



Access to care at the root of the American mental health problem

The Healthcare Series – Part 1 of 3

By Jo Bohn

Since the deinstitutionalization of public mental health facilities began in the 1970s, our nation's funding of mental and behavioral health services has been on a steep downward slope. At the same time, patients needing mental health services and medications have increased significantly in recent years.

A March 2012 congressional briefing is just one report that has shed some light on this dangerous dichotomy, revealing continued increases in U.S. consumers receiving mental health services for mental illnesses and increased drug and substance abuse since 2007, alongside \$4.35 billion in funding decreases to state public mental health services from 2009 to 2012.

A March 2011 report by the National Association on Mental Illness (NAMI) released shortly after the shooting incident involving Rep. Gabrielle Giffords noted the decreases in mental health services funding in recent years have occurred in concert with more frequent visits to emergency rooms, hospitalizations, homelessness, and incidents with juvenile and criminal law enforcement, deaths and suicide.

This increase in mental health patients stems from a wide variety of societal challenges including economic struggle, psychological and emotional trauma among veterans, relationship and career stresses,



Jo Bohn

substance abuse, natural disasters, and chronic disease.

The findings of these reports, coupled with the Virginia Tech shootings in 2007 and the 2012 tragedies in Aurora, CO and Newtown, CT, show similar underlying factors. Do we have a gun control issue to address in this country? Yes, and there are many at work to address it. But at the root of these violent episodes is the mental and behavioral health of our nation.

The need for increased mental health services spans all segments of the population. Compounding the societal challenges is the issue of access to services. Decreases in funding, along with the shift from inpatient- to outpatient-focused services, have in some cases resulted in access barriers to needed mental health care. In addition, the difference in coverage between individual plans and group plans is prohibitive for many people. Individual plans sometimes have more limited benefits than group plans—a real concern for entrepreneurs and small businesses. When insurance doesn't provide coverage, or if patients fear stigmatization and impact to their insurability, they or their families are left with high out-of-pocket expenses that encroach on precious discretionary income. Often, these people will forego needed treatment.

The high price tag of mental health care has an impact on multiple generations, harming not only adults who forego treatment for financial reasons, but also children with mental illness whose parents can't fit the bill for expensive treatment. A 2011 Kaiser Family Foundation report noted that 60% of adults and 70% of children that needed treatment in 2009 for mental health services did not receive it, with affordability being the greatest reason.

The complexities of the U.S. healthcare system are vast. Tremendous changes in technology, cultural norms, structure and policy will have a long-lasting impact on mental health services in this country. On the mental health services side of the industry, the complexities are formidable. Involuntary hospitalizations, consents for communication, and the balancing of patient

privacy with societal protection are just a few to consider.

Help is coming with future mental health reforms, but change takes time. The 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) will bring expansion of Medicaid coverage in 2014 that includes mental health services for Medicaid-eligible patients. Will integration of mental health and primary care services be part of this transformation? Will the nation-wide influx of health information technologies improve the access to and quality of care for mental health patients?

How can we change the system to reduce risk of harm and improve the quality of life for all citizens our local communities? What social determinants can we influence to improve the system? A nation embroiled in sequestration needs to continue rededication of funding to services that support the mental health of its people and reduce risk of harm to its citizens.

Mental health issues are sometimes hidden—you can't see them until they manifest themselves outwardly. In some families, signs of mental health issues are swept under the rug or hidden in the proverbial closet in hopes that they will go away with age. Left untreated, they can have negative multi-generational effects and take the lives of loved ones. Often, the greatest harm we do is in our inaction. Now is the time for change and now is the time action.

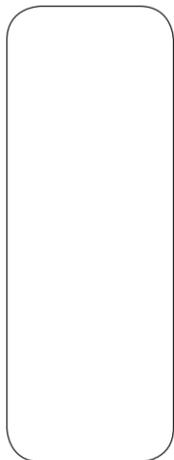
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History tells us Citizens United can be defeated

by Derek Cressman

When the infamous Citizens United v. FEC ruling of the US Supreme Court came down three years ago, many of us thought that citizen action to reverse it by constitutional amendment would become an important long-term project.

But after seeing the torrents of cash from billionaires and corporations flood our elections in 2012, and after seeing intentional efforts to suppress votes in several states, we are reminded of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s call to respond to the "fierce urgency of now."

No one can know how long it will take. On the other hand, our history teaches us that it need not take long.

It is true that some amendments, such as the abolition of slavery and voting rights for women, have taken decades. These were changes that bridged wide divisions between and among people. It required time for public opinion to evolve and strengthen.

When the people have been in agreement, we have passed amendments quickly. For example, the 26th Amendment was ratified in only three months. That amendment changed the voting age to 18.

Last fall, we saw voters by margins of three-to-one in the red state of Montana, purple state Colorado, and blue state Massachusetts instruct their members of Congress by referendum to support a US constitutional amendment to reverse Citizens United and its undemocratic legal precedent.

In January 2013 the Los Angeles City Council voted to approve a voter instruction measure for the next general election. The

Chicago and San Francisco city councils did the same in 2012. Meanwhile, Common Cause is working with Regnat Populus in Arkansas to approve a state ballot initiative for 2014. See www.freespeechforpeople.org for more.

No one seriously doubts what people want. They want elections decided by people instead of money. The only question is whether our representatives in Congress will actually represent people. If we, the people, stubbornly insist that they do, maybe we will win.

Just imagine citizens politely sitting in the district offices of every member of Congress day after day until Congress acts to reverse Citizens United.

Just imagine voters of every persuasion pledging to vote against any member of Congress who refuses to act to reverse Citizens United.

Just imagine a President telling Congress that he will veto their earmarked appropriations until they act to reverse Citizens United.

These steps may not happen this year. But we can begin laying the groundwork today. Reversing Citizens United is about determination more than it is about time. That determination is building up city by city and state by state.

When, we the people, decide what we want, we win. Our history teaches us that it doesn't take long for us to make something happen once we've come to agreement.

Derek Cressman is the Vice President of State Operations for Common Cause. His email is dcressman@commoncause.org.

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Diane Randall at the TTL shows we have no truer “Friends” than those at the (Quaker) FCNL

by Ike Thacker

One of the most beautiful combinations of words in the entire peace and social-justice movement is the Friends Committee on National Legislation’s (FCNL) statement of what it is all about, namely:

We seek a world free of war
and the threat of war.
We seek a society with equity
and justice for all.
We seek a community where every
person’s potential may be fulfilled.
We seek an earth restored.

Diane Randall, national Executive Secretary and head of the FCNL’s (Quaker) lobbying unit, pulled off the daunting task of doing this statement justice at the March 21 Third Thursday Lunch (TTL). Weaving her comments around three bumper sticker messages with which her forty or so years with the FCNL have no doubt made her very familiar, Randall told her audience of the vital work in Congress in which the FCNL has been engaging, from nuclear disarmament to the “defense” budget to global warming, as comprehensively and convincingly as anyone could be expected to, given less than an hour. The former high-school teacher from Nebraska, who started her own peace-and-social-justice journey fighting for the elimination of nuclear weapons, “done good,” indeed.

The first bumper sticker around whose theme Randall wove her words is one that she said has even made the New York Times crossword puzzle as “War ____ Answer:” WAR IS NOT THE ANSWER. No truer statement, perhaps, has ever been made; and it seems that we may even be making some headway toward getting the world to see this! It is now very generally agreed, for example, that invading Iraq was not the answer (the U.S. admits,

some 4,500 dead U.S. military personnel and perhaps a million dead Iraqis too late, not to mention the even more numerous injured and displaced), noted Randall. This admission no doubt helps in the FCNL’s lobbying against Senate Resolution 65, of which Randall also spoke. This Resolution is a nonbinding statement of full support for Israel vis-à-vis Iran. Let us hope that Randall and her cohorts are successful in stopping it, and the next “inevitable” war (read “invasion,” as my friend Dr. Peggy Kidwell always reminds us)—a war which would definitely not be the answer to anything but how to avoid peace.

Randall believes that the current administration really is reluctant to use force, despite its temporary escalation of the invasion of Afghanistan and vastly increased use of unmanned aerial vehicles (drones), something of which I am less certain—accepting the Nobel Peace Prize, President Obama was adamant that he deals with the world “as it is”—but her view has much to recommend it. We can at least hope that it is true and, as Randall exhorted, not get discouraged about contacting our local and national elected officials: they do listen, at least sometimes.

Two specific FCNL programs that Randall mentioned in connection with the “War is Not the Answer” bumper sticker were Peaceful Prevention of Deadly Conflict, which operates more than others of its programs on the premise that the geneses of the varied forms of violence are related, and Alternatives to Violence, the latter of which relies partly on community engagement. Alternatives to Violence has been especially active, she said, in Kenya, where there are more Quakers than in any other country, and there has been markedly little of the endemic violence there since it started.

The second of Randall’s thematic bumper stickers was, “If You Want Peace,



Diane Randall talks peace at March’s Third Thursday Luncheon at the Ruddyard Kipling Restaurant

Work for Justice.” This bumper sticker is based on the solid-as-a-rock foundation that violence often comes from injustice; and gets at the intimate connection between the two “halves” (social justice and peace) of our movement of which I wrote in reporting on the February TTL. Immigration reform and passage of the Violence Against Women Act, the latter of which has in fact passed the House (complete with the important Native American, LGBTQ, etc. components), said Randall, are two areas in which the FCNL is working for the justice that is essential for true peace. A third is climate change, stopping which is part of our struggles for

justice in part because those hurt worst by global warming are often minorities and the poor. There are unfortunately few climate change bills, said Randall, but the FCNL supports them actively; and there is at least some indication of progress in getting legislators to see that the increased incidence of droughts and extreme weather is part of the long-partially-understood equation.

The third and final bumper sticker Randall used to frame her remarks was, “Think Globally, Act Locally.” This, she used in part to again exhort her listeners to be in contact with their local and more “distant”

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FOR’s Mission Statement

The Fellowship of Reconciliation seeks to replace violence, war, racism and economic injustice with nonviolence, peace and justice. We are an interfaith organization committed to active nonviolence as a transforming way of life and as a means of radical change. We educate, train, build coalitions, and engage in nonviolent and compassionate actions locally, nationally, and globally.



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Since 1915, the Fellowship of Reconciliation in the United States has led campaigns to obtain legal rights for conscientious objectors, win civil rights for all Americans, end the Vietnam War, oppose U.S. intervention in the Third World, and reverse the superpowers’ arms race. An interfaith pacifist organization, the FOR has members from many religious and ethnic traditions. It is part of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, with affiliates in 40 countries.

In the development of its program FOR depends upon persons who seek to apply these principles to every area of life. If you are not already a member, we invite you to join us in this endeavor. Membership consists of signing the Statement of Purpose, indicating that you agree with FOR goals.

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Whither Labor?

By Ira Grupper

It is no secret that the U.S. labor movement is in crisis. It is hemorrhaging union members, and the rough economy has meant tough times during various contract negotiations. There are important attempts by the AFL-CIO to meet this downward slide. David Moberg writes (in *These Times*): AFL-CIO president Richard Trumka and other leaders hope to both draw strength from, and add heft to, the progressive movement. The plans would move labor more out of its traditional insularity and into greater solidarity—the original soul of organized labor—not only within labor but also with other progressive groups.

“Both Trumka and Communications Workers [CWA] President Larry Cohen, who heads the federation’s organizing committee, said... that the goal was not just gaining new members or better contracts,

LABOR PAEANS

important as they may be.” Labor would try “to ‘connect the dots’ among causes—such as immigrant rights, worker rights, campaign and voting reform—to build a mass movement for a strong democracy at work and in the public arena.”

They “emphasized that the AFL-CIO must reflect the labor movement’s changing shape, reaching beyond its core of legally recognized unions to new forms of worker representation, like the 3.1 million-member Working America, workers’ centers (up from a handful to more than 200 in a few years), the OUR Walmart movement and non-union alliances of workers such as taxi drivers, domestic workers and food service workers.” Stay tuned.

The AFL-CIO has many issues to confront, showing the clash between self-

interest and class-interest. The Keystone XL Pipeline, and the general problem of creating and retaining jobs versus the need to protect and improve our environment—these will signal which way organized labor is going. Stay tuned.

What about high unemployment? To his credit, Mr. Obama’s balanced budget plan has some merit. He has the opportunity to create jobs. Maybe he can look into Congress’s Progressive Caucus budget suggestions.

Maybe our President should steer clear of ways to cut Social Security and Medicare. What if we stopped spending on war preparations, and really cut tax loopholes? What if we taxed the rich, ended the drone stupidity, exposed sequestration as the red herring it really is? It will, some estimate, cut 10,000 teaching jobs, 70,000 spots for preschoolers in Head Start, and so much more.

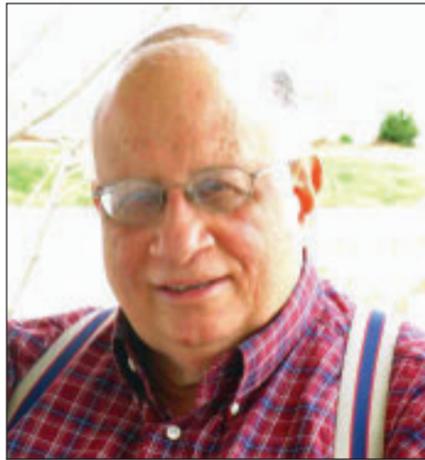
Workers’ wages are in decline, while the Federal Reserve’s stimulus program makes the rich richer. Unemployment seems to be lessening, but is it enough? How about raising the minimum wage proportionate to the rise in the cost-of-living, for starters?

These are issues organized labor must be very clear to stress.

Do you remember when the U.S. military unleashed weapons of mass destruction against Iraq? We claimed that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, and that al-Qaeda was running the show for Saddam Hussein?

Do you also remember when U.S. government agencies later testified that they could find no weapons of mass destruction and that al-Qaeda was not a big presence?

Well, how did all of this impact Iraqi civil society? Reports U.S. Labor Against the War (USLAW): “Despite all the talk about fostering democracy and human rights in Iraq, workers there continue to be denied the right to freely organize trade unions and negotiate over the terms of their labor—just



Ira Grupper

as they were under Saddam Hussein.

“In the last two years, repression against unions has escalated. A wave of peaceful strikes has recently swept Iraq as workers seek to redress grievances and assert their rights. The response of the Al Maliki government has been to crack down on discontent with disciplinary action against union activists, and even criminal complaints against union leaders.

“Recently the Ministry of Oil lodged a criminal complaint against Hassan Juma’a Awad, president of the Iraq Federation of Oil Unions, claiming he was responsible for strikes in the oil industry.... If convicted, he could face stiff fines and five years in prison. He was ordered to appear in court on April 7 to respond to charges leveled against him.

“Labor organizations across the U.S., including the AFL-CIO, and around the world have responded by signing a letter to Prime Minister Nouri Al Maliki demanding that all charges against Hassan Juma’a be immediately withdrawn and that persecution of Iraqi workers peacefully exercising their rights must cease.

“They further demand that the Iraqi

government promptly enact a basic labor and trade union law that guarantees the right of workers to organize and join unions of their choosing free from government interference and harassment, and that both public and private employers be required to negotiate over the terms and conditions of employment with the unions chosen by their employees.”

On the local front: Kentuckians for the Commonwealth is a dedicated group of progressive activists involved in many issues. This past February, as I have for many years, I joined its I Love Mountains Day, a large number of demonstrators at our capitol in Frankfort, demanding government act to stop coal companies from shearing the tops off our beautiful mountains to get at the coal seams beneath, as well as the environmental devastation this causes as the sludge runs downhill.

Students from the University of Louisville and Bellarmine University (and a few teachers) filled a bus for the trip. I was privileged to be on the bus. I wrote to the group: “My feelings (about the demonstration): The gathering was invigorating and upbeat, a way for those of us who favor environmental justice to cohere and push for change. Yet, I know that the gathering, and I have gone to several in the past as well, has zero effect on the governor (whose main financial backer has been Big Coal) or the legislature (there are maybe 7 or 8 decent legislators; the rest are reactionaries). So, here is the question: where do we go from here?”

Ira Grupper is a retired factory worker, union shop steward, labor organizer and delegate to the Greater Louisville Central Labor Council. He is on the board of KY Labor Institute, KY Alliance Against Racist & Political Repression, and Metro Disability Coalition. Contact Ira Grupper at irag@iglou.com.

University of Louisville holds Israeli Apartheid Week

By Russ Greenleaf

Most Israelis use the word “apartheid” when they talk about Israel’s treatment of the Palestinians. That was the message that University of Louisville Professor Avery Kolers conveyed in a lecture for the opening event of Israeli Apartheid Week 2013 at the University of Louisville Belknap Campus.

Kolers is Israeli and Jewish, as well as holding Canadian and US citizenships. He is an Associate Professor of Philosophy, specializing in ethics. He is the acting Chair of the Jewish Studies Committee and of the Social Change Program at the University of Louisville.

Kolers said Israel’s treatment of the Palestinians meets the definition of apartheid. He cited a recent survey conducted in Israel that showed that over 50% of Israelis believe that Israel’s policies towards the Palestinians have aspects that

the Israelis describe as apartheid. For example, Israel enforces two different sets of laws, one for Jews and one for non-Jews. The laws for Jews are more lenient and favorable, conferring a privileged status. The laws for Palestinians are harsher and impose a disadvantaged, second-class status upon them, even within Israel itself.

This is despite the fact that within Israel itself (not including the West Bank and Gaza) the Palestinians (also called “Israeli Arabs”) have the right to vote and are nominally equal citizens of Israel. Nevertheless, institutionalized discrimination against them is widespread, ranging from segregated housing to the denial of water, electricity, and other services to Palestinian towns and villages within Israel.

Apartheid in the West Bank

For Palestinians living under Israeli military occupation in the West Bank and

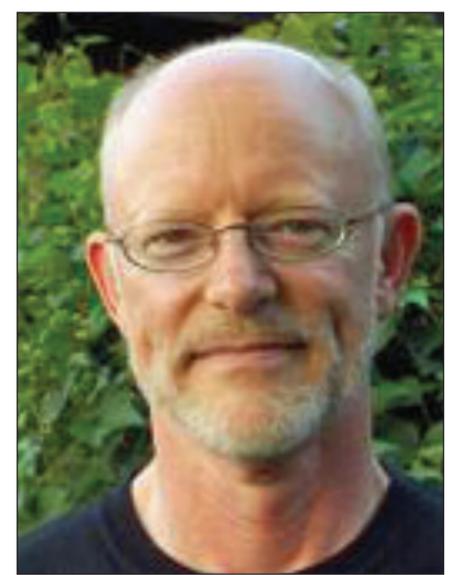
Gaza, the situation is much worse. In eight events during Israeli Apartheid Week, six speakers at the University of Louisville explained how the Palestinians suffer under a brutal apartheid regime imposed on them by the increasingly repressive right-wing government of Israel.

They explained that the West Bank is considered by international law (and by the United States) to be Palestinian land, and not part of Israel. However, the Israel disagrees with this perspective and imposes military rule and military law upon the Palestinians living there. This denies them the most basic human rights that we all take for granted. There, Palestinians do not have the right to vote in Israeli elections. They are taxed and ruled by Israel without any democratic representation at all. Israel arrests and imprisons them without charges, or trial, for simply participating in non-violent demonstrations asking for their human rights.

Frequently Israel kills Palestinians on the suspicion that they are engaging in armed rebellion against Israel’s military occupation of their land. Although armed struggle against occupation is a right guaranteed to all people under international law, such armed rebellion by Palestinians is called “terrorism” by Israel and is dutifully reported as such by most of the US media. The few Palestinian groups that still engage in armed rebellion are designated as terrorist organizations by both Israel and the United States government. Hamas is an example.

Palestinian non-violent resistance

Most Palestinians have given up armed struggle in favor of the non-violent resistance methods pioneered by Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The speakers at Israeli Apartheid Week emphasized that the future belongs to non-violent resistance. The Oscar-nominated film *Five Broken Cameras* documented the growth of the Pal-



Russ Greenleaf

estinian non-violent resistance movement.

The week’s keynote speaker, Palestinian journalist Laila El Haddad, received spontaneous applause when she said, “building walls is not the way to achieve peace.” The crowd applauded again when she said, “the key to peace is for Israel-Palestine to become one state where civil rights and human rights are given equally to all—Jews and non-Jews alike.”

University of Louisville student Reem Hussein, who is Palestinian and lived in the West Bank, also spoke. She brought the audience to tears when she described how she and her family suffered, and how their lives and livelihoods were destroyed by Israel’s apartheid policies towards the Palestinians.

Nineteen-year-old Palestinian human rights activist Arafat Kanaan was the week’s final speaker. He was wounded four times by Israeli soldiers while he was participating in non-violent demonstrations in the West Bank town of Ni’iin. Even after all he has

(continued on page 6)

Hello *FORsooth* Reader!

Did you know that it costs \$800.00 to produce and distribute each issue of *FORsooth*? FOR and the editors at *FORsooth* work hard to bring you progressive voices from your community—providing a rare and precious platform for issues that are too often drowned out in the mainstream media. If you value the news and opinions you read here, please consider supporting *FORsooth* by making a tax-deductible donation to the Louisville FOR.

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Community remembers the life of Rev. Henry Moore Humphrey Jr.

By Gracie Lewis

The Rev. Dr. Henry Moore Humphrey Jr. passed on Wednesday, December 12, 2012. He died on a historical date, 12-12-12, at a significant time of 7:00 p.m. The number twelve signifies wholeness. The number seven in the biblical sense means completion, perfection and being finished. God created the heavens and the earth in six days and he rested on the seventh day from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it (Genesis 2:1-3). Rev. Humphrey died at the seventh hour and was the father of seven children. His divine purpose and work in this life was finished.

His Homegoing services were held at King Solomon Baptist Church on December 22, 2012. Rev. Broderick Purvis officiated the services. Rev. Charles Elliott Jr., pastor of King Solomon Baptist Church, gave the eulogy. What a day of rejoicing we had.

Rev. Humphrey was a very active part of our community. He was instrumental in the establishment of the Erwin House, a halfway house for ex-offenders. There he also served as the Chairman of the Board. He spearheaded and assisted in the implementation of a juvenile program. He was a member of the Central District Association, at one point during his tenure with the association he served as the Executive Board Treasurer. He was an active member of the Interdenominational Ministerial Coalition. He was also an active member of the NAACP and various other organizations throughout the City of Louisville.



Gracie Lewis

Rev. Humphrey was the first son of the late Mildred Humphrey and the late Rev. Henry Moore Humphrey Sr. His siblings included one sister, Mildred Gene Hazley, the late Isaiah Humphrey and Alphonso Humphrey. He was married to Mary E. Humphrey, and was the father of seven children: Henry, III; Dona Ann; Julia Lynn; Theresa; Kendra; John and Derrick.

Rev. Humphrey was baptized, licensed and ordained to preach the gospel within Shiloh Baptist Church where he served as the assistant pastor under the leadership of his father. Rev. Humphrey Jr. was called to the pastorate of the Shiloh Baptist Church in June of 1978, where he remained as pastor for 34 years, until the time of his passing. Under his dynamic and spiritual

leadership, approximately 3,100 members were added to the church roster. Among his numerous accomplishments was his successful leadership of the church through an extensive renovation process in the amount of \$300,000.

The life and legacy of Rev. Humphrey was celebrated throughout his homegoing service. Sister Gwen Jeffrey sang "I'm on my way to Heaven." What I believe was one of the most memorable parts of the service was the reading of a tribute by his family: Dona, Nate, DonRicka, Derra and Lil Nate. His family called attention to the symbolic moment at which Rev. Humphrey passed—the 7th hour of the 12th day in the 12th month during the 12th year. He received his call letting him know, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou has been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of the Lord."

Rev. Dr. Frank Smith, Jr., President of the Interdenominational Ministerial Coalition reflected on how compassionate Henry was and how he was always willing to be a supporter, an encourager and a director.

Rev. Dr. Walter Malone spoke about how he used to refer to Henry as "The Godfather." He spoke of how Rev. Humphrey, like Moses, didn't stumble into the ministry—he was called. And like Moses leading his people through the wilderness, Rev. Humphrey provided 34 years of pastoral care and encouragement to many families.

The Rev. Jesse V. Bottom Jr., Pastor

of Beulah Baptist Church in Poughkeepsie, New York, told stories from the childhood he shared with Rev. Humphrey. Henry was from Smoketown, while Jesse lived "in town," and was an intense rivalry between the 7th graders. "Every day we got beat up and had our lunch money taken away from us," Jesse said. "But one day, I looked up and saw Henry coming my way. The boys started backing up away from me when Henry showed up. My backup had arrived on the scene. The Smoketown posse had to back up."

The Rev. Charles Elliott gave the eulogy. The scripture came from Revelation 2:10, in which John wrote to the church at Ephesus that "you are going to experience trials and tribulations, but if you remain faithful until death, you will receive a crown of life." Rev. Elliott told those gathered that when he was at the bedside of Rev. Humphrey, he asked him to preach for him at his next pastor's anniversary banquet. But Henry replied, "Reverend, I don't think so." He knew that whatever happens, his work was finished. Elliot told us that Henry had now gone on to get his crown of life. And if we remain faithful until death, we too will receive it. Following this message, we sang "Going Up Yonder."

Gracie Lewis is a longtime activist for social and racial justice. She works with the Kentucky Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression. www.louisvillepeace.org/kyalliance.html.

Choices and the homeless

By Ike Thacker

I must confess to a certain bias in the matter I am about to discuss, for it seems to me perfectly reasonable to suggest, as has the venerable Jonathan Kozol, that a newly homeless woman standing on a New York traffic island screaming for revenge until her single room is restored to her sounds eminently mentally healthy compared to a president who, as sort of a parting shot three days before Christmas in 1988, seriously claimed that the homeless "make it their own choice."

Counts have shown that there are somewhere between 9,000 and 11,000 homeless people in Louisville, defined as in shelters or on the street; and JCPS now reckons that some 13,000 of its students, or one in eight (!), is homeless—an increase of more than 20 percent in just one year. Let us briefly explore the lifestyles that, according to the late Ronald Reagan, these largely hidden homeless humans have "chosen."

The first thing the homeless "choose" is hunger. Suffice it to report that a study, commissioned by the Food and Nutrition Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and prepared by the Urban Institute found that 37 percent of the homeless reported eating one meal a day or less, and that 36 percent go one day or more per week without eating anything.

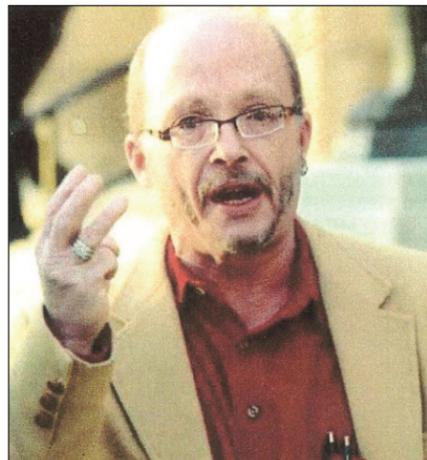
Not surprisingly, then, the homeless also "choose" ill health. A key conclusion of a nationwide study conducted by the National Academy of Sciences (hardly a bastion of bleeding-heart liberalism) was the following: "The fundamental problem encountered by homeless people—lack of a stable residence—has a direct and deleterious impact on health. Not only does homelessness cause health problems, it perpetuates and exacerbates poor health by seriously impeding efforts to treat disease and reduce disability." Soup kitchens serve what they can afford; thus, even to treat high blood pressure with a low-sodium diet becomes almost impossible. Bed rest is impossible if you don't have a bed. The simplest prescriptions for getting well

simply cannot be effected by the homeless.

And there are myriad problems that need treating. In the old conservative journal *Commentary*, Harvard's Thomas J. Main reports that between 70 and 80 percent of homeless people suffer from one or more major disability; basing his conclusions on a study of nearly 30,000 homeless persons seen in health clinics nationwide, James D. Wright found that homeless children suffer various physical disorders at rates "two to ten times those seen among children in general." Even these numbers are likely understated, as Lillian Gelberg and Lawrence Linn have noted in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA), because "determining the health status of the homeless by sampling residents of shelters as is usually done seriously underestimates the prevalence of many conditions" by ignoring "the most severely ill, those living outdoors." One can well imagine, then, why some 20 percent of the homeless in the previously-cited Food and Nutrition Service study reported having tried to commit suicide.

Many of the homeless apparently don't want to get old if it means continuing to live without a home. Wright notes that only three percent of the homeless are over sixty-five; this fact results partly from the obtaining of pensions and the like (along with Social Security) by the elderly, but also partly from the simple fact that lives on the street end early. A study of deaths of the homeless in Atlanta, reported in JAMA, found that the median age at death was 44 years; a Swedish study found that observed mortality among the homeless "exceeded the age adjusted expected mortality by a factor of approximately four," and that the average age at death was about 53; and a similar figure was reached (actually in this case the average age at death was 51) in a nationwide study conducted in the United States as a whole. It appears that the homeless are "choosing" not to contribute to the ever-increasing average life expectancy in the U.S., which now approaches 80 years.

Against this unsurprising but tragic litany of obscenely serious ills suffered by



Ike Thacker

homeless humans, naysayers say several things. First, they allege that there are "not many" homeless people. Well, at a time when the economy was in much better health than it or homeless people are now, July 1995, the *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* suggested that some 12 million persons, or 6.5 percent of the adult population (then), experience homelessness sometime during their lives. And it is by now well-known that that same president who took his parting shot at the homeless in Christmastime 1988 virtually created a whole new class of homeless people, homeless working families, by cutting public housing assistance by 78 percent. That number has continued to grow with the recent deep economic recession. So the second argument advanced by the naysayers in their attempt to minimize "the homeless thing" (a la "the vision thing"), that most of the homeless are single men and single women, is in the wake of Ronald Reagan not only irrelevant but false.

Our friendly naysayers argue also, though, that most of the homeless are either "undeserving" (whatever that means) of our help or incapable of putting it to good use. It is true but of little relevance that many of the homeless are mentally ill (The New Republic's estimate of one-third, based on an 18-city National Institutes of Mental Health study, seems the most reasonable to me). But this simply does not mean that they could not be helped by having a place to call home, a place to live! And it is at least as likely that homelessness causes mental illness, as the reverse. Thus the

mentally ill should receive even more of our attention than emotionally sturdier homeless persons for the disarmingly simple reason that they need more help.

Again, our naysayers will respond that most of the homeless are beyond help. This is another misconception. As the authors of the NAS study have pointed out, the proportion of the homeless with a high school diploma has increased dramatically, from only 19 percent in 1963 to well over half now. Since the recessions of the 1980s (along with Reagan's draconian cuts) and 2008, people who had never dreamed they would ever be homeless, were rudely awakened.

In short, beginning with Reagan's years and extending all the way (so far) to 2013, the U.S. has certainly made the "choice" to be homeless an easy one. While increasing the supply of government-subsidized low-cost housing for those who need it is no panacea, it is probably the best we can hope for under capitalism. It's not as if the United States would be blazing a new trail: William van Vliet of the University of Colorado points out that the social housing sector in Great Britain is 27 percent of the total market, in the Netherlands 43 percent, in Germany 20 percent, and in Sweden 35 percent. Here in the U.S., the comparable figure is 1.5 percent.

In keeping with my policy in this essay of leaving the soapbox-climbing (mostly) to others, I will close with an approving quotation of JAMA's September 8, 1989 editorial, which obviously came after Reagan's public-housing cuts but before our recent near-plunge into a full-fledged Depression. It suggests a different kind of "choice" having been made in the U.S. as regards our homeless citizens: "We forget that the other developed countries have successful public programs that provide basic levels of housing...to all citizens much as we provide basic education for all...Poverty such as we see on the streets of large American cities is not inevitable. Homelessness and intractable poverty are not social givens but the results of particular social policies."

Ike Thacker is an advocate for political, social, and economic democracy. He focuses especially on housing issues, believing simply that everyone deserves a place to call home, and may be contacted at ike.thacker@gmail.com.



Dollar Store damage to West Louisville

By Martina Nichols Kunnecke

TROJAN HORSE: Vehicle for introducing destructive elements under the guise of a gift—originating from Greek legend, where a huge wooden horse concealing warriors was used to subjugate the city of Troy.

As Preservation Month, May seems appropriate for discussing the respect due our historic neighborhoods and their future. To those lacking adequate shopping and housing spaces, developers use “Anything is better than what is there now” to justify demolition and new construction that neither complies with neighborhood plans nor addresses market needs. Thus, West Louisville’s architectural infrastructure continues to erode thanks to “predatory” development, under the pretext of “progress”.

In Butchertown, Clifton and NULU, the creative re-use of existing buildings for housing and a range of commercial needs reflects respect for old neighborhoods. In California, Portland or Chickasaw, buildings with similar characteristics are undervalued and likely to be destroyed in favor of new construction that falls far short of community standards and needs. East of 9th Street, vintage buildings are rehabbed for homes, eateries, galleries and an array of shops.

The west is forced to relinquish its architectural assets in deference to hypothetical industrial parks and “suburbanization” in the form of radically altered streetscapes, box stores and pre-fab houses. Some argue that these modes of development are better than nothing. Experience suggests what masquerades as progress are only ways to redesign West Louisville in the spirit of entrenched community bias, perpetuating economic injustice west of the 9th Street divide for nearly half a century.

Dollar Stores: A gift horse bringing more of the same

Increasingly, American communities are rejecting one of the mainstays of suburbanization – dollar stores. Convenient and “affordable”, the realities of dollar stores contradict the corporate promises.

Improved neighborhood appearance?

This is usually the dollar stores’ chief selling point. Yet, their large off street parking lots and boxy exteriors disrupt the residential nature of urban neighborhoods and introduce safety concerns. Notoriously understaffed, dollar stores bring loitering and property neglect – as one journalist in Seminole County Florida noted, “...the peeling paint and general seediness of the store I pass regularly on Columbus Drive – less than 2 miles from the one opening soon – does not exactly inspire confidence.”

Jobs? Jobs? Jobs?

Dollar stores bring primarily part-time, minimum wage positions. Critics of the two largest chains, Family Dollar and Dollar General, contend the companies realize super-profits by hiring few and through the “uncompensated labor of overworked store managers...” These practices have resulted in employee lawsuits in Alabama and New York.

Stimulate further development?

Both Family Dollar and Dollar General target less affluent communities with numerous stores within a few blocks. They drive local businesses under. Jobs are lost. Non-competing commerce (e.g., Check cashing, fast food, alcohol outlets) are their more likely neighbors.

Dollar Stores improve neighborhood safety?

Large parking lots and near windowless buildings provide inviting staging areas for robberies and other violent crime. Then there is alcohol. In 2012, Dollar General Store applied to sell alcohol in nearly 30 of its Indianapolis area stores. Within months, it filed similar applications in four nearby counties.

Last November, the dollar store at 17th and Market had applied to sell alcohol, less than 4 months after opening. The shocked Portland neighborhood opposed this application, noting “... the number of alcohol outlets in a community is directly



Martina N. Kunnecke

correlated with the number of murders, family violence, underage drinking, rapes, and other types of crime.”

Recipe for more of the same: A crippled West Louisville

Dollar stores are just one example of the suburbanization and retail homogenization that undermines smart growth. After decades of profits, national chains have revealed their underbelly—few jobs, low wages, threat to local businesses and profits going far away. Thus, they epitomize “predatory commerce”, extracting far more from the community than it contributes. This matters. Currently, at least six new dollar stores are under consideration for West Louisville, though five already exist within 2.5 miles of the Russell/Portland Market Street area alone.

As long as developers and political leaders view West Louisville primarily through the lens of quick profit and photo opportunities, box stores, pre-fab housing, liquor sales outlets and industrial parks will suppress authentic improvement.

West Louisville needs significant employment opportunities and companies that address the totality of market needs. The traditional urban streetscape promotes safety, product variety and local prosperity – in a way that a profusion of chain stores and industrial parks cannot. Imposing suburban features (i.e. chain stores, expansive parking lots, large gaps along city streets, etc.) on urban areas is yet another path to

stagnation or decay.

Building communities where local business can thrive and people of various incomes can live and work fuels the foot traffic necessary for economic revival. Lacking that, West Louisville remains compelled to satisfy most of its consumer needs outside its boundaries. Consequently, press conferences on demolition sites carry the scent of Trojan horses and should provoke questions:

Will this empty space remain vacant like the many others?

How many jobs paying a living wage will result?

Are market needs being met (e.g., pet store, bakery, skating rink, attractive housing, “sit-down” restaurant, etc.)

Who profits? Corporations faraway or across town?

Is this predatory commerce (i.e. big profits going outside the community from liquor sales, chain stores, cheap housing, and industrial parks)?

Does it reduce vehicular traffic, promote safe pedestrian and bicycle traffic?

Does it improve the neighborhood for residents? Will it entice people to move west?

Does it increase local ownership of homes and commercial space?

Does it reflect respect and good stewardship for Louisville’s neighborhoods?

As long as the commercial locus of control dwells outside the community, the recalcitrant pattern of economic injustice in West Louisville will persist: low wages, a degraded environment and a stunted future. This is essentially a feudal state of affairs; and, despite rhetoric to the contrary, West Louisville remains hostage to a cycle of subsistence living and “ghetto-ization”.

A freelance writer, researcher and lay historian, Martina Kunnecke is an advocate for social and environmental justice. She is also President of Neighborhood Planning and Preservation (NPP), a volunteer, metro-wide grassroots advocacy group with no governmental affiliation. NPP works to strengthen neighborhoods’ role in processes that affect their quality of life. Ms. Kunnecke may be contacted at nppkentuckiana@gmail.com.

Mainstream media promotes the myth of American democracy

By John Wilborn

In U. S. culture today, the mainstream media have failed to challenge or even discuss the status quo. The status quo consists partly of a ruling class, an economic system that rejects any notion that policies should promote the common good and promotes the myth that our political system is a real democracy.

The Constitutional Convention was a conservative counter-revolution whose primary objective was to form a powerful central government that would protect the property and privileges of a ruling elite. By the time of the convention in May 1787, common people had fostered uprisings in every state against the demands of creditors that debts be repaid in specie, or hard money. In response to the pleas of ordinary folk for relief, four states had issued paper money or passed tender laws. Such responsiveness by those states alarmed the founding fathers, or framers, who were wealthy men of property, whether landowners, merchants, or professionals. The words of Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts encapsulate the reigning view among those who attended the convention: “The evils we experience flow from the excess of democracy.” Edmund Randolph of Virginia also believed the problems of the times were due to the “turbulence and follies of democracy.”

The Framers were spectacularly successful in creating a powerful central government that would serve the interests of the wealthy. Jerry Fresia, author of *Toward an American Revolution*, summarizes the Framers’ achievements: “The new Constitution (Article I, Sections 8 and 10) simply swept



John Wilborn

away the sovereignty of the states in the areas of war and treaty-making, coining money, emitting bills of credit, and impairing the obligation of contracts. These sections also ... authorized the national government to tax directly and raise a national army and navy, and gave the national government the new powers to regulate commerce and establish a national currency.”

Thus the stage was set at the Founding for the domination of a ruling class and a capitalistic economic system that would benefit it. This system has produced grotesque income inequality that haunts our country today. But mainstream media bars any discussion of alternatives, nor does it allow context to be presented that would help citizens understand our dire straits. For example, by 2010 the income of the top one percent of the U. S. population had once again attained the level of the late 1920’s, just prior to the Great Depression. The consequences of this inequality are explained by noted economist Joseph Stiglitz: “The

more divided a society becomes in terms of wealth, the more reluctant the wealthy become to spend money on common needs. The rich don’t need to rely on government for parks or education or medical care or personal security – they can buy all these things for themselves. In the process, they become more distant from ordinary people, losing whatever empathy they may once have had.” No such commentary about a divided society or the rich becoming distant from ordinary people has appeared in the mainstream media. We have just witnessed an impasse between Congress and the President over budget priorities that have resulted in a “sequestration,” a ploy that is code for cutting spending on social programs for the common good.

The Framers designed a structure that would ensure minimal democracy by incorporating “checks and balances” into it. The concept of checks and balances is normally considered one that checks the power of one branch of government over other branches rather than one that ensures minimal democracy. Mr. Fresia explains: “... the Framers chose to discard the arrangement under the Articles of Confederation where the important powers of government were vested in a single legislature and resurrect England’s aristocratic system of ‘checks and balances.’ The purpose of checks and balances was this: public power would be ‘checked,’ especially the House of Representatives which was closest to the people. Moreover, the House of Representatives would be ‘balanced’ ... by giving property owners a greater voice ... : the Presidency and the Senate would

be elected directly by property owners through the electoral college and state legislatures respectively ...” The present-day consequences of this system are that ordinary citizens have a minimal voice in the political process. Our participation has been filtered to the point of voting only for approved candidates. We have absolutely no say in the budget or taxation, policies that would benefit our most vulnerable fellow citizens, or foreign policy; that is, the issues that affect nearly every American. However, the mainstream media acts as an effective gatekeeper, preventing any such analysis from becoming a topic of discussion.

If children, grandchildren, and future generations beyond are to realize the promise of living effective, secure, and fulfilling lives we elders must change the conversation. The conversation must reclaim the theme “people over property” and we must never forget that those with power and property make concessions only when they have no choice. What must we citizens do? We must change the conversation by pressuring the mainstream media with whatever techniques are at our disposal, supporting alternative media, using social media to challenge the status quo, provide well-researched analysis and context, promote the common good, destroy the myth that we live in a real democracy and promote traditional moral and community values rather than those that promote self-interest.

John Wilborn is a participant in the Louisville Media Reform Group and may be reached at jwilborn@iglou.com.

Mali offers old lessons on the prevention of violent conflict

By Chris Harmer

The recent French/Malian assault to re-take Diabaly—near Mali’s border with Mauritania—started from my “hometown,” Niono. Life was always hard for my neighbors there. It is now much harder for the projected 700,000 Malians who have left their homes to avoid groups like al-Qaeda in the Mahgreb (AQIM) and their imposition of Shariah law. A number of lessons can be drawn from this conflict.

Lesson 1: Weapons and combatants from one conflict usually end up escalating another conflict. The US must work to stop the flow of arms into and from conflict zones—and its own leading role in the worldwide arms trade. Similarly, the US and other governments must work to stop conflicts by addressing their underlying injustices. We must not let conflicts escalate to the point where oppressed people become freedom fighters, and the next generation grows up knowing nothing but fighting.

The current situation arose when AQIM and similar groups opportunistically joined Malian Tuareg nationalists who already had taken over a number of northern desert outposts. The takeovers occurred because of a shift in the long-standing power balance between the military and Tuareg nationalists. That shift was due to the advanced weaponry Tuareg nationalists brought back from Libya, after working there as mercenaries for the Kaddafi regime.

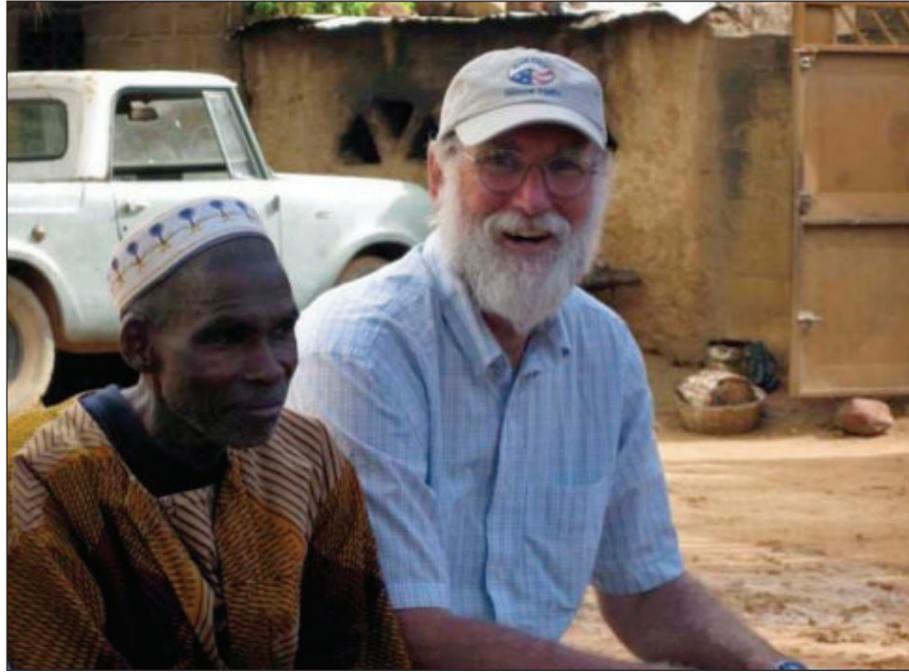
The badly-beaten Malian army demonstrated at the Presidential Palace to get more advanced weaponry to suppress the Tuareg. The demonstration turned — almost accidentally — into a de facto coup. In the resultant power vacuum, AQIM saw an opportunity for expansion with the well-armed Tuaregs.

What turned the Tuaregs into mercenaries and terrorist allies? Throughout history, arbitrary borders and oppressive “divide and conquer” strategies by colonial powers have pitted regional ethnic groups against each other and turned minorities like the Tuareg into militant nationalists. Since at least Malian independence 50+ years ago, the dominant ethnicities of the south have controlled the central government and have given a relatively small proportion of development spending to the north’s poorest. Armed conflict alternated with temporary truces, but without real commitment to eliminating underlying injustices. The intermittent breaks in fighting left the second-and third generation Tuareg combatants with little to do. Having known no other life, they became mercenaries. As with Al Qaeda, money—and power to impose their control—slowly became more important than ongoing injustices as their motivation.

Lesson 2: Uneven development is unjust development. Possibly more than the continuing Al Qaeda presence, the likely return of the bulk of pre-coup leadership and policies after the upcoming national elections is a major hindrance to progress toward a more equal, and therefore secure, Malian society. Where there is no justice, there will be no peace.

Recently, commentators have railed against the current French-led military response as an example of imperialism—particularly now that the French are saying they will leave a residual force after the initial campaign. Its impact, however, as “neo-colonialist intervention” in Mali pales beside decades of multi-national corporate investment—largely by South Africans, French, and Chinese companies—to reap large profits by extracting the scarce agricultural and mineral resources of Mali. The same countries’ governments often supply foreign aid as well, to partner with—or protect access for—their businesses. The quid pro quo for all these investments was a stable, donor-compliant government—imperialism by other means.

The government of Mali accepted that bargain, and the corruption that drove it. Nearly 60 percent of Mali’s national budget has come as public or private donor aid. In *The Crisis Caravan* (2010), Linda Polman



Chris Harmer, right, and his Malian host (and namesake), Mamadou Boly

reports that six to 20 percent of aid in many Third World countries is being siphoned off at each level of their distribution chains by governments, by NGOs, and—in conflict zones—by opposition militias that control disputed areas. According to Transparency International, Mali’s “Corruption Index” has continued to increase over the two decades of what the US calls its “model democracy”.

This corruption and resultant unequal application of resources inevitably led to broader inequalities in incomes and services across Malian society. In *The Spirit Level* (2009), Wilkinson and Pickett present overwhelming data showing the impact of income inequalities. Wider income gaps result in lower social mobility and social cohesion, and, not surprisingly, higher levels of physical violence in any society.

To break the cycle of violence, we can drive new mandatory international aid delivery protocols that both reduce corruption and measure impacts for the poorest of the poor. When we cannot meet those standards, we must stop deliveries,

Lesson 3: The military as a short-term fix, really isn’t. There are no waves of soldiers crossing Mali’s—or any African—borders. The real “war” in Mali is long-standing, institutionalized injustice. Mali, the US, and the international community must reassess whether the Malian—or French, or any—army is the right vehicle to address this challenge.

U.S. foreign policy is a balance of the “three D’s”—diplomacy, development, and “defense”. Since the Rwandan genocide and the embassy bombings, though, our African policy has increasingly shifted toward a military focus. This year, the Obama administration is going further and considering submittal of an Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF) in Africa. As with the AUMF in 2001 after 9/11, this would both legitimize and expand current US military activities by lumping all conflicts under a “war on terror”.

This emphasis on the military is part of the problem, not part of the solution. To be clear, there is no possibility of a complete military “victory”—French or otherwise—in Mali. Nor does there need to be. AQIM has been in the Malian desert for nearly a decade. Smuggling drugs and cigarettes to Europe—and kidnap ransoms—have made them the richest Al Qaeda affiliate. Like crime in any country, terrorist groups need to be marginalized within the society and their impacts managed. Like crime, they cannot be completely eliminated. In fact, trying to do so by bringing in foreign forces aids recruiting for these groups—as our intelligence community admitted in the 1996 National Intelligence Estimate (NIE).

There are already opportunities to manage, if not eradicate, AQIM. The brutality of Shariah law in AQIM-held areas has reduced the chance of major popular support—and protection—of AQIM if they try to move south again. In the north, the Tuareg nationalists — who were double-crossed by AQIM after they had jointly

driven the Malian army out of northern Mali last spring — have already joined with the central government and France against AQIM. Mali and its forces should take advantage of these openings. The Tuaregs and other northerners could be effective allies for controlling AQIM within their communities in the longer term.

Lesson 4: The best time to fight a war is before it starts. Of course there is a history of conflict between these allies. There are no “perfect angels” on any side of any armed conflict. Northerners have legitimate grievances, though, that must be addressed by the next Malian government—with more resources, and with more autonomy. Treating them the same as AQIM criminals will just restart the conflict between north and south. At the same time, no one should go unpunished for the war crimes reported by Human Rights Watch, including retribution killings of civilian Tuaregs by Malian soldiers, or

the rapes and enslavement of non-Tuareg northerners by some Tuareg forces.

Mali already has armed customs officers that could reduce AQIM’s smuggling if properly trained and supported internationally. Similarly, focused development of national policing—not military—capacities and professionalism would put Mali in a better position to manage criminal terrorists while maintaining civil authority and civilian support.

International assistance to the police could also include appropriate weaponry and hardware, intelligence networking, and a refusal by governments to pay ransoms. Together, customs agents and the national police could interdict weapons and armed groups coming into the country. That is how we approach terrorism inside developed countries. There is no reason to do it otherwise in the Third World, except to develop and exploit strategic surrogates for Western military actions, where Third World people both kill and die for us.

More broadly, the US people, government, and allies should make elimination of extreme poverty worldwide our primary strategic goal, not simply a tactic to gain governmental goodwill and political capital. Working constantly to provide capacity development for the poorest, while supporting strong, but professional and multi-ethnic national police forces and the rule of law is a more sustainable path to justice and security.

It is also a more cost-effective path. The FY 2013 State Department budget for foreign development aid was \$14.7 billion. The Pentagon budget was \$614 Billion. Estimates to eliminate extreme poverty worldwide are \$60-100 billion per year. The lessons of Mali’s recent history make clear which expenditure is the wiser.

Chris Harmer is a longtime member of LFOR Steering Committee, a Louisville native, and a Quaker. After retiring from a career in environmental consulting, he served in the Peace Corps in Mali from 2009-2011.



Diane Randall

(continued from page 2)

political representatives. They need to hear from “their” people (especially us, of course), she said. And thinking globally, even while acting locally, she correctly claimed, is more important than ever in this age of globalization. That broadening of even “local” issues was reflected in the fact that Randall spent much of her time in this segment talking about the budget sequester and its defense cuts, (which equal \$1 trillion from defense spending over the course of a decade) which are mostly national or even international issues despite their very profound local effects. The local and the global are in fact, as Randall pointed out, inextricably intertwined these 21st-century days; and the bloated military budget, which has roughly doubled in recent years, could certainly stand lots more cutting!

In short, Diane Randall in the TTL on March 21 at the Rudyard Kipling did the FCNL proud. In seeking as we indefatigably do a world “free of war and the threat of war,” which would make the solution of so very many other problems so very much less tragically problematic, we would do well to follow the lead of her and her organization, for we have much to learn from them.

Ike Thacker is an advocate for political, social, and economic democracy. He focuses especially on housing issues, believing simply that everyone deserves a place to call home, and may be contacted at ike.thacker@gmail.com.

Apartheid

(continued from page 3)

suffered at the hands of Israelis, he bears no ill will towards Jews. He said, “I welcome you to live in my land, Palestine. I welcome you to live in my land with me as equals. Just do not take my land from me and force me out like you have been doing.” The audience responded with loud applause and heartfelt appreciation.

Russ Greenleaf, who moderated the discussions, said the way to achieve equality for Palestinians is through Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS). “It worked in South Africa. It worked in Montgomery, Alabama. It will work in Israel. Boycott Israeli products. End all US aid to Israel, until Israel starts treating the Palestinians like human beings. The BDS movement is gaining momentum. It offers the best hope for peace. And it’s something we all can do.”

This week of educational events was co-sponsored by Students for Justice in Palestine, the Muslim Student Association, Louisville Jewish Voice for Peace, and the Louisville Committee for Peace in the Middle East.

Russ Greenleaf is a Jewish peace activist, writer, and organizer. He does volunteer work for Students for Justice in Palestine, for the Louisville Committee for Peace in the Middle East, for the Fellowship of Reconciliation, and for Louisville Jewish Voice for Peace.

A world of sound: Americana Digital and WFOR

By Jared Zarantonello

The Americana Community Center is a unique soundscape. Every day the Center's halls resonate with stories, music and conversations shared in an array of languages: Young internationals creating original music that expresses the experience of exile and dislocation; a group of women from East Africa, singing joyful songs during the break between their adult education classes; an immigrant man who has taken his knowledge of traditional Vietnamese instruments and adapted it for performance on a self-modified electric guitar; groups of musicians from Sudan and Burundi playing traditional music styles in order to continue their musical heritage. These are just a few examples of the amazing wealth of sound that can be heard at Americana.

Located in the heart of the diverse "South End" of Louisville, the Americana community is comprised of over 94 national/ethnic groups from around the world, many of whom are refugees who have had to flee war-torn countries. At Americana, participants engage in community programs such as English as a Second Language classes, the Fiberworks micro-enterprise group for women, After-School and Summer Youth Programs, a community garden, and much more.

Another great community program happening at Americana is the Americana Digital Music Project (ADMP). The ADMP is an innovative project that uses digital music production and recording to share and engage the diverse voices and sounds of our community. The project has two main aims; to teach music production skills to young aspiring international musicians, and to record traditional musicians in Louisville's international community to promote the preservation and development of global music culture in our city.

The project focuses their youth music production workshops on making "socially engaged" music. The students, who are mostly refugee students, use their lyrical and sonic creations as a platform for addressing a multitude of local and global social justice topics. Through their music, they offer critical analysis on issues such as community violence, poverty, militarism, negative elements in commercial media, as well as the everyday experiences of growing up as a refugee.

The project has also recently recorded musicians such as the Sudanese Rebaba Project, a group whose members met in a refugee camp after fleeing Sudan, and have continued their musical traditions here in Louisville by building homemade instruments. In another recent collaboration with the World Affairs Council of Kentucky and Southern Indiana, the project hosted a small workshop with visiting cultural Ambassadors from the People's Republic of China. During the visit, Kahrman



Jared Zarantonello

Keyum who is a musician from China's minority Uyghur culture, recorded a traditional Uyghur maqam, which the ADMP immediately began to remix into a beat and bass laden composition combining sonic cultures and music technique.

To help share these wonderful sounds with the wider Louisville community, WFOR: Forward Radio, a non-profit community media project, has partnered with the ADMP to showcase the music created and recorded by the project. WFOR also plans to collaborate with Americana on their annual event The Americana World Festival: "Where Louisville Meets the World". The festival will take place on June 1st, 2013 at the Iroquois Amphitheater and be a day celebrating Louisville's global culture through music and dance, international cuisine, and community information and merchant booths. WFOR will be recording and micro-broadcasting the day's musical performances and events so that the festival can be shared via radio to the surrounding neighborhood.

Interested in hearing more? You can visit the Americana Community Center website www.americanacc.org to find out more about their work. You can also visit the WFOR site www.wforradio.org to hear the sounds of the Americana Digital Music Project.

Jared Zarantonello is a native of Kentucky. Trained in Applied Anthropology he now works with the immigrant and refugee communities here in Louisville. In addition to being involved with Forward Radio, he is also engaged in various musical projects performing under the moniker Yared Sound. jaredzarantonello@gmail.com.

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Regular Meeting Times for Area Organizations

- ADDICTION RECOVERY ADVOCATES OF KENTUCKIANA – (485-1248)
- AIDS INTERFAITH MINISTRIES (AIM) OF KENTUCKIANA, INC. – (635-4510)
- AMERICA 2000 DEMOCRATIC CLUB – 4th Tuesday. Contact Enid Redman at 459-0616 or John Mine at pappajohn15@gmail.com. Also see www.America2000plus.net.
- AMERICANS UNITED FOR SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE – Every month at noon (contact Paul Simmons: 608-7517)
- AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL – 1st Saturday (Sharon: 637-8951) at Heine Bros. on Douglass Loop
- APPAPF [American Palestine Public Affairs Forum] – 2nd Thursday (773-1836)
- BREAD FOR THE WORLD – Last Monday every other month (239-4317 for details)
- CAPA [Citizens Against Police Abuse] – 2nd Thursday (778-8130) Meet at Braden Center, 3208 W. Broadway
- CART [Coalition for the Advancement of Regional Transportation] – 3rd Wednesday, Union Station, TARC Board Room
- CLOUT [CITIZENS OF LOUISVILLE ORGANIZED AND WORKING TOGETHER] – (583-1267)
- COMMITTEE FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST – 2nd Monday (456-6586)
- COMMON CAUSE – Ad hoc discussions. Continuous engagement. www.commoncause.org/ky
- COMMUNITY FARM ALLIANCE OF JEFFERSON COUNTY – 2nd Tuesday (223-3655)
- COUNTER RECRUITMENT, "Aim Higher" – Second Sunday (893-2334)
- EARTH SAVE LOUISVILLE – 2nd Saturday (299-9520) www.LouisvilleEarthSave.org
- FAIRNESS CAMPAIGN – Quarterly community dialogues and volunteer opportunities (893-0788)
- FDR/LINCOLN LEGACY CLUB – 1st Thursday, papajohn15@bellsouth.net
- FELLOWSHIP OF RECONCILIATION – 4th Monday (609-7985 or 291-2506)
- FRIENDS FOR HOPE (Support Group for Adult Cancer Survivors) – 4th Wednesday at 6:30 PM (451-9600).
- FRIENDSHIP FORCE OF LOUISVILLE – 2nd Tuesday (893-8436)
- GREATER LOUISVILLE SIERRA CLUB – 3rd Tuesday, 7pm. (502-644-0659)
- HUMANISTS OF METRO LOUISVILLE – 2nd Monday, 7:00pm (896-4853)
- INTERFAITH PATHS TO PEACE – 3rd Wednesday, every other month. (214-7322)
- IRFI [ISLAMIC RESEARCH FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL, INC.] – Sundays at 6:00 PM (502-423-1988)
- JEWISH VOICE FOR PEACE (jvp.org) – 1st Friday and 4th Thursday. Contact 256-525-5290 or sonrevolution@aol.com
- JOBS WITH JUSTICE KENTUCKY (582-5454)
- JURISDICTIONARY CLUB OF LOUISVILLE – Know the law and how to use it (500-8161)
- JUSTICE RESOURCE CENTER – (345-5386)
- KFTC [KENTUCKIANS FOR THE COMMONWEALTH] – 2nd Monday (589-3188)
- KITOD [KENTUCKIANA INTERFAITH TASKFORCE ON DARFUR] – (553-6172)
- KY ALLIANCE AGAINST RACIST & POLITICAL REPRESSION – 3rd Monday (778-8130)
- KY COALITION TO ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY – (541-9998)
- KITLAC [KY INTERFAITH TASKFORCE ON LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN] – 2nd Wednesday (479-9262)
- LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS (502-895-5218), www.louisville-orglwv
- LOUISVILLE COMMITTEE FOR ISRAELI/PALESTINIAN STATES – 3rd Sunday (451-5658)
- LOUISVILLE PEAK OIL GROUP – 2nd Saturday (425-6645)
- LPAC [LOUISVILLE PEACE ACTION COMMUNITY] – (456-6914)
- LOUISVILLE WOMEN CHURCH – Meditation every Sunday (473-8435)
- LOUISVILLE YOUTH GROUP – Friday nights (893-0788), www.louisvilleyouthgroup.org
- LOUISVILLIANS IN FAVOR OF EQUALITY (LIFE) – 4th Sunday (384-3875)
- METRO SWEEP FOR ACCESS – 3rd Tuesday (895-0866 or 899-9261)
- METROPOLITAN HOUSING COALITION – 4th Wednesday (584-6858)
- MIGHTY KINDNESS – mightykindness@gmail.com (235-0711)
- MUHAMMAD ALI INSTITUTE FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE, at UL (852-6372)
- NAACP [NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE] – 3rd Monday (776-7608)
- NAMI [NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR THE MENTALLY ILL] – 2nd Monday (245-5287)
- OCCUPY LOUISVILLE – every Wednesday, 7:00 p.m., Braden Center (384-3875)
- PARENTS, FAMILIES & FRIENDS OF LESBIANS AND GAYS (P-FLAG) – 3rd Sunday (329-0229)
- PEACE & COMPASSION BUDDHA CIRCLE/CML – (451-2193, brozier@bellsouth.net)
- RCRC [RELIGIOUS COALITION FOR REPRODUCTIVE CHOICE] – (866-606-0988)
- RESULTS (a hunger lobby) – 2nd Saturday (451-4907)
- SIERRA CLUB INNER CITY OUTINGS – 2nd Thursday, 7:30 PM (558-0073)
- WOMEN IN TRANSITION (WIT) – every Wednesday, 6-8 PM (636-0160)

Note: If your group would like to be added to this list or if information needs to be updated, please let us know by calling 458-8056.

Calendar for peacemakers

Calling for writers! If you are involved with the organizations listed below, plan on attending any of these events, or are an activist in the community, we'd love for you to contribute your voice to FORsooth. Send articles to our editors at jessie.clark03@gmail.com or johart.john@gmail.com.

- May 1 to 15 **LIVING A SIMPLE LIFE – HARLAN AND ANNA HUBBARD**. UofL, Ekstrom Library, Lower Level. An exhibit of journals, manuscripts, and artwork. The Hubbards lived "off-the-grid" on the Ohio River and later in Payne Hollow from the 1950s through the 80s. Visit <http://louisville.edu/sustainability>
- May 1 to Jun 2 **MERTON AND THE DALAI LAMA**. Thomas Merton Center, Bellarmine. Monday through Friday. An exhibit of artifacts relating to Merton's historic 1968 meeting with the Dalai Lama. Visit <http://merton.org>
- May 1 to Jun 16 **SPIRITS OF PASSAGE**. Frazier History Museum. On the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, this humbling new exhibition examines the transatlantic slave trade. Artifacts from the archaeological excavation of a sunken slave ship. Visit www.fraziermuseum.org
- May 1 to Jul 7 **GLOBAL SHOES**. This family-friendly exhibit from the Brooklyn Children's Museum educates us about different cultures through the shoes we wear. Visit www.alicenter.org
- May 1 to Aug 9 **SELECTED WORKS OF G.C. COXE**. African American Heritage Center. Coxe was considered the dean of Louisville's African American artists and mentor of many. See examples of his daring abstract paintings. Visit www.kcaah.org
- May 1 (Wed) **NOONTIME INTERFAITH MEDITATIONS**. Every Wednesday from 12:10 to 12:30 at Christ Church Cathedral, Downtown. Weekly rotation includes Zen Buddhist silence, Lectio Divina, Vipassana Buddhist practices, and Creative Visualization. Visit <http://paths2peace.org>
- May 1 (Wed) **NATURE PRESERVE VOLUNTEERS**. Blackacre State Nature Preserve and Historic Homestead. Every Wednesday, 9AM to Noon. Help care for gardens, trails, and farmland. Visit www.blackacreconservancy.org
- May 1 (Wed) **CITIZENSHIP TUTORING**. Kentucky Refugee Ministries, 6:30 to 8:30PM. Every Wednesday. Also every Thursday, 11AM to 1PM. Help students study for the citizenship exam. Ask about our other volunteer opportunities. Call 479-9180 Ext 57 for more information.
- May 1 (Wed) **THE LOUISVILLE SUSTAINABILITY FORUM**. Every first Wednesday. Sustainability and relationships that create a community for change. Bring your lunch. Noon to 1:45 PM, Passionist Earth & Spirit Center, the Barn at 1924 Newburg Road.
- May 1 (Wed) **COOKED: A NATURAL HISTORY OF TRANSFORMATION**. Clifton Center, 7PM. Author Michal Pollan interviewed by Wendell Berry. A portion of the proceeds go to Kentuckians For The Commonwealth. Visit www.carmichaelsbookstore.com
- May 4 (Sat) **LOUISVILLE COMMUNITY AGRICULTURE**. Every Saturday morning. Also, other days and times. 26 farmers' markets from California neighborhood to Norton Commons. Visit www.louisvilleky.gov/HealthyHometown
- May 4 (Sat) **HOME REPAIR VOLUNTEERS**. Fuller Center for Housing of Louisville. Every Saturday. All skill levels. Ask about our other volunteer opportunities. For more information, call 272-1377.
- May 4 (Sat) **ENGLISH CONVERSATION CLUB**. Every Saturday at the Iroquois & Newburg Public Library Branches, 3PM. Also Main Library on Thursdays at 7PM. Practice conversational English with neighbors and friends from many parts of the world. Visit www.lfpl.org
- May 4 (Sat) **SACK LUNCHEES FOR HOMELESS**. Every Saturday, 12pm to 2PM, Bates Community Development Corporation, 1228 S. Jackson Street. Call 636-0573 for more information.
- May 4 (Sat) **LAND STEWARD PROJECT**. Jefferson Memorial Forest. Every first Saturday, 9AM to Noon. Also, Wednesdays. Help improve landscape and protect native flora. Gloves, tools, water and on-the-job training provided. Visit www.louisvilleky.gov/metroparks/jeffersonmemorialforest/
- May 5 (Sun) **"AIM HIGHER"** focusing on military counter-recruitment. Every first Sunday at 7 PM, 2236 Kaelin Avenue at the FOR office. Discuss conscientious objection, military recruitment, and the possibility for high school students to "opt out" of having their names given to recruiters. Call Jim Johnson, 262-0148.
- May 5 & 12 **SPRING WILDFLOWERS**. Charlestown State Park. Guided hikes of a different trail each week. Visit www.falloftheohio.org
- May 6 (Mon) **BICYCLES FOR HEALTH AND CLEANER AIR**. Louisville Bicycle Club, Every Monday, weather permitting. Fat Forty at 8:45AM. Recovery Ride at 6:45PM. Visit www.louisvilleky.gov/bikelouisville.

- May 6 (Mon) **DEADLINE FOR THE JUNE ISSUE OF FORsooth**. Every first Monday. Contact John Hartmann, editor, at 296-1793 or johart.john@gmail.com. Please email new or updated calendar listings to calendar.peace@gmail.com.
- May 7 (Tue) **HOUR OF POWER BOOK DISCUSSIONS**. Newburg Branch Public Library. Every first Tuesday, 6:30PM. Discussions of books by contemporary authors on personal efforts to overcome the challenges of abuse, oppression, deprivation, discrimination or disabilities. Visit www.lfpl.org
- May 8 (Wed) **KENTUCKY INTERFAITH TASKFORCE ON LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (KITLAC)**. Every second Wednesday at the 1741 Building on Frankfort Avenue. 7:30 PM. For more information, call David Horvath at 479-9262 or Pat Geier at 456-6586.
- May 8 (Wed) **LOUISVILLE FORUM**. Every 2nd Wednesday, Noon at Vincenzo's Downtown. Speakers on current public issues. Nonpartisan discussion. For details, call 329-0111.
- May 9 (Thurs) **AMERICAN PALESTINE PUBLIC AFFAIRS FORUM (APPAPF)**. Every second Thursday. A documentary film exploring the situation in Middle East will be presented. 7 PM, Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, Nelson Hall, Room 119. For more information, call Bashar Masri, 773-1836.
- May 9 (Thurs) **REAL PEOPLE, REAL CHALLENGES, REAL SOLUTIONS**. Volunteers of America Family Emergency Shelter, 6:30PM to 7:30pm. Also May 22nd. One hour interactive tour of VOA's work and programs for self-determination. For more information, call 636-4660
- May 9 (Thurs) **ANNUAL KIPLAWARDS DINNER**. Kentucky Interfaith Power and Light at St. Paul's Methodist Church, 6:30PM. Recognize work towards sustainability in Kentucky's faith Communities. Michael Dowd to speak on Beyond Sustainability. Visit www.kentuckyipl.org
- May 10 (Fri) **A GLIMPSE OF ETERNITY**. The Louisville Astronomical Society at dusk in Tom Sawyer Park. Every 2nd Friday. Look through telescopes at planets, our moon, stars, double stars, the Orion nebula and other wonders. Visit www.louisville-astro.org
- May 11 (Sat) **EARTHSAVE POTLUCK**. Crescent Hill Ministries, 6PM to 8PM. Every 2nd Saturday. Bring a plant-based dish and share your recipe. Discuss healthy food and behavior change. Mix, mingle, music. For more information call 299-9520.
- May 11 (Sat) **PEAK OIL**. Every 2nd Saturday, St. Matthews Public Library, 10 AM to Noon. Call George Perkins, 425-6645.
- May 11 (Sat) **OLMSTEAD PARK VOLUNTEERS**. 9AM to 12PM, at Iroquois Park. Help maintain and restore our urban forests. Visit www.olmsteadparks.org
- May 11 (Sat) **PENNIES FROM HEAVEN**. Fern Creek / Highview United Ministers at St. Gabriel Catholic Church, 6PM to 9PM. Music, penny contest, silent auction and dinner. Funds go to FCHUM. Visit www.fchum.org
- May 12 (Sun) **VETERANS FOR PEACE**. Every second Sunday, 3PM to 4PM. Heine Bros. Coffee at the Douglas Loop, Call 632-2177 for more information.
- May 12 (Sun) **VIGIL FOR PEACE**. Every second Sunday. A remembrance of all those suffering from conflicts in the Middle East. Bring a sign. 5PM to 6 PM, Bardstown Road at Douglass Blvd. Sponsored by LPAC (Louisville Peace Action Community). For more information, call Harold Trainer at 387-9490.
- May 13 (Mon) **URBAN LEAGUE YOUNG PROFESSIONALS**. Louisville Urban League, Every 2nd Monday, 6PM. Networking opportunities for emerging leaders ages 21 to 40 of all minority backgrounds. Call the Urban League office for more info: 561-6830.
- May 14 (Tue) **FREE HOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY SEMINAR**. Energy Pros Sustainable Home Education Group, 6:30PM to 8:30PM. Learn the basics. Visit www.theenergypros.net
- May 14 (Tue) **GREEN CONVENE**. Every second Tuesday at The Highland Green Building, 6:30PM. Join residents and policymakers in examining ways to connect the health of our community with our environment. Visit www.greenconvene.org
- May 14 (Tue) **LUNCH & LEARN AT CATHOLIC CHARITIES**. St. Anthony's Campus, 11:30AM to 1PM. Bi-monthly tour of programs and facilities. For more information, call 637-9786.
- May 14 (Tue) **AMERICANA COMMUNITY CENTER**. Orientation at 7pm every second Tuesday. Learn how you can help immigrant families learn practical skills, join social networks, and improve language skills. Call 366-7813 to RSVP.
- May 14 (Tue) **INTERNATIONAL VOICES BOOK DISCUSSION**. Bon Air Public Library, 7PM. Also May 21. A different book each meeting by authors from around the world. Visit www.lfpl.org
- May 14 to 19 **FESTIVAL OF FAITHS**. Sacred Silence: Pathway to Compassion. In preparation for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's visit to Louisville. Visit <http://festivaloffaiths.org>

- May 15 (Wed) **GROWING FOOD AND COMMUNITY**. 15 Thousand Farmers, at Dismas St. Ann's on Algonquin Pkwy, the 15th day each month. Share ideas and experiences about growing your own food. Taste samples. Visit www.15thousandfarmers.com
- MAY 16 to 18 **INTERNATIONAL SUMMIT CONFERENCE ON COMPASSIONATE ORGANIZATIONS**. Spalding University. Help us find ways to foster cultures of compassion in school, business, government, faith groups and other organizations. Renowned speakers. Visit <http://compassionorg.net>
- May 16 (Thurs) **FRIENDSHIP FORCE OF LOUISVILLE**. Second Thursday of odd months, 6:30PM. Help plan and participate in International goodwill ambassador exchanges. www.friendshipforce.org
- May 16 (Thurs) **KENTUCKY SINGLE PAYER HEALTH CARE**. Every third Thursday, 5:30PM at First Unitarian Church. Call Kay Tillow 636-1551.
- May 16 (Thurs) **COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN (CASA)**. Orientation, Noon to 1PM. Learn how you can help defend the rights of abused and neglected children in our community. Call 595-4911 to RSVP
- May 16 (Thurs) **MENTAL ILLNESS SUPPORT & ADVOCACY**. NAMI Louisville every third Thursday at 3PM. Also Saturdays and Sundays. Support group for families. Draw on years of experience. Visit www.namilouisville.org.lfpl.org
- May 18 (Sat) **SIDE BY SIDE CELEBRATION**. Program by neighborhood children and dinner. Silent auction. Funds go to The Portland Promise Center. Visit <http://Sidebyside.portlandpromise.org>
- MAY 18 (Sat) **COMPASSION WALK**. Interfaith Paths to Peace, 3:30PM to 4:30PM. Walk from 32nd & Broadway to 32nd & Greenwood to show your support for survivors of gun violence. Visit <http://paths2peace.org>
- May 19 TO 21 (Sun) **ENGAGING COMPASSION**. Three-day event includes a Public Talk and a Public Teaching by H.H. the Dalai Lama. Hosted by Louisville's Tibetan Buddhist Center, the Drepung Gomang Institute. Visit www.DalaiLamaLouisville.org
- May 20 (Mon) **SOCIAL CHANGE BOOK CLUB**. Every third Monday, Heine Bros., 119 Chenoweth, 6PM. For book list, Visit www.greenlistlouisville.com
- May 21 (Tue) **DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES WORKSHOP**. Every third Tuesday, 11AM to 1PM. Expressions Café at The Council on Developmental Disabilities. Learn how an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is prepared for a child with a disability. Address barriers to inclusion. Call 584-1239
- May 23 (Thurs) **FORsooth LABELING**. Presbyterian Seminary, Nelson Hall, Room 10. 6:30 PM. Every 4th Thursday. We need volunteers! Many hands make light work, and the opposite is also true! So please join us if you can. Call 451-5658 for more information.
- May 25 to 27 **KENTUCKY REGGAE FESTIVAL**. Water Tower on River Road. Authentic Jamaican and Caribbean live reggae. Visit www.kentuckyreggaefestival.com
- May 28 (Tue) **FREE NON-PROFIT START UP CLINIC**. Center for Nonprofit Excellence, 3:30PM. Learn the fundamentals. Pitfalls to avoid. Visit www.cnpe.org
- May 30 (Thurs) **MOSAIC AWARDS**. Jewish Family & Career Services at The Henry Clay Hotel, 5PM. Program in honor of honors immigrants and refugees who have made significant contributions to our community. Visit www.jfclsouthern.org
- May 30 (Thurs) **COMPASSION IN THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS**. Spalding University and Thomas Jefferson Unitarian Church, 7PM. This month's subject is Islam, Sixth in a series of six. Visit <http://paths2peace.org>
- May 30 (Thurs) **REVOLUTIONARY OPTIMISTS**. The Muhammad Ali Center, 5:30PM. Film series. In the poorest neighborhoods of Calcutta, a lawyer turned social entrepreneur is empowering young girls and boys to take an active role in transforming their own lives through arts programs and hands-on activities. Visit www.alicenter.org
- June 1 (Sat) **THE SOUL FOOD FESTIVAL**. Waterfront Park. Sense the aroma of soul cooking outside and enjoy the food. Visit www.ilovesoulfood.com
- June 1 (Sat) **AMERICANA WORLD FESTIVAL**. Iroquois Amphitheater, 11AM to 9PM. International performances and cuisines, activities for children, and community information. Visit www.americanacc.org

OUT OF TOWN

- May 4 (Sat) **UNITED PALISTINIAN APPEAL SPRING WALK**. Reston, VA. Join family and friends for Palestine, its children, scholarships, and other programs. Visit www.helpup.org
- May 17 to 18 **KFTC STEERING COMMITTEE RETREAT**. Kentuckians For The Commonwealth in London, KY. Help organize for a fair economy, healthy environment, new safe energy, and an honest democracy. Visit www.kftc.org