Fort Benning, Georgia on Nov 22-23 to join the annual national witness to close the infamous School of the Americas.

### Protesting the WTO in Cancun

During the recent week of the World Trade Organization's meeting in the Mexican resort city of Cancun, concerned anti-war and anti-globalization persons from around the world gathered to highlight the link between corporate global dominance and first-world militarism. Several peace activists from the Mid-South, sponsored by the Peace and Justice Center, joined others on September 13<sup>th</sup> to distribute flyers and display banners to highlight the message of fair trade and peace for all, rather than profits for the few and war for the masses.

### Polling the Candidates

Last month questionnaires were mailed to all candidates running for the city council election on October 9. (See reverse side for text.) The purpose of the poll was to provide our readers some idea of how the individual candidates stand on key issues relating to peace and justice in our community.

Of the 35 candidates, nine responded. The results are tabulated below by name. Respondents gave a resounding “no” on yet another tax supported stadium, and a “yes” for a living wage ordinance. The group was nearly split on bringing our troops home (4, 3, 2). It favors keeping the death penalty (3, 5, 1). This does not include the opinions of the non-respondents, many of which can be assumed to be more conservative.

--George Grider

### Requesting Your Help

The effort that went into writing, mailing, and tabulating this questionnaire was 100 % volunteer. Volunteerism is one of Democracy’s brightest lights. There is no federal or state tax on the labor of volunteers. A volunteer punches no time clock. Volunteers realize great personal rewards for working at a job that best matches their interests and skills.

But volunteers cannot manufacture the postage stamps or construct the billboards. They cannot pay for the police escorts needed for our protest parades. Nor can they staff a desk during normal business hours. **For that we need funding.** Most of the funding we receive comes from local donors like you.

If you feel that the Center is representing your interests through projects such as these, please let us know **by sending your check.** Through volunteerism, each dollar you give is leveraged many-fold toward achieving a saner world.

### Candidate Survey Results

Issue	Tax for Another Stadium?			Bring Troops Home?			Pass Living Wage?			Halt Death Penalty?		
	Y	N	referendum	Y	N	no vote	Y	N	no vote	Y	N	no vote
Responding Candidate												
Debra Brooks			✓	✓			✓			✓		
Jim Brown		✓			✓		✓				✓	
Lester Lit		✓			✓				✓		✓	
Tiffany Lowe		✓		✓			✓			✓		
TaJuan Stout Mitchell			no vote			✓	✓					✓
Scott McCormick		✓			✓		✓				✓	
James Robinson		✓		✓			✓			✓		
Perry Steele		✓		✓			✓				✓	
Pat Vander Schaaf		✓				✓	✓				✓	

Responses not received from: Albert Banks, W.B. Bates, Jennings Bernard, Joe Brown, Wyatt Bunker, Carol Chumny, Beverly Jones Farmer, George Flinn, Mark Follis, Edmund Ford, Isaac Ford, Barbara Swearngen Holt, E.C. Jones, Rex Hamilton, Janet Hooks, Myron Lowrey, Gregory McVay-Lawrence, Tom Marshall, Don Murphree, Henry Nickell, Rickey Peete, Jack Sammons, Jim Strickland, Brent Taylor, Kerry White, Arnold Weiner. A self addressed, stamped envelope and a fax number accompanied Outgoing forms. A return date of September 17 was requested, and followup calls were made.

### 2003 CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATE PEACE AND JUSTICE SURVEY

The following four questions were mailed to the 35 Memphians whose names are expected to appear on the October 9 ballot for City Council. See reverse side for results.

1. Taxpayer funded sports facilities. The City of Memphis committed to the construction of two stadiums, beginning with the Pyramid funding approximately 15 years ago. The FedEx Forum is estimated to be costing the city taxpayers \$150 million. And while these monies do not directly impact the general fund, it's no secret that the FedEx Forum will ultimately take funds from our already suffering education and housing programs.

Question: What would be your response to constructing a third tax supported sports stadium, should such a proposal be made sometime prior to the year 2008?

Answer  No funding  Submit to voters  Approve funding

Comments:

2. Bring Our Troops Home. During the Iraqi War buildup, the organization Cities for Peace sponsored a No War in Iraq resolution. Along with Chicago, New York, Washington D.C. and Atlanta, approximately 150 municipalities and states signed on. The Memphis City Council considered the measure but did not take a vote, on account of the President Bush already declaring an ultimatum. As the war against Iraq drags on, Memphis must consider cost of the ongoing war in terms of lost federal monies that would otherwise help fund our urban health needs. Also, we pay for the loss of fire and police services caused by our Reservists being called away.

Question: Would you endorse a "Bring Our Troops Home" resolution if one were to be put before the city council?

Answer (check one):  Yes  No  
 Would be willing to help with text.

Comments:

3. Living Wage. A proposed Living Wage ordinance is before the city council. It requires that all city workers, contractors, and employees for companies receiving tax subsidies receive a minimum wage of \$10/hour with benefits, or \$12/hour without benefits. Supporters hold that such an ordinance would assist low-income workers in providing for their families in housing and education, and generally improve the overall quality of life within the city.

Question: If the above-cited Living Wage ordinance were submitted to the city council, how would you vote?

Answer (check one):  Yes  No

Comments:

4. Death penalty moratorium. A national anti-death-penalty movement is gaining ground. The movement holds that killing people for any reason is not only morally wrong, but that it sends the wrong message that cold blooded killing may be justifiable. Moreover, as held by the governor of Illinois who recently cleared out death row in his state, mistakes can be made leading to the execution of innocent people.

Question: Would you support a city council resolution supporting a Tennessee statewide moratorium on the death penalty?

Answer (check one):  Yes  No

Comments:

#### **ANNOUNCING:**

##### **The MSPJC Billboard**

MSPJC has recently been awarded a grant to display a pro-peace outdoor advertisement. Beginning late October, three one-month-duration messages will be displayed to those heading west on Union Avenue, just west of E. Parkway. A committee is working on the text.

## Visions

### Global Goods Store

It's a little jewel of a place tucked away down the hall at 1000 S. Cooper, but it packs a powerful punch. That's the Peace and Justice Center's Global Goods Store. It's where you can buy crafts made by artisans in developing parts of the world who are paid a fair price (as opposed to a "market price") for their creations.

And coffee. Especially coffee. Fair Trade Coffee, purchased through co-ops directly from farmers in Central and South America and other poverty areas, giving them income to afford some health care, education and housing for their families. Our latest addition is Zapatista coffee, grown by family farmers in Chapas, the poorest state in Mexico.

Help is needed right now—on Friday evenings 6-9 p.m., Saturday mornings 10-12, and Sunday 12-3.

The Peace and Justice Center operates the store in conjunction with First Congregational Church. Open Fridays 6-9 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Peace people are encouraged to:

- Buy your holiday—and other—gifts here.
- Volunteer to work in the store. Encourage your place of worship or organization to purchase Fair Trade Coffee from the store.
- Offer to transport it from the store for their use.



#### Listsers

mspjc-events@riseup.net

peaceandjustice-

discussion@riseup.net

To subscribe click on email links on home page

<http://midsouthpeace.org>

#### Weblog:

To access click on "weblog" from the sidebar menu on homepage.

### Peace Forums—Seeking the Truth

The Peace and Justice Center has been sponsoring forums around town on the theme "Seeking the Truth." The forums started in the spring as a continuation of the peace planning sessions held at the Center during the war against Iraq:

May—Women of Afghanistan  
 June—American Imperialism  
 July—Culture of War  
 August—Oak Ridge and Nuclear Peril  
 September—Beyond Capitalism  
 October—Kathy Kelly (see page 1)  
 November—Stop FTAA Tour (see page 2)

A second objective of the forums is to raise money for organizations providing humanitarian help to heal wounds our country has inflicted:

*Doctors Without Borders*, for Iraq  
*Military Toxics Campaign*, for the U.S.  
*Revolutionary Association for the Women of Afghanistan*, for Afghanistan

So far we have raised a total of \$350 for these organizations.

--Allan Lummus

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### Peace and Justice Center Board

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Cooper Young Banner



## Demand Justice, Now!

Mid-South Peace and Justice Center  
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Memphis, TN 38111-0428

**URGENT:** Candidate Survey results.  
Read Before Oct 9<sup>th</sup> Election. See Page 3.

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## Perpetual War—Not if we can help it

By Gerry Vanderhaar

George Orwell, in his eerily prescient novel *1984* published in the middle of the last century, described a country not unlike the United States engaged in “perpetual war.” The combat took place on shadowy, distant battlefields, while the leader back home exhorted his people to stay in line, be patriotic, and hate the enemy,

In my lifetime the real United States has almost always been engaged in some form of war. In 1941-45 it was against the Evil Axis of Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and Imperial Japan. After several years of “peace,” a new enemy emerged, Communism, personified by the Soviet Union and Red China. Wars on distant battlefields followed, in Korea and in Vietnam, against the background of the incessant Cold War, which required building ever more powerful weapons of mass destruction for national security.

The Soviet Union’s collapse and China’s metamorphosis into an acceptable economic power threw us into an unexpected and upsetting decade of “peace.”

Not to worry. We now have a new enemy. International Terrorism will again put our country back on the steady, familiar—and profitable—road of perpetual war.

We in the peace movement can do something about it.

We’re in solidarity with millions of people around the world who don’t want war—not in Iraq, not anywhere, and certainly not perpetual. In Memphis we have our Truth Forums, we have the Coalitions, Actions and Visions described in this Newsletter. We have our energy, our abilities, and our resources. As we use all of these to the fullest we may not only sidetrack the perpetual war machine, but actually help bring about some genuine peace.

### Peace and Justice Calendar

- Oct. 2 Peace Committee
- Oct. 6 Forum Kathy Kelly, at CBU
- Oct. 10 Community Potluck,  
at Global Goods Store
- Nov. 6 Peacemaker Awards Dinner
- Nov. 9-11 Stop FTAA Speakers Tour
- Nov. 10 Forum Metropolitan Baptist
- Dec. 4 Peace Committee
- Dec. 8 Peace Forum
- Dec. 12 Community Potluck,  
at Global Goods Store