

NEWSLETTER

The Manhattan Alliance will educate and organize
for peace and justice at home and abroad.

Visit us online at: <http://www.mapj.org>

Tuesday, June 24, 2008 at 6:30 pm.

MAPJ to host Pastors for Peace delegation heading to Cuba

First Congregational Church - Juliette and Poyntz Aves.

Potluck dinner followed by a presentation.

--by Glenda Phillips

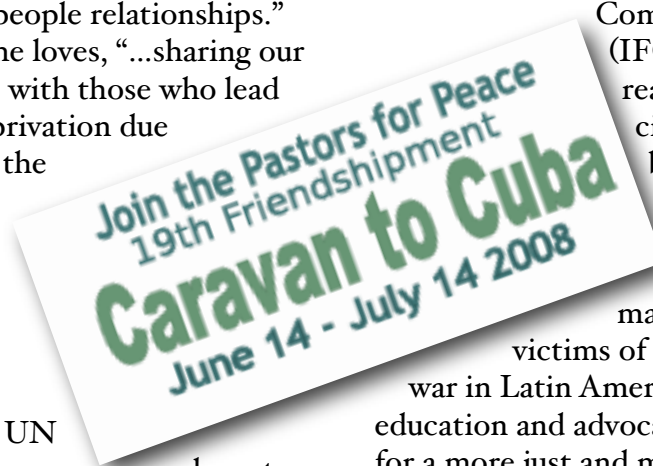
Jim Bouman signed on for his first caravan in 2006 and hasn't stopped since. Having been a Juvenile Probation Officer in his previous life, Jim finds a major connection to IFCO and Pastors for Peace. He is glad to find others who believe as he does, "...in community organization, non-violent resistance to unjust laws, carefully undertaken civil disobedience and building people-to-people relationships." Jim goes on to say that he loves, "...sharing our time and material goods with those who lead lives of considerable deprivation due to the unjust policies of the US Government vis-à-vis the Cuban people."

Jim Bouman was first struck by Castro's strength and rebellion against the US in 1960 when Castro visited the UN in New York City. Castro chose to stay at the Hotel Theresa in Harlem over one of the midtown hotels, Jim "...suspected that this was not going to be a business-as-usual revolution..." and he was right. Now, almost 50

years later, Castro's regime has maintained its position even through Castro's illness and power passing to his brother, Raoul. It should be extremely interesting to hear about the changes in Cuba and the US connections to it. The Pastors for Peace delegation should have many updates for us.

Pastors for Peace is a project of the award-winning Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO). It began in 1988 as a reaction to an attack on civilians and an IFCO team by US backed contra forces in Nicaragua. The aim of this new project was two-fold: to deliver material aid to support the victims of so-called 'low intensity' war in Latin America and to initiate education and advocacy projects to campaign for a more just and moral US foreign policy in our hemisphere.

This 2008 caravanista will be Pastors for Peace's 19th non-violent Challenge to the US Blockade of Cuba. The delegation travels from



all parts of the US, converge at McAllen, TX, cross the US-Mexico border with a truck filled with tons of humanitarian aid delivering school busses, educational supplies, medicines and medical supplies gathered from across the United and Canada. Since 1992, Pastors for Peace has campaigned and challenged the US government in its attempt to confiscate vehicles and humanitarian aid bound for Cuba. The group has delivered more than 2500 tons of assistance to the Cuban people without seeking a US Treasury license. Anyone interested is invited to join the travelers on any part of their journey. Information is available through MAPJ or through the website:
www.pastorsforpeace.org

Bring a dish to share and join Jim Bouman and his colleague, Sabine Casper from Germany who has been on 10 caravans, for what should be an inspiring evening on June 24, 2008 at 6:30 pm in the First Congregational Church.



GI Rights Update

The GI Rights Project is moving forward following the training workshop in February 2008. We have seven lay counselors meeting regularly preparing themselves to help GIs with problems including discharge status, Absent Without Leave/Unauthorized Absence (AWOL/UA), harassment, Conscientious Objection (CO) and other issues.

We now need help with the logistics of this project, which will be a 'node' of the National GI Rights Hotline. We need to address several items, some of these are short one-time set-up tasks and others are longer term.

A phone system

Finances: Budget/fundraising/
organization support

Local resource list for counselors to use
and for referrals of GIs

Publicity

And more

In order for the lay counselors to concentrate on their training we need a working structure for all the volunteers. If you are interested in helping and being part of Friends of GI Rights let us know. Contact any of the lay counselors or leave a message at:537-2025 or email:
anne_cowan@sbcglobal.net

We are excited about this project and think you will be also. We would like your participation.

From the lay counselors:

Carol Barta

Susan Brazzle-Daniels

Anne Cowan

Richard Gehring

Duane Johnson

Dave Redmon

Nancy Twiss

Constitutional Rights Denied

El Salvador Update

-- by Anne Cowan

Helping advance education

US-El Salvador Sister Cities and Progreso, a regional grassroots organization, work closely to coordinate the activities of the sister units in a small region of El Salvador. El Papaturro is officially the sister city of MAPJ but the sister cities choose to have us do most of our work regionally. Presently our activities include scholarships for university students and support for the work of Progreso. The scholarship support comes from organizations in Wichita, Lawrence and MAPJ in Kansas, from an organization in Concord, MA and from two individuals. Each student requires \$2-3000 per year.

In the past MAPJ has sponsored high school students to help them travel to high school a long distance from their villages but presently all four sponsored students are in their fourth year of five-year university programs.

Quotes from recent student letters:

"If God helps me finish my studies, I will not be thanking the Salvadoran government because it did not help me. I know that it's through the support of the sister cities that I can study."

"The problem in this country is not just illiteracy, but the illiteracy of critical thinking. There are many people who receive an education but only say and think about what they are taught by the government. I had a teacher who said that in order to study at another University, he could never say his opinion about politics. At the Lutheran University, people speak about the national reality

"I hope that one day I can fund a scholarship so that another person can study. I want to invite members of the sister communities to come visit us at the university and come stay with us."

"I have done all my studies thanks to your effort to help me economically, and I thank you very much. I hold your support and collaboration very dear."



in a realistic way."

"I know when I graduate it will be difficult to find a job, because I study judicial science, and people in this field have to make the jobs for themselves. I would like to work for PROGRESO or for an NGO."

"I am studying business administration. My study is very much focused on the reality of our country. I believe that this is a very important thing to study."

This scholarship program has functioned for several years now, at times supporting young students who had to travel long distances to the nearest school. If more money was available more students could be included. If you are interested in being one of the individual donors or increasing the MAPJ support for this project, contact MAPJ for information.

-- continued on next page

El Salvador Update, continued.

Political Prisoners

In July 2007, 14 political nonviolent protesters were arrested during an anti-



privatization of water event. Some of the accused, members of Progreso, were arrested on their way to attend the protest. They were charged under their "Special Law Against Acts of Terrorism" with possible sentences of up to 60 years.

The law is modeled after the US Patriot Act. After much work by Progreso and receiving international attention along with our USESSC, the charges were dropped.

We have also learned that Hector Ventura was assassinated in his home on May 2, 2008. He was the youngest of the 14 political prisoners captured in July. Progreso is pressuring the government for a complete investigation of this crime as a political murder. There is concern for the fate of the other defendants.

Elections

National elections will take place in March 2009.

Grassroots organizations in El Salvador are asking US citizens to monitor US government intervention in the process. Important issues of their election will be the 2006 implementation of CAFTA (Central American Free Trade Agreement), the U.S. State Department training of El Salvador's police at the new International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) in San Salvador, the increasingly repressive behavior of the Salvadoran police and the enactment and use of the Special Law Against Acts of Terrorism. U.S. influence plays an active role in all these issues.

For more information on any of USESSC activities see www.elsalvadorsolidarity.org

Save the Date

HEARTLAND SPEAKS:

A Response to the Paradigm of Violence.

Monday, October 13 through Wednesday, October 15, 2008

There will be a series of events in Salina, Kansas to coincide with and serve as an alternative to the Hawgsmoke 08: an A-10 Warthog Bombing and Strafing Competition at the Salina Regional Airport. Bombers from around the world are expected to take part, using the Smoky Hill Range.

Events sponsored by the Salina People For Peace will include one and a half days of nonviolence training from Christian Peacemakers Team members, plus workshops, lectures, music, and ending with a Peace Rally at the Airport as A-10's fly in. There will be options for civil disobedience.

MAPJ is a co-sponsor of these events.

You will be hearing much more about this as plans are finalized.

Annual Meeting a Success!

--by Jeff Stillely

Vibrant victuals, dynamic discussions and a colorful call-to-(peaceful)-arms all coalesced for MAPJ's rousing 2008 Annual Meeting. Over one-hundred members of the MAPJ community came to the Golden Wok Restaurant on April 12th for dinner and a speech.

The night's main attraction was Kathy Kelly who gave a powerful speech based on some heart wrenching stories of women and children in Iraq, Palestine, and Lebanon. Kelly is a cofounder of Voices in the Wilderness and currently helps coordinate the Voices for Creative Nonviolence organization. She has traveled to the Middle East dozens of times in the last two decades. The theme of her speech was based on a quote she heard from an Irish lawyer: "What will rise you?"

The Annual Meeting served as a rendezvous for Kelly and the Wheels of Justice Tour, which

she was joining. The Wheels of Justice Tour, a traveling group of speakers who spread their first-hand witnesses of occupations around the world, was in Manhattan from Thursday through Monday. The tour included Bill Hill, bus driver and Vietnam veteran; Abbey Coburn, tour manager; Nora Barrows-Friedman, Palestine speaker and radio producer; and Gene Stoltzfus, Iraq speaker and former Director of the Christian Peacemaker Teams for 18 years. Each member of the tour attended the meeting and tabled with literature and books for sale.

Jon Tvite, MAPJ Vice-Chair, kept the business part of the meeting short and sweet. There was a summary of the past year's activities, as well as the landslide election of Glenda Philips to the MAPJ Board. A lot of time and energy went into the event and was decidedly successful.

Letters to the Newsletter

Feel like MAPJ should address a certain issue?

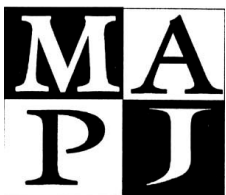
Would you like more information about a particular subject?

Did you enjoy a particular article or opinion piece?

Write into the Newsletter!

The MAPJ Newsletter staff would like to begin printing your words!

JOIN MAPJ!



To become a MAPJ member, send us a donation or volunteer some time for a MAPJ project.

\$_____ Donation enclosed \$_____ Pledge to be paid _____ (date or dates)

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ E-mail _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Projects I would like to take part in: _____

For a tax deduction make checks payable to "MAPJ ED Fund"

Sent to MAPJ, PO Box 1561 Manhattan, KS 66505

Corporate Hogwash

Workers' rights leader Maung Maung condemns the corporations doing business with the regime.

This interview with Maung Maung appeared in the May issue of New Internationalist magazine. Visit their website at: <http://www.newint.org> for more information.

There's no great difference between any country in the world when it comes to doing business with Burma. Look at the US – the Bush executive order is pretty good, but what is Chevron doing? The British Prime Minister and parliamentarians are very vocal, whereas they haven't stopped trade in practice. So when the EU says: 'Well, we have sanctions going on,' I have to ask them: 'Excuse me, where are they?' Because visa bans are not sanctions. There is trade still taking place with countries from Europe. Germany has always blocked the EU position on sanctions. France has got Total there.

When, in 1998, the regime was on its knees, it was a joint venture by UNOCAL (which was taken over by Chevron) and Total that brought it back on its feet. It's the same situation now – politically, the regime is in a bad way. But it is Chevron's and Total's money that is allowing them to creep along. So it's corporate policy that is supporting the regime, and corporate policy that is hampering the governments from going after Burma on all fronts, from going after full sanctions. We are working on a bill with our supporters in America on getting Chevron out of Burma; it's been passed by Congress. But in the Senate it hasn't passed because some Senators are worried about Chevron having to leave Burma.

The attitude of the corporations needs to change. If they say: 'Well, we're just doing business,' – no, you're not just doing business, your business is helping the regime kill

people. What the multinationals get out of Burma is really very little compared to their overall income. They say: 'Well, we're putting a foot in the door,' but your foot is stepping on our necks. If we can get them to refrain from doing anything in Burma for the next three years, we would see a change in the political system which would allow the people of Burma to become ordinary human beings again.

I think consumer boycotts are a very good thing. When we went on a boycott campaign in America, PepsiCo and Levi's withdrew right away.

We took UNOCAL to court. It's got a budget that's bigger than Burma's. We started in 1996, didn't have any money, didn't know whether the money would come, didn't have any lawyers. But we got them to settle with us. After nine years they shut up and admitted they were working hand-in-hand with the regime. These are very rare cases – you have to be a bit stupid to push them through. But the stupidity proved that there are still things that can be done in the world.

State-controlled Burmese media accuse Maung Maung of offences ranging from petty theft to involvement in bomb plots. He is the General Secretary of the Federation of Trade Unions – Burma (FTUB), which has been instrumental in getting Burmese workers' rights and forced-labour issues onto the international agenda.

FTUB website: www.ftub.org

Journey to Justice

A long way travelled but still far to go on debt relief

– by Jonathan Stevenson, New Internationalist magazine

Campaigners from around the world will gather in the British city of Birmingham on 18 May for Journey to Justice – an event marking 10 years of the campaign to Drop the Debt. It will be a decade since the day in 1998 when 70,000 people formed a human chain around the G8 summit in Birmingham – and put the international debt campaign on the map.

Since then, the Jubilee 2000 and Make Poverty History campaigns have helped turn debt cancellation for the countries of the South from a pipedream into a political reality. Some \$88 billion of debt has been cancelled across 25 countries, delivering real benefits for people living in poverty across the world. Zambia, for instance, introduced free healthcare for people living in rural areas for the first time in 2006, following \$4 billion of debt relief agreed in 2005.

But while significant achievements have been made, the campaign is far from over. The ‘Heavily Indebted Poor Countries’ (HIPC) scheme set up by the rich world to tackle the problem is both too limited and highly undemocratic. Countries like Kenya, Bangladesh and the Philippines, despite high poverty levels and massive debts, are told they don’t ‘qualify’ for debt relief under World Bank criteria, while countries that do qualify are forced to meet harmful and undemocratic economic policy conditions in order to complete the process. At least another \$400 billion of unpayable debt must be cancelled if poor countries are to meet their people’s basic needs, yet the existing promises – much-trumpeted since the deal reached at Gleneagles in 2005 – will deliver only a fraction of this.

With the existing process so unsatisfactory, the global debt movement, led by Jubilee South, has increasingly stressed wider issues of justice and power when calling for debt cancellation. In 2006, Norway decided to cancel \$80 million of debts on the basis of shared responsibility for the failure of the loans, which were given to support ship exports. This has fuelled the debate on so-called ‘illegitimate’ debts – where rich countries have lent money to serve their own political or commercial ends, and the funds have not benefited the people of the receiving country. From dictator debts, to lending for useless projects or on unfair terms, examples of illegitimate debts abound. But lender countries are still stuck in the mindset of ‘forgiving’ poor countries their debts, rather than taking responsibility for their poor lending decisions in the first place.

All of which makes the Journey to Justice event in Birmingham much more than simply remembrance of things past. With participants from Jamaica, Zambia, South Africa and the Philippines, as well as interviews, music and film at the International Convention Centre – the same venue where the G8 met in 1998 – campaigners will certainly be celebrating the achievements of the last 10 years. But above all they will be focusing on finishing the task at hand – to drop all the debt and stop unjust debts building up again in the future.

For more information about Journey to Justice, see www.jubileedebtcampaign.org.uk

Contact Information:

Chair: Carol Barta (chair@mapj.org)
Vice-Chair: Jon Tveite (vice-chair@mapj.org)
Treasurer: Anne Cowan (treasurer@mapj.org)
Campus Organizer: Alissa Vining
(campus-organizer@mapj.org)
Newsletter Editor: Lisa Hamer
(newsletter-editor@mapj.org)

Committees:

MAPJ is developing a stronger committee system. If you are interested in becoming more involved, consider joining one of the following committees: El Salvador Sister City; Programming; Action on Iran; Rallies and Protests; Legislative Action; Monthly Potlucks; Nominating; Website.

MAPJ
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Manhattan, KS 66505

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MAPJ Calendar

June 2008

- 11 - Anti-war Protest - Triangle Park, Aggieville 4:30-5:30. Every Wednesday
- 12 - Community Bridge Radio Show, 5:00 pm, KSDB 91.9 FM - topic: Juneteenth
- 19 - Community Bridge Radio Show, 5:00 pm, KSDB 91.9 FM - topic: Voter ID laws
- MAPJ Board Meeting, 7 pm, Mennonite Church - all MAPJ members welcome.
- 24 - Pastors for Peace Delegation visit - First Congregational Church, Potluck with speaker. See newsletter article
- 26 - Community Bridge Radio Show, 5:00 pm, KSDB 91.9 FM - topic: LGBT Civil rights

July 2008

- 3 - Community Bridge Radio Show, 5:00 pm, KSDB 91.9 FM - topic: Lee Jones, Democrat Candidate for US Senate
- 10 - Community Bridge Radio Show, 5:00 pm, KSDB 91.9 FM - topic: TBA
- 17 - Community Bridge Radio Show, 5:00 pm, KSDB 91.9 FM - topic: TBA

- 17 - MAPJ Board Meeting, 7 pm, Mennonite Church - all MAPJ members welcome.
- Community Bridge Radio Show, 5:00 pm, KSDB 91.9 FM - topic: Anti-Smoking Ordinance
- 31 - Community Bridge Radio Show, 5:00 pm, KSDB 91.9 FM - topic: TBA
- 31 - August 2 - National Friends of Sabeel Retreat and Strategy Meeting - Check this out at www.friends@fosna.org

August 2008

- 4 - First Monday Potluck - Monthly gathering at UU Fellowship on Zeandale Road, 6:30 pm. Discussion about important issues.
- 7 - Community Bridge Radio Show, 5:00 pm, KSDB 91.9 FM - topic: TBA
- 28 - Community Bridge Radio Show, 5:00 pm, KSDB 91.9 FM - begins Fall Season

September 2008

- 1-2 - March on Republican National Convention, St Paul, MN - Addressing issues of poverty, health care and the war. www.marchonrnc.org or www.economichumanrights.org