

FORsooth

Lesson from a new friend: open up mind's windows

by Maurice "Bojangles" Blanchard

I've long been a student of Mahatma Gandhi because of his love of humanity and devotion to truth. Gandhi's quiet determination and unshakable will saw the awakening of India's independence from British rule in 1947.

Through the use of his own ideology, Satyagraha, he brought together the masses of India to convert the hearts of the British

For the last two years of Gandhi's life, his grandson, Arun, came to live with him. His grandfather taught him the intricacies of nonviolence and life lessons he never forgot. Arun went on to become an author and moved to America where he created the Gandhi Institute of Nonviolence. He currently travels the world speaking on nonviolence and sharing the memories of his grandfather that changed his life.

I was able, via the internet, to strike up a friendship with Arun and traveled in

Gandhi never asked someone to do something that he himself wasn't willing to do. That lesson resonated with me because if we are to lead people for change, we must lead by example.

rulers and gain independence. Satyagraha is a form of civil resistance that is strictly nonviolent and seeks to convert the heart of the adversary through love rather than striking back in anger.

This was revolutionary in a climate of extreme violence perpetuated by the colonial powers of the period. In the end, Gandhi's refusal to hate led to his assassination on January 30, 1948 by a radical Hindu who was angered by Gandhi's push to share power with the Muslim population.

February to Tennessee to hear him speak at a small community college. The following is that story....

My husband and I arose early on that cold, February morning, filled with excitement and anticipation at meeting Arun Gandhi, the Mahatma's grandson. My weekly conversations with him on the internet had led me to this speaking engagement at Volunteer State Community College, in Gallatin, Tenn. We packed our

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— photo by Cathy Ford

New president, old priorities

FOR members, from left, George Edwards, Virginia Noonan, Jean Edwards and Doug Magee inform the public April 15 in downtown Louisville that almost half of their tax payments go for war, despite official deceptive figures that it is far less. To learn more, go to www.warresisters.org.

'Phenomenal peacemaker' guides Rwandans to heal



— photo by Carrie Christensen

Rwandan peace activist David Bucura shares some joy with youth mediators at Stonestreet Elementary School in Louisville in April while visiting the city for the second time since 2007. He has exchanged ideas on mediating disputes and reconciling former enemies in Rwanda and elsewhere.

by George Morrison
FORsooth editor

Rwanda may have become a synonym for genocide, but David Bucura, a Quaker leader in the African nation told Louisville audiences in April that the country is busy with the work of reconciliation 15 years after internal strife resulted in hundreds of thousands of murders in about 100 days in 1994.

Bucura, who made his second visit to Louisville since 2007, said discussions about reconciliation with Peace Education Program leaders and others in the city helped him and other Rwandans fine tune their efforts back home.

Studying the interaction between peace educators and children was particularly important, because it is children who are the hope for a new, peaceful social model

in Rwanda, Bucura said April 21 in an interview hours before speaking at Christ Church Episcopal Cathedral, his second talk in the city.

"When we had the genocide, they were using youth to destroy," he said. "The youth are easy to use.... We work with the children to prevent another... war in my country."

Bucura, who has worked as a pastor, teacher and school headmaster in Rwanda, is a Hutu, the tribe that for centuries experienced good relations with the minority Tutsis. But after the assassination of Rwanda's president in April 1994, Hutu leaders unleashed an extermination campaign to kill Tutsis and many Hutus.

Bucura said many Rwandans who were perpetrators and victims of the vio-

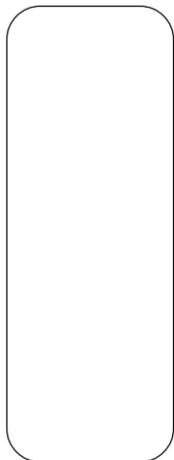
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Millennium goals called tiny sacrifice to curb poverty

FORsooth staff report

Americans spend more on ice cream each year than it would cost to provide a primary education to all the world's children, one of the eight Millennium Development Goals set in 2001 by 191 United Nations member states, speakers told the Third Thursday Lunch April 16.

Mary Abrams, chairperson of the peace and justice division of the Episcopal Diocese of Kentucky, and Matt Hanka, president of the Louisville chapter of the United Nations Association, told the lunch the cost of achieving all eight goals by the target year of 2015 is relatively tiny.

"If we gave .7 percent (of our income)... we could reach these goals," Abrams said. The remaining seven goals besides education are eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, achieving gender equality and empowering women, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, ensuring environmental sustainability and developing a new global partnership to bring about fairer trade, debt relief and more access to medicines.

"If children are educated they're going to be able to better provide for themselves and their families as they grow up," Abrams said.

The lunch talk, sponsored by the Louisville FOR and Interfaith Paths to Peace, also included remarks about the U.N.'s Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which recently passed its 60th anniversary.

Abrams said the greatest impediment to achieving the Millennium Goals is the lack of widespread talk about them in the U.S.

"The strongest thing we can do is to be advocates, to let people know," she said. "We've got to get the word out.... We've got to let every person we know know about these goals and, particularly, our

congresspeople.

"Any time you have the opportunity to talk to a candidate, ask that candidate, what are you doing about the Millennium Development Goals, and if you were elected, what would you do to support them?"

Abrams said some progress is evident since 2001, particularly increasing numbers of developing-world children in school (still, she said 77 million children in the world have no schools) and greater access to medicine and economic development tools such as mobile phones.

However, Abrams also said 100,000 women die every year from complications due to pregnancy and childbirth and that one-fifth of the planet's people have no access to clean water.

Abrams fears the affluent world's worsening economic problems are shifting media emphasis from those hurting the worst.

"Our own economic crises put these goals at greater risk because people are pulling back," Abrams said. "The people who are the victims of poverty are the ones who will be affected even more so by economic crisis."

Abrams said that aside from talking about the goals, another tool to boost their chances is using fair trade, a concept that bypasses corporations, using instead direct exchange between producers in impoverished areas and conscientious distributors and stores. This makes for better earnings for producers, safer working conditions and respect for cultural identity, backers of fair trade say.

Hanka said the 1948 Universal Declaration on Human Rights, which does not have the force of a treaty, states people are entitled to freedom without distinction as to race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.



— photo by Cathy Ford

Matt Hanka and Mary Abrams

It also backs the right to meaningful employment and religious freedom and calls for people to act toward one another "in a spirit of brotherhood," he said.

Louisville FOR member George Edwards, a pacifist and war resister since World War II, asked if the declaration would not be stronger if it included the right of conscientious objection to war, which many nations don't grant.

Edwards said many nations opposed

including CO rights because it could hamper their raising military forces.

"I say praise God if we reach (such) a point," Edwards said.

Bob Brousseau and Phil Nippert, activists with the recently formed Kentuckiana Interfaith Taskforce on Darfur, will talk about the crisis in that nation at the May 21 Third Thursday Lunch. See ad on page six.

A seasonal array of thoughts on political, social trends

It's time for spring cleaning - in this case cleaning my mental files of ideas for this column.

I flat out disagree with the *Newsweek* cover article April 4 declaring "the end of Christian America," a conclusion based partly on a 10-point drop in self-identified Christians over 20 years.

While writer Jon Meacham was right to say the religious *right* has failed, such Christian ideas as economic justice, nonviolence in foreign policy and interracial understanding have gotten a boost in the last three years, the decline in Christian self-labeling notwithstanding.

The very computer I'm typing this on provides some insights into why the religious right has plummeted, concerning one of its central tenets—literalism. Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson pounded it into us that the scriptures millions of Americans grew up reading (in English or Spanish, overwhelmingly) were the "literal and inerrant word of God."

Since of course they had to be translated many times over centuries before we read them, consider what happens when I translate, using a program in my computer, this familiar statement:

"Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country." I ordered the computer to translate it into German, then the German to Greek, then the Greek to Japanese and finally the Japanese back into English.

What should logically have returned to John Kennedy/Theodore Sorensen eloquence instead came out (and I'm not making this up):

"With who Your country because of you it is possible Thing If you do not ask These for your country In position To that A certain it does What, asking/depending."

No, I'm not representing this experiment as Biblical scholarship at its finest; human translating involves judgment and recognition that computers currently can't do.

It should also be noted, however, that centuries of translating involved cultural, national, gender and ideological bias, which makes interpretation, not literal repetition, essential in gaining from reading scripture.

On the subject of human biases, lets not be blindly celebratory of President Obama's spectacular success in passing a giant stimulus bill filled with progressive initiatives it would have taken Jimmy Carter or Bill Clinton decades to have achieved.

Just
Ideas



George Morrison

A deficit of a trillion dollars (in a single year) contains seeds that could derail what some see as a 30-year cycle of liberalism. Obama's omnibus stimulus package may have buried the memory of an arrogant Texan, but the combination of big domestic increases, war and tax cuts sounds disturbingly like the methods of a Lone Star State president whose mishandling of fiscal and foreign policies took us from glory in 1964 and '65 through a long string of defeats.

Instead, Obama should use nonviolent Satyagraha against the Taliban and should level with the voters; if they want universal health care, clean energy and better schools, they're going to have to pay for them. Those who should first be made to pay are the 70 percent of corporations, in a study a few years ago, which paid no federal income taxes.

The president's most immediate problem is the housing crisis, which is worsening. Foreclosure rates still rose in the first quarter of this year and in addition to the many families who have been hurt, an intangible casualty is the stature of the highly image-conscious Sun Belt.

Nevada, Arizona and California have the highest foreclosure rates. In Nevada, the rate of foreclosures is more than five times the national average, consumeraffairs.com reported.

This is the region that for decades was pointing the rest of the country toward happiness and prosperity, while the "old, cold" states were too encumbered by bad policy decisions and outdated industries to lead anymore.

Why some even predicted that the national pastime would become primarily a sunbelt phenomenon, as the Arizona Diamondbacks,

(continued on page 3)

CLARIFICATION

A story in the April FORsooth said the Congressional Black Caucus was one of many groups which helped Virginia businessman Earl Stafford organize the People's Inaugural Project in January. The story should have said the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation was one of the groups. The foundation and the caucus are separate organizations.

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.



Founded 1915

FORsooth is published by the Louisville chapter of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. Send submissions for news stories or commentaries to George Morrison, editor, c/o 2236 Kaelin Ave., Louisville, KY 40205, e-mail: <klm86@att.net>.

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94 Years on Peace Frontiers

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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'Clear and compassionate language' for those broken

A Spirituality for Brokenness: Discovering Your Deepest Self in Difficult Times

by Terry Taylor. Skylight Paths Publishing, Woodstock, Vt., 2009. 158 pp.

reviewed by Eustace Durrett

Probably to evaluate Terry Taylor's book fairly, to say whether it succeeds in its purpose, fails, or partially accomplishes its objective, we need to know what the author means by the term, "brokenness." When he says that one is "broken," does he mean clinically depressed but functionally able, partly or totally dysfunctional, or some combination of these?

Taylor quotes a Buddhist nun as saying that brokenness is "the embarrassment of being oneself." (p. 14). He makes a distinction between "suffering" and "brokenness." He says that suffering may be a "symptom of brokenness, but it is not the same thing. People suffer for a variety of reasons, such as grief, relationship problems, or illness, but brokenness is more than a temporary emotion, more than a set of unfortunate circumstances. Brokenness is a *felt* state of being. People can feel broken whether or not they actually are. In spite of this, the feeling of brokenness is its

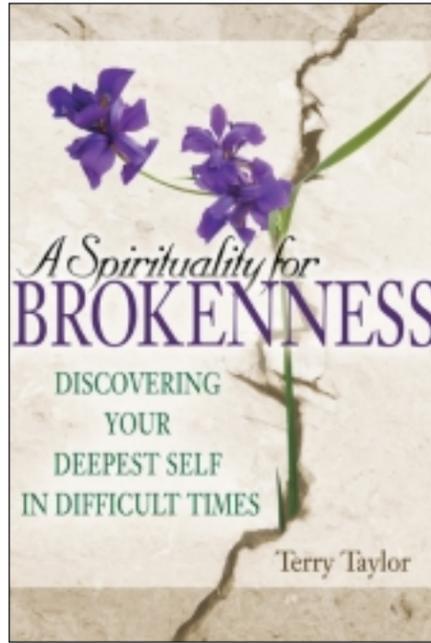
BOOK REVIEWS

own reality that must be acknowledged and honored" (p. 14).

Taylor goes on (still on p. 14) to compare brokenness with what William James called "torn-to-pieces-hood." He quotes James as saying, "We have all known that experience, for to be human is to feel at times divided, fractured, pulled in a dozen directions...and to yearn for serenity, some mending of our 'torn-to-pieces-hood.'"

These are all very apt descriptions and quotations. And yet despite all of them, "brokenness" still sounds to me like a buzz word for depression. But I confess that it got my undivided attention, and that it is probably a quite useful way to *approach* depression.

Taylor, who is Executive Director of Interfaith Paths to Peace, an ecumenical peace-oriented group, has built his book around seven religious methods for dealing with "brokenness." Each comes from a major religion: the concept of the Sabbath from traditional Judaism; *maitri* and *tonglen* from Tibetan Buddhism; *Lectio Divina* from early Christianity; pilgrimage and *hajj* from Islam and other traditions; the labyrinth common to many religions



(Native American, Jewish, etc.); the "yoga of creativity" (Taylor's term) from Hinduism; and the "Third Jewel" (*sangha* from Buddhism) of community (see esp. pp. 130-131). This last method, as Taylor notes, is quite similar to some approaches to group therapy (pp. 134-136).

Indeed, these religious practices have similarities to various psychological techniques (remember the old adage about going to see either your pastor/priest or your psychiatrist in times of trouble). It is nonetheless refreshing and useful to have these rendered in other terms than the usual blurring jargon of psychology.

Taylor has presented these methods in clear and compassionate language understandable and potentially very helpful to the intelligent but psychologically and ecumenically unsophisticated reader without pulling out a tome on world religions or a dictionary of psychological terms and phrases. For this reader, he has both clarified and introduced me to some of these religious traditions. My own tradition is Nichiren Buddhism, and Taylor might be faulted for not making a sufficiently clear distinction between the Hinayana (Theravada) and Mahayana schools of that religion. After all, we chant the heart of the Lotus Sutra twice a day, ending with the desire for "the happiness of all living beings." But, as this basically positive review should make clear, Taylor has admirably succeeded to a great degree in achieving the objectives of his book.

The reviewer, of Louisville, is an advocate for rail transit and economic equality.

Biblical, technological explorations in a lesbian's life

Out From It All: Revolutions in a Lesbian Life

by George W. Morrison, iUniverse, Bloomington, Ind. 248 pp.

reviewed by George Edwards

Reading this book has been an unusual pleasure. George Morrison and I are friends and members of the Louisville chapter of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation founded on the eve of World War I when the religious leaders of Europe came together in Switzerland to discuss how to prevent war from breaking out. They vowed not to participate in the war no matter how their separate countries might inaugurate what was to become the most massive slaughterhouse humanity had ever experienced.

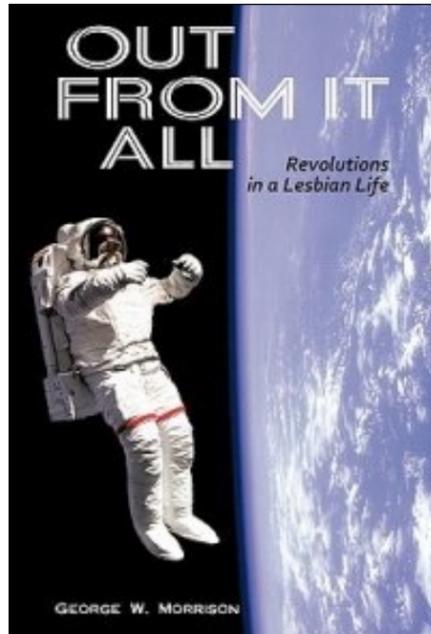
"Reconciliation" is a biblical word. Perhaps those peacemakers meeting that night were thinking about the Pauline epistle 2nd Corinthians (5:18) where the apostle exhorts the Corinthians to engage themselves with the "ministry of reconciliation." My impression is that George Morrison has made for himself a place in this ministry of reconciliation during the last 20 years while he has been the editor of the Louisville FOR monthly newspaper *FORsooth*. This title was the brainchild of Arch Taylor, now retired after 30 years as an educational missionary

in Japan. Morrison can revise the linkage I propose between this book and the biblical theme. The basis of the proposed analogue is as follows.

The heroine of the story is Kera Lea McClain. Her father's name is Keith, her mother's, Michelle. From chapter 1, Kera is distinctive, has a mind of her own. In grade school she becomes a winner in volleyball. Everybody is full of congratulations, including her parents. But Kera seems disinterested, while she is fascinated by a girl named Cara, as the story moves on to middle school.

Cara is a leader in school politics. This interest lands Kera somewhere between fascination and fear. In the meantime Kera comes across a book at the public library which treats the subject of SEXUAL ORIENTATION. The library book says lesbians are marked by independence not associated with heterosexuals. Even in grade school Kera's interest tilts toward subjects usually associated with masculinity.

At a family gathering on Thanksgiving, Kera is watching TV while she overhears comments in the adjoining room about Jack and his impending induction into the Navy at San Francisco. This provokes the ironic comment that Israel and San Francisco are favorite places because "we send all the Jews" there and the other "takes the queers off our hands." After returning home, Kera informs her parents that she wants to



go to such meetings no more.

Not long after this, Kera sees the FAIRNESS booth at the state fairgrounds, comprehends its work against discrimination and picks up a brochure on "The Women's Circle." She is 15 now. Here she learns about male-dependent women who hardly know how to bait a fishhook or change a tire.

There are many features which underlie

my strong commendation of Morrison's first published novel. This book has a generous number of allusions to sites and social history of the Louisville area. There is a social realism in this book. The descriptions of the young heroine's experience of isolation are deftly portrayed. The stories of struggle against cultural prejudice are told in Kera's encounters with her Bible-thumping father and the more mediating position of her mother, as the story unfolds.

My knowledge of the world of astronauts is very limited. But Morrison carries the reader through this climactic section with exciting clarity. The author's reportorial experience serves him well even to the choosing of a picture for the cover of the book illustrating the outer space world as well as the curiosity evoked by the title "Out From It All."

In terms of the reconciliation motif, Morrison depicts with skill how space itself does not provide a hiding place from our human alienation. The writer enjoys, to be sure, a lift in the recent unanimous (!) decision of the Supreme Court of Iowa that same-gender marriage should not be criminalized. Surely a new era is at hand.

The reviewer is a retired professor of theology. This review was written without being solicited by the FORsooth editor, who is also the book's author.

Calendar for peacemakers (continued from back page)

June 6 (Sat) **GOLF SCRAMBLE FOR PEACE.** Get your foursome together and sign up for the Peace Education Program's golf scramble to be held at the Shawnee Golf Course. Putting contest, chipping contest, and much more! Registration required. Call for a registration form at 589-6583 or download one at www.peaceeducationprogram.org.

June 8-12 (Mon-Fri) **PEACECASTERS SUMMER CAMP: GET READY!** Empowering youth to explore messages of peace and cooperation through digital media. In this first of three camps, learn the foundational skills. The second camp "Get Set" to be held July 6-10, and third camp, "Go!" will be August 3-7. Space is strictly limited so register early! Each camp includes fun, games, lunch, and a DVD of your completed projects. For ages 12-15. Registration is \$95 for each camp. Some scholarship funds are available. For more information or to register, contact Mark Steiner at the Center for Interfaith Relations at 583-3100 or visit www.interfaithrelations.org.

June 14 (Sun) **COSMOLOGY AND FAITH: REVELATIONS IN DEEP TIME.** Sr. Miriam Therese MacGillis will explore the wisdom of the Judeo-Christian tradition for deep spiritual energy for supporting the faith community as it transitions from the destructive patterns of the industrialized economy into a more ecological and inclusive culture for sustaining the whole web of Earth's life. Free and open to the public. 7 PM, the Cathedral of Assumption Undercroft, 433 South Fifth Street. For more information, email Darlene@interfaithrelations.org or call 583-3100.

June 15 (Mon) **OPENING THE CHRISTIAN MYSTERIES TO DEEP TIME.** In this workshop, Sr. Miriam Therese MacGillis will expand on the central themes of the previous evening's lecture and will focus on the life and teachings of Jesus for guidance in opening to an ecological and cosmological dimension emerging in our times. Workshop fee: \$40. 9:30 AM to 4 PM, the Cathedral of Assumption Undercroft, 433 South Fifth Street. For more information or to register, email Darlene@interfaithrelations.org or call 583-3100.

June 20 (Sat) **"CHAMPIONS 4 HER" 5K WALK, RUN AND FESTIVAL.** Join this annual benefit at Waterfront Park to support eleven local women's organizations, including Women for Habitat, Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana, Maryhurst, and the Center for Women & Families. Walk begins at 8 AM. Cost is \$25. Participants choose which organization will receive proceeds. For more information, visit www.champions4her.com or contact Habitat Development Director, Jane White at 637-6265, ext. 30.

An array of thoughts

(continued from page 2)

Anaheim Angels and Florida Marlins won successive World Series. The Chicago White Sox came literally within minutes of leaving for the Sunshine State before a late night passage of incentives by a reluctant Illinois legislature kept them on the south side.

Starting in 2004, however, only the White Sox, Boston, St. Louis and Philadelphia have taken home World Series trophies.

Of course, regionalism is not called for by today's situation. The difficulties we face are remarkably evenly spread - so much so that Indiana, Virginia and North Carolina joined a huge chorus last fall calling for change. For the first time in almost 70 years, there is simply no industry, economic sector or region out there to envy.

Contact George Morrison at klm86@att.net.

City, Africa woes spur ideas from area youth

by Chris Harmer

In FORsooth this month, we are publishing winning essays from this year's FOR Peace Essay/Video contest for high school students. There were three topics to choose from. The writers were challenged to pick one and develop a creative nonviolent solution... in 500 to 1,000 words.

The first place winning essay was written by Nick Neuteufel, a freshman at duPont Manual High School. The second place award went to Miranda Eubank, also a duPont Manual freshman. Manual senior Sarah Johnsrude wrote the third place winner.

Assumption High School student Claire Schroering received an honorable mention for her essay.

The winner in the video division was duPont Manual freshman Eli Fosl, who produced a video about Louisville's violent crime problem, one of the topics open to the writers and video makers. Another was finding a nonviolent path out of the decades-long warfare centered in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The three essay winners wrote on that matter, while Claire wrote on Louisville crime.

Congo's ongoing series of conflicts has claimed more than eight million lives—making it the deadliest since World War II. Other than an occasional news clip and the movie "Hotel Rwanda," however, America's mainstream media have virtually ignored the suffering, the waste of lives, and the roots of the problem.

The following historical summary is intended to help put the Peace Essays into a broader context, and help us look—with the essay writers—for ways to act constructively in this long-neglected area.

The summary is excerpted from several web sources, including the CIA Factbook. The CIA was clearly active in Congolese affairs from before independence through the Cold War. As in other parts of the world, the U.S. has been at least partly responsible in central Africa for the destruction of popular governments and movements, for support of corrupt regimes because they claimed to be "anti-communist," and for allowing genocidal atrocities to occur without taking action.

Colonial Era and Independence from Belgium

A virtual private fiefdom of the Belgian royal family in the late 1800s, the Congo Free State was founded and exploited for rubber production. A Belgian officer corps developed and led the brutal Force Publique, which maintained the production quotas at any cost. Some estimates indicate half the population of the Congo died from exploitation and disease under their rule. Because of increasing international pressure, the elected government of Belgium took over the Free State from the royal family and made it a Belgian colony in 1908. While some of the worst excesses were curbed, the European upper class continued domination and exploitation of the country's people and natural resources for 50 years.

In the 1950s, there was increasing opposition to colonial rule across Africa. At a Pan-African conference in Ghana in 1958, a Congolese postal clerk named Patrice Lumumba saw a vision for a free and united Africa, and came home to build the Mouvement National Congolais (MNC) party.

Because it was the only major multi-ethnic party in the Congo, it soon attracted the largest following across the country, and was the major player in independence negotiations with Belgium. Lumumba and his party won pre-independence elections in 1960, and he became the first Prime Minister of the newly-independent country later that year.

(continued on page 5)

Solving the multi-sided blood diamond

by Nicholas Neuteufel, Freshman, DuPont Manual High School

There are multiple sides to everything in life—we see that in the legal system, debates and more. What we need to realize in applying nonviolent conflict resolution to other countries in the world and when we analyze the situation in those countries is that there are two facets to every conflict, two facets which refract and reflect upon each other, the political facet and the socio-cultural facet of a country's situation—just like a diamond.

According to Stephen Prothero, professor of religion at Boston University, a major flaw in America's foreign policy doctrine has been the failure of seeing only one part of every ethnic clash or general conflict—the political one. As a result of this secular worldview, we have alienated others and not gotten to the true root of the problem—the socio-cultural facet.

Each decision in politics, however, is influenced by the other one, as is the other facet. What we have on our hands is a diamond stained by the blood of 5.4 million people when we look at the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

How can we begin to solve this problem? We must first evaluate what caused this problem and who is involved before we can suggest a solution.

The DRC has a long history, full of conflict, starting in 1885, when King Leopold II of Belgium seized control of the Congo, creating a corporate state, exploiting the Congolese for rubber and other desired resources, solely for his corporate front, the Association International Africaine, of which he was the sole shareholder. It was the brutality toward the Congolese that inspired Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, and started the history of oppression in the ironically named Congo Free State.

After the exposure in the early 1900s, Leopold II ceded control to the Kingdom



Nicholas Neuteufel

of Belgium in 1908, when it became known as the Belgian Congo and was controlled by the Belgian parliament until the year 1960, when the Congo became an independent nation. Since then, there has been much infighting between the warlords, who are more powerful in some regions than the central government, and other warlords and the central government, mostly due to the fragility of the government. Most of the fighting has been among ethnic groups.

Taking all these factors into account, we can see a perpetuated and seemingly unbroken cycle of violence and oppression. This is easily explained by the Brazilian philosopher Paolo Freire, who stated in Chapter One of his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, that "during the initial stage of their struggle the oppressed find in the oppressor their model of 'manhood.'"

"How can this be?," many ask. "How can the oppressed become the oppressors themselves?" Simply put, the oppressors of the past are unintentional role models to the new, seemingly liberated regime. They are the basis for the ideas and methods for the new regime. This is why revolution

seems fruitless to some, because history repeats itself.

There is only one way to solve this crisis in the long run. It does not require a partition or U.N. peacekeeping forces or even U.S. direct involvement. It is talking, a Freirean dialogue, where people of all ages and ethnicities discuss their experiences and debate about a solution that works for all people.

Too simple, many will say. However, I pose these questions to those who question this plan: How can military or political force be used for peace? Are these tools, whether bullets and bombs, or the gavel and the politicians, helping both those oppressed and those oppressing, or just the victims?

As we seek the humanization of all man, the giving of liberty and freedom to all people, we must not forget the others, the oppressors. If we have to change things for the better, we have to do so for all people, not just the huddled masses. This is our vocation, our task, to free not only the oppressed, but the oppressors as well.

This Freirean dialogue will help the cultural aspect of the conflict in the DRC, as Freirean dialogue facilitates cultural discussion and fosters a true love for people. How else can we do political or other types of action if we don't understand or tolerate each other? Freirean dialogue is not only a short-term solution, it is also a long-term solution.

We need to realize when we seek a solution to the DRC conflict that there are two sides to each conflict, the socio-cultural and political. Religion, race and other social issues play out upon the political side of the conflict. We need to solve the cultural side before we can begin to solve the political side. No partition, peacekeeping operation or political mechanism will solve this conflict, as they do not reach the root of the problem. We must attempt to stop the cultural hatred and oppression, not mask the problem in a secular worldview. Freirean dialogue is a necessary step to heal the wounds, the flaws in the blood diamond.

More US, UN input could calm Congo

by Miranda Eubank, Freshman, DuPont Manual High School

The Democratic Republic of Congo is abundant with valuable natural resources. Congo holds more than half of the world's cobalt, 30 percent of all diamonds, 70 percent of coltan—a vital ingredient in mobile phones—as well as huge deposits of gold, copper and various other minerals (BBC, 2008).

Congo lies in the center of equatorial Africa bordering nine countries. In theory, Congo should benefit from its inherent wealth and a location with many trade opportunities, but it has only brought tribulation. There is constant violence over land and power. The current situation is complicated and grim. Although there is no longer a pronounced war, thousands of people die every day because of continued conflict. Congo is full of government corruption, rebel uprisings, and military invasion.

The Democratic Republic of Congo originated as a Belgian colony in 1908, soon after the country gained independence in 1960, Mobutu Sese Seko seized power and managed to continue the role of leader through a series of sham elections for 32 years. In 1997, Laurent Kabila overthrew the government of Mobutu Sese Seko with the assistance of Rwanda and Uganda.

Upon taking the role of president, he promised to respect human rights, create an open government, and put an end to corruption, but soon failed to carry out these promises. A little over a year later, Rwanda and Uganda turned against Kabila and supported Congolese rebel forces who gained control of much of the country.



Miranda Eubank

Namibian, Angolan and Zimbabwean troops later came to assist Kabila.

In 1999, the Lusaka Accord was signed by all six states and most rebel groups. Two years later Kabila was assassinated and his young son, Joseph Kabila, became president. Throughout his presidency, he has attempted to end the ongoing violence and remove foreign troops from the country, but has had relatively little success.

The situation has festered for decades. Rebel forces primarily supported by Rwanda and Uganda controlled about two thirds of the country. Tens of thousands of women, possibly hundreds of thousands, have been raped in the past few years in this hilly, incongruously beautiful land (Gettleman, New York Times). On top of that, Angola regularly invades western Congo to chase the rebels back into Angola.

This situation will not improve unless the United States steps in actively to support the United Nations to end hostilities in the Congo and stabilize its government. We can do this by providing technical advisers to train police forces to keep order and prevent methods of torture that are used to get confessions. In addition, with the return of the refugees, to prevent food shortages, we should provide agricultural development advisors to plan efficiency in harvest. Congo is also in strong need of medical supplies and training. Once the government starts to help the people, they will begin to respect the government.

Giving Congo the support it needs, we should insist that the Kabila Administration abide by the democratic ideas that were originally proposed, hold democratic elections every four years, and allow rebel leaders to take part in the democratic process. Kabila should also declare an amnesty for all hostile activity that has occurred in the past. This would give Congo a fresh start and prevent favoritism in prosecution. Congo should actively prosecute corruption and human rights abuses in the future. Finally, the United States should emphatically suggest that foreign governments should remove military forces from Congo and terminate their support of rebel groups.

The proposals suggested will effectively address the current intolerable situation in Democratic Republic of Congo. The United States should exercise leadership in the Security Council as well as solicit the cooperation of other countries in order to calm the chaos in the Congo. Perpetuating the violence can only further exacerbate the situation.



World must do more in Congo to halt rape, militarism

Sarah Johnsrude, Senior,
DuPont Manual High School

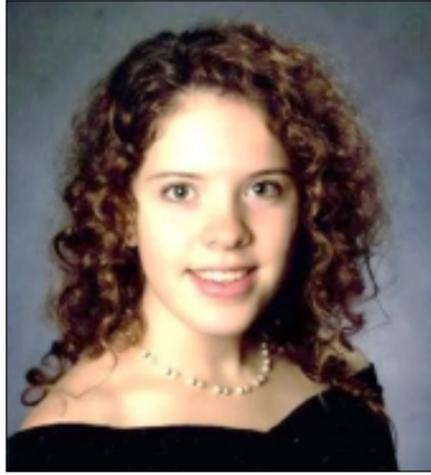
No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main; if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as any manner of thy friends or of thine own were; anyman's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind.

John Donne

In 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations created "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights." The document was created to protect and illustrate the rights of the world's exploited people and ensure legal action if any right is threatened. It describes the equality of all of humanity, regardless of "race, color, sex, religion, political... opinions, nationality... or other status." It promotes the "spirit of brotherhood" between and within nations. "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights" lists the proper treatment of the individual and condemns acts of torture and degradation. This "common standard" unites all people from all locations.

The United Nations asked all of its Members to publicly support the Declaration. In doing so, the Member nations have promised to intervene in the face of cruelty and to protect their fellow humans' rights to "life, liberty and security of person."

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)—once called Zaire—became independent from its Belgian colonial rule in 1960. The country, rich with mineral and natural resources, has been a hot bed of political turmoil since independence. A



Sarah Johnsrude

large contributing factor is the ethnic culture of the DRC. The people of the DRC are separated ethnically into 200 groups, and most have languages independent from the French used by the government.

Most recently, in 1996, the DRC was dragged into an external war as troops from Rwanda led by Laurent Kabila flooded into the country. Kabila later proclaimed his presidency, which created even more unrest between Kabila, his troops, and civilians. Kabila worked with the Tutsi in an uprising in May of 1997 in order to overthrow Mobutu, the previous leader of Zaire (the Democratic Republic of Congo). Kabila's regime, which had once been an ally to Uganda and Rwanda, severed ties with the countries and pledged their new allegiance to Zambia, Namibia and Angola. In 2001, Kabila was assassinated and his

son, Joseph Kabila, succeeded him as president of the DRC.

A ceasefire agreement was signed in 1999, but did not stop the war.

The United Nations began to track records of sexual and resource exploitation in the DRC in relation to the economic situation there. A link was established between the two and the U.N. saw reason to enforce peacekeeping efforts.

In the six year war, an estimated 3.8 million died due to malnutrition, disease and violence. The war has been deemed the worst African emergency in years—with death tolls topping those in Darfur. Most specifically, the rape and sexual exploitation of women has plagued the country.

Eve Ensler, founder of V-Day, a movement to stop violence against women and girls, speaks of the Congo: "I [ve] spent the past 10 years working on V-Day.... I [ve] traveled to the rape mines of the world—places like Bosnia, Afghanistan and Haiti, where rape has been used as a tool of war. But nothing I ever experienced felt as ghastly, terrifying and complete as the sexual torture and attempted destruction of the female species here. The violence is a threat to all; young girls and village elders alike are at risk. It is not too strong to call this a femicide, to say that the future of the Congo's women is in serious jeopardy." Ensler has launched a new campaign entitled "Stop Raping Our Greatest Resource, Power To The Women And Girls Of The Democratic Republic Of Congo." UNICEF and the International Rescue Committee alike have raised money to institute medical services and prevention measures in the DRC.

It is the U.N. and U.S.'s responsibility, as promoters of worldwide peace and freedom, to intervene in the DRC. Though the U.N. has sent peacekeepers in the past, it has not had the desired outcome. In fact, it has had very negative impacts. In 2003, there were reports of rape and prostitution initiated by U.N. peacekeepers. Records and videotapes have proved the illegal and immoral actions of some U.N. peacekeepers who have exchanged food and money for sex by refugees.

In 2009, the violence has yet to stop.

The U.S., as a Member of the U.N. and advocate of "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights" has every reason to intervene in the war of resource exploitation and femicide in the DRC. Peacekeeping in this African region should become a high priority of the new Obama administration once the United States has had a chance to lick the wounds from the War in Iraq and the current economic crisis. Although the U.S. does not have the means to intervene militarily, it is important that the government, and citizens alike, continue to support the efforts of UNICEF, the IRC, and "Stop Raping Our Greatest Resource, Power To The Women And Girls Of The Democratic Republic Of Congo" by funding female treatment clinics and health institutions for those affected by the conflict.

The Democratic Republic of Congo and its people are not an island, but a significant mass on the continent of Humankind. The United Nations, and the United States, must act fervently, and peacefully, to encourage successful blockades and to promote the growth of a strong, representative government of a united DRC.

Ideas from youth *(continued from page 4)*

From the outset, Lumumba struggled with challenges from regional/tribal parties, succession of the mineral-rich Katanga province (supported by Belgian troops) and from a military that had just thrown off its own colonial officer corps. Because the U.S., U.N., and NATO allies would not actively support Lumumba against the Belgians in Katanga and elsewhere, he turned to the Soviet Union, and the sides were drawn along Cold War lines.

Less than seven months after independence, Lumumba was murdered—apparently by Belgian officers, with the full knowledge and support of the CIA and U.S. government. In the absence of the man who is today seen across Africa as having been a visionary, unifying leader, the central government—and the country's stability—quickly deteriorated.

Col. Joseph Mobutu seized power and declared himself president in a November 1965 coup. He subsequently changed his name to Mobutu Sese Seko, and the country's name to Zaire. Mobutu retained his position for 32 years through several sham elections, as well as through the use of brutal force.

He was supported by Western powers—visiting with three Republican U.S. presidents—because he was an ally in the Cold War. As importantly, he apparently also allowed western corporations to operate with little regulation, exchanging his country's tremendous natural wealth for a personal wealth in the billions of dollars.

The First and Second Congo Wars

While people of Rwandan origin have been living in eastern Congo since the late 19th century, many of the current DRC conflicts trace their origins to the influx of 1.2 million Hutus that fled Rwanda fearing reprisal attacks as the 1994 genocide ended.

Among them were an unknown number of "genocidaires" (those responsible for the genocide), including members of the former (Hutu) government and armed forces and also members of the Hutu "interahamwe" militias. These refugees gathered in internally displaced persons camps (IDPs), including some 800,000 outside the city of Goma in North Kivu,

just across the border from Rwanda. Conditions were terrible, with an estimated 50,000 dying of cholera.

These IDP camps came to be controlled by the military forces of the former government of Rwanda, which began to forcibly coerce people to join their fight. They hoped to return to Rwanda and complete the "work" of the genocide, making guerrilla raids into northwest Rwanda.

The Government of Rwanda objected to being attacked by these DRC-based militias, and in 1996 they were joined by Uganda and Burundi, as well as some militias, in overthrowing Mobutu's corrupt government. Support for Mobutu was low, and the "First Congo War" was over in a matter of months, in early 1997. Laurent-Désiré Kabila was declared leader of the new "Democratic Republic of the Congo."

Kabila had difficulty holding the large country together. To consolidate his power and put to rest the idea that he was a puppet of Rwanda, he expelled the Rwandan members of his government. This angered the Rwandans and led, in 1998, to another attempt by Rwanda and Uganda to overthrow the new Congolese leadership—the Second Congo War.

However, under Kabila, the new Congolese government was able to enlist the support of Zimbabwe, Namibia and Angola and the fighting soon deadlocked, with no group able to control more than their own part of the country. A cease-fire was signed in July 1999, but sporadic fighting continued.

Laurent Kabila was assassinated in January 2001 and his son, Joseph Kabila, was named head of state. In October 2002, the new president was successful in negotiating the withdrawal of Rwandan forces occupying eastern Congo; two months later, the Pretoria Accord was signed by all remaining warring parties to establish a government of national unity.

Rwanda, Uganda, Angola, Zimbabwe, and Namibia agreed to withdraw their troops. Unfortunately, while some progress was made, it was difficult to integrate the remaining militias into the national army, as stipulated in the agreement.

Instead, local militias continued to operate under the authority of local leaders and to control the population and resource extraction within their areas.

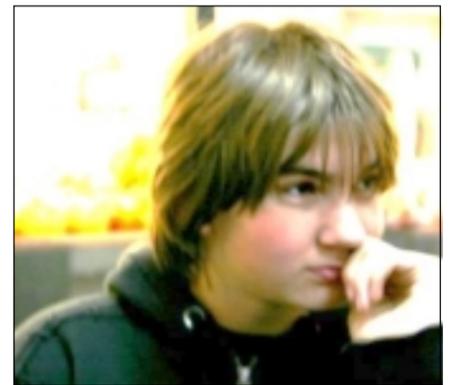
Fosl: use weapon of peace

"The Weapon of Peace" is the title of the winning video in the FOR's essay/video contest, produced by Dupont Manual High School freshman Eli Fosl. It deals with peaceful ways to solve the upsurge in violent crime in Louisville in recent years.

To see it, go to www.youtube.com, then type "Eli Fosl FOR" in the search line.

In the video, Eli interviews nonviolence activists, including Christopher 2X, Jack Norris and Catherine Fosl. The video goes to a church parking lot which was the site of a murder during a drug deal.

This year, the contest's third, it included videos for the first time.



Eli Fosl

By 2003, this "Second Congo War" had become the deadliest war since World War II, with an estimated 5.4 million deaths. Most of these were preventable civilian deaths from disease and malnutrition, the result of people being displaced from their homes and unable to access humanitarian aid and health care.

A transitional government was finally set up in July 2003, with Joseph Kabila continuing as president. After a successful constitutional referendum in December 2005, there were elections for the presidency, National Assembly, and provincial legislatures in 2006. Kabila was inaugurated president in December 2006.

The National Assembly was installed in September 2006. Provincial assemblies were constituted in early 2007, and governors and national senators elected in January 2007.

There have been, and are, many armed groups—regional militias and foreign rebel armies—that base themselves in the DRC. They continue to do so for refuge from their home countries' armies, to extort money from the people extracting the natural resources of DRC, and to force people in the communities and IDP camps into their militias.

Laurent Nkunda headed one of these militias (CNDP) and is a good example of the current problem facing the DRC. He is a Tutsi born in the North Kivu region who was trained by Rwanda and who fought with Rwandan troops in the two Congo wars. The 2002 agreement sought to integrate him into the national Congolese army, which he did for a while, rising to the rank of general.

After the elections in 2006, many Tutsi in North Kivu felt they had lost political power. They continued to feel vulnerable to attacks by Hutu genocidaires forces, which may have been supported by the Congolese troops.

Responding to these concerns, Nkunda began to operate independently of the Congolese army and proclaimed himself the protector of Congolese Tutsi against the Hutu genocidaires. At the same time, however, he used his military force to exploit resources and increase his own power and influence.

In January 2008, Nkunda's forces signed a peace agreement with the Congolese government agreeing to cease fighting and disarm, in exchange for amnesty as well as the Congolese government's pursuit and disarmament of the Hutu militias (FDLR). However, Nkunda's forces soon resumed fighting claiming that the government's fight against the FDLR was progressing too slowly. As Nkunda's forces expanded the territory they control in North Kivu, civilians fled.

Of approximately 600,000 displaced people in the province, some 250,000 found their way to camps outside Goma.

After unsuccessfully attempting to defeat the Nkunda's CNDP militarily, Congolese president Kabila made a deal with President Kagame of Rwanda to allow Rwandan soldiers into the DRC to help Congolese soldiers uproot FDLR militants in exchange for Rwanda removing Nkunda. Nkunda was captured in January 2009. Nkunda's forces continue fighting.

(continued on page 6)

Open up mind's windows *(continued from page 1)*

necessities and our MapQuest directions, then headed out.

The ride down was full of conversation regarding Gandhi, nonviolence, Arun's message and how they related to our struggle for gay rights. My husband, Dominique, was somewhat unfamiliar with the details regarding Satyagraha so I had plenty of time to fill him in as we rode south. The trip down I-65 was over before we knew it and we exited onto a two lane highway that would lead us into Gallatin, some 30 miles ahead.

It was along this road that the irony of it all became clear to me. As we passed small homes, with old pickups parked out front and the occasional rebel flag draped across a barn, I thought how ironic it was, to be going to hear a man speak who taught things as radical as nonviolence and tolerance of diversity in such a location as this. There's no better place, I reflected.

We arrived in Gallatin three hours ahead of the speech, just as I'd planned. I wanted plenty of time to get a good seat and to mentally prepare myself for his message.

We were hungry though and being vegetarians, food options in small communities can be a challenge. Fortunately, we found a Kroger and were able to get our nourishment and drive back to the college. We parked and ate as students milled about and seemed so carefree—oh, to have those days again.

After we'd finished, we headed into the auditorium through an unlocked door we were later to learn should have been locked. The place was empty and was much smaller than I'd imagined. We went straight down front and got our seats.

In a couple of minutes several maintenance workers came in and began setting up the microphone and large screens on each side. Their accents were pure country and when one of them asked the other what this was all for, he replied, "It's for Gandhi's grandson." He said Gandhi with a soft "A" sound, as in "Andy." They asked us how we'd gotten in and after I'd explained about the unlocked door, they seemed amused that we were willing to sit and wait in the auditorium for the remaining two-and-one-half hours until the speech from this "Gandhi's grandson." Yet, we continued to sit waiting.

About an hour before the speech, another gentleman came in and took a seat a couple of rows back from us. He greeted us and I could tell from his accent, he was a good ol' boy from the hills of Tennessee, of which he confirmed proudly.

He went on to tell us how he had been in the military and then not long after he'd returned his dad passed away. On his deathbed his dad had told him how he wanted him to go back to school and become a nurse, like he'd originally wanted. Now, for a man, in that environment to up and become a nurse takes guts and our friend explained how much flack he'd received for it from the town.

"It was Gandhi's message that got me here, back in school," he said. "Gandhi said never deny your inner truth." This shared truth from our new friend showed me the power of Gandhi's message. It even found its way into the backwoods of Tennessee to give a man courage to follow his dream regardless of the consequences.

Soon the auditorium had filled with people. They were people of all kinds, young, old, women, men, adult, child and many different races. I was talking to Dominique and glanced up and there down the aisle came Arun, accompanied by a photographer. Nobody seemed to even notice him as he quietly found a seat and sat down in the front row. We got up and went over and greeted him. He was warm and friendly and remarked how good it was to meet face to face finally. I didn't keep him long and we went back to our seats.

The deans of the college took the stage and greeted the crowd. After a brief introduction, they brought Arun up and the true education began. His Indian accent was soft and reminiscent of the Mahatma's I'd heard on old recordings from early 1900s. For the next hour and a half, he talked of his grandfather and shared intimate lessons he'd been taught so long ago.

Adjusting the glasses on his face, he softly said, "One of the lessons grandfather taught me that has served me immensely was of three men who had gone blind. These men had never before seen an elephant and wanted to know what one looked like. All three were taken to an elephant.

One was taken to a leg, another to the trunk and the last, to the side of the elephant. The first one felt the leg and said that an elephant must look like a tree trunk. The second one felt the trunk and said an elephant must look like a large snake. The third one felt the side of the elephant and said they must appear as a large wall. Grandfather said that is how the religions of the world see God. Each sees a piece but none see the entire truth of God without seeing each others' viewpoints as well."



— photo by Dominique James

From left, Maurice "Bojangles" Blanchard and friend Arun Gandhi

The crowd was hushed.... You could have heard a pin drop. It was powerful and the truth was flowing. He went on to say that his grandfather had taught him that the mind should be like a room with all the windows open, letting breezes or ideas, flow in and flow out, yet never letting one blow you completely over. True understanding comes from the ability to see others' perspectives as compared to your own.

There's one other lesson that I want to share that Arun spoke of. When Arun was sent to live with Gandhi in 1946, he was 11. In the Ashram village Gandhi had created, Arun played with all of the children. One child that he was very close to had a very bad habit. He would eat any sweets he could get his hands on to the point of becoming physically ill.

His parents took him to local doctors but none could cure him of this habit. They were at their wits end and decided to carry him to "Bapu," Gandhi. Bapu is the loving term for "father" in Hindi. Early one morning, they carried the boy to Gandhi and explained their dire situation. After a few moments of silent reflection, Gandhi told them to return in two weeks with the boy and he would fix the problem.

The parents were confused as to why they must return in two weeks but obeyed Gandhi's request anyhow. In two weeks, they came back and Gandhi took the boy aside for about a minute and returned telling them to take the boy home and see if he'd been cured. They were skeptical but

returned home and were amazed after the boy no longer touched sweets, not a bite.

They returned to Gandhi and asked him questions. First they asked why had he told them to return in two weeks. He replied that if he was going to ask the boy to give up sweets, he too, would have to give them up and needed two weeks to do so. Then they asked how, in just a minute, had he cured the boy when they had tried for years in vain.

He replied that he told the boy that he would not take a bite of food until the boy gave up sweets. It was the boy's love and concern for Gandhi that gave him the resolve to give up sweets. Gandhi never asked someone to do something that he himself wasn't willing to do. That lesson resonated with me because if we are to lead people for change, we must lead by example.

After Arun's speech, I briefly met with him and thanked him for coming. We still converse weekly online and he gives me insights on my activism and struggles for equality. He is a dear friend and if you ever have the chance to hear or meet him, you should surely take advantage of it.

There are many more lessons and insights that he spoke of that I'd be happy to share with anyone that wishes. They will change the way you see things and strengthen your humanity.

The writer is an FOR member in Louisville, an activist for LGBT/civil rights and a Satyagrahi.

Peacemaker

(continued from page 1)

lence, or survivors of those murdered, have met in local courts, where killers have apologized and asked for forgiveness, which often is granted.

This leaves him hopeful, if still aware of the potential of the unfathomable violence to return.

"We still have extremists," he said. "We need to build a relationship between our people.... The hope is for all my country to have peace and to have unity among all people."

Peace Education director Eileen Blanton said grass-root efforts at reconciliation are helping achieve that in Rwanda. She said Louisville activists of many groups and religious denominations have helped Bucura and other visiting Rwandans formulate these efforts.

"It's primary small groups of (Rwandan) people in their communities that are making this happen," Blanton said.

She lauded Bucura for being at the forefront in his nation of a movement for forgiveness and reconciliation.

"He's a phenomenal peacemaker.... To choose nonviolence in the aftermath of genocide is a phenomenal choice, you know. He had family members who were killed and to be the voice of reason just after the genocide, and at great risk to himself... is amazing."

Third Thursday Lunches

presented by the

Fellowship of Reconciliation & Interfaith Paths to Peace

May 21

THE CRISIS IN DARFUR will be addressed by two local leaders involved with a relatively new organization, The Kentuckiana Interfaith Taskforce on Darfur (KITOD). Bob Brousseau and Phil Nippert will speak about the current situation in Darfur, and how it has evolved over the last few years, both in the Darfur region and as a movement here in the United States. KITOD's work has been recognized nationally. Members have attended conferences in Washington, worked with the media in keeping Darfur in the news, and conferred with political leaders on solutions. Phil also has been a member of Amnesty International for some thirteen years. He has lobbied legislators' offices as a delegation leader for AIUSA. Phil is a serious student of the history and policies of Darfur. We feel very fortunate to have them share their insights with us.

The Rudyard Kipling • 422 West Oak Street • Louisville
Buffet Lunch at 11:30 • Presentations at Noon • \$6.00

For reservations, call Jean Edwards (458-8056)



Youth

(continued from page 5)

The fighting continues on many small fronts. It is estimated that 45,000 people are dying every month as a result of the ongoing conflicts. Children are forced to be child soldiers, and rape is used as a tactic of war.

Who are the major groups still fighting in eastern DRC?

There are many armed groups in the region, but to simplify, the main actors are:

- CNDP—(Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple) - Laurent Nkunda's forces.
- FDLR – (Forces Démocratiques de la Libération du Rwanda) originally included Rwandan Hutus involved in the genocide who wanted to retake power in Rwanda, though now also made up of recruits who were not so involved.
- Mai-Mai militias – referring not to any particular group of a specific ethnic or political affiliation but rather to a number of small militias that fight to protect local communities, mostly in response to the intrusion of Rwandan militias.
- FARDC – (Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo) - National Army of the Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) – a 20-year rebellion against the government of Uganda, led by Joseph Kony.
- MONUC – (United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo) there are only 17,000 U.N. peacekeeping forces in the DRC.

A more united labor wages uphill fight for free choice

The good news is that the two warring union coalitions in the U.S., the AFL-CIO and Change to Win, have formed the National Labor Coordinating Committee. It will consist of presidents of twelve of the nation's largest unions, and include the National Education Association.

There is no love lost between the unions in their respective camps, which makes this thrust all the more remarkable. Serious problems remain: turf wars over hospital workers in California and elsewhere, and the bitter split-up of the UNITE-HERE union, and more.

Also, organized labor may be facing a major setback in the most contentious fight over labor laws since the 1940s: the Employee Free Choice Act. As this column is being put to bed, unions seem to lack the 60 votes needed to block a Senate filibuster against the Employee Free Choice Act, the bill that would give workers the right to have their union recognized as soon as a majority signs cards calling for a union. The change would make it easy to bypass so-called secret-ballot elections, which are traditionally harder for unions to win.

Sen. Arlen Specter, a "liberal Republican" labor thought it could influence, caved in to Big Capital. Somewhat-liberal Democrat Diane Feinstein also seems not to be willing to back it. The struggle continues.

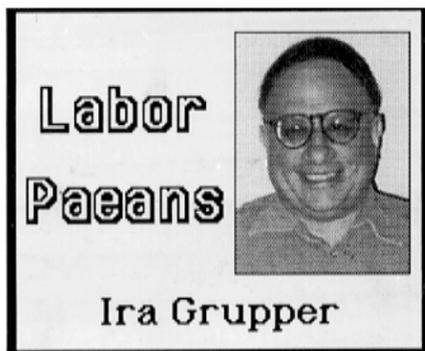
On the local front, there was a bad storm here in Louisville months ago. The city is way behind in picking up all the branches and debris strewn all around. Much criticism of the city administration has been leveled.

Comes now Mayor Jerry Abramson, in a March 31 letter to the Louisville *Courier-Journal*: "The crews are doing a great job, sacrificing their weekends and spending time away from their families to get our city back to normal. Starting last weekend, our 24 city crews were aided by private companies, which should significantly speed up the process

"I wanted to hire the contractors weeks ago. However, because the city crews are union members, city government cannot contract for work that would normally be assigned to the unions without their approval....

"When the union agreed, we moved quickly — taking bids on March 20 and awarding the contracts six days later." Now, your columnist has a few questions: Is it okay for the mayor to hire non-union labor when there are lots of union folk who could use the work? Were the union crews forced to work overtime? And, why did the union cave on this issue? Well, at least the visitors to the Churchill Downs racing shrine for the Kentucky Derby won't have to see the debris. And that's what really counts.

Bill Londrigan, president of the Kentucky State AFL-CIO, in his April



11 newsletter, informs us: "It certainly was business as usual when the usual suspects introduced their perennial favorites, right-to-work-for-less and repeal of prevailing wage. The winner of this session's anti-worker, anti-union award must go to (State) Sen. Damon Thayer, who introduced the standard right-to-work-for-less (S.B. 165), repeal of prevailing wage on school construction projects (S.B. 145) and an increase in the prevailing wage threshold (S.B. 146).

"Rep. Joe Fischer also deserves recognition for introducing a prevailing wage repeal amendment to H.B. 143, along with Rep. Sal Santoro who introduced a floor amendment to H.B. 144 to repeal prevailing wage on school construction projects. These three are a real promising trio of legislators, except that not one of their bills or amendments were ever called or heard in either the House or Senate. The memory of 2,000 agitated union members in the Capitol Rotunda must still be fresh in the minds of those legislators who witnessed that event."

Bill also reported on those legislators who attack coal mine safety: "Three separate bills, each targeted to a particular aspect of coal mine safety, were introduced.... They were all defeated through a concerted effort of your labor lobbyists, allied groups and several widows of deceased coal miners."

"(Also defeated was a bill) which would restore the civil rights of felons." There were some good bills that passed. "Also signed into law was the union-inspired S.B. 33, which requires that flags flown on public buildings in the Commonwealth are made in the U.S.A."

Speaking of patriotism, a few weeks ago the CBS "Sunday Morning" television show aired a segment, "America's Class Warfare." Reporter Jeff Greenfield explored "the roots and the history of anger in America. And how the class warfare argument has played out, and is playing out, in the face of our current economic crisis. "Wowie! "Is too much wealth and power concentrated at the top? Should the government try to redress that balance? Or is that idea nothing but 'class warfare?'"

Jeff then goes on: "Two centuries ago, Thomas Jefferson denounced 'bankers and speculators' as the biggest danger to the Republic. President Andrew Jackson waged war against the Second Bank of the United States, and the 'elite circle' of financiers.

"And Franklin Delano Roosevelt began his presidency by indicting the 'money changers' who, he said, had caused the Great Depression."

Well, your scribe knows at least one good quote, from Santayana: "Those who refuse to learn from history are condemned to repeat it."

Notwithstanding quotes from the bourgeoisie's enlightened sector, Jobs With Justice reports: "Companies aren't supposed to attack workers who want a union, but Rite Aid and other employers are doing it every day. When 650 workers at Rite Aid's distribution center in Lancaster, Ca. wanted to join a union to address problems like sweltering heat in the warehouse, the company threatened and fired them.

"The federal government was preparing to charge Rite Aid with 49 labor law violations, but let the company off with a slap on the wrist. After workers prevailed and voted to join the International Longshore and Warehouse Union last March, Rite Aid continued the attacks. Now the company is refusing to sign a first contract and has hired an anti-union consulting firm to guide the company through the decertification process. This situation at Rite Aid is a perfect example of why passing the Employee Free Choice Act is so important." And why, your reporter must say, its shelving is such a tragedy.

...

The door to resumption of trade with Cuba has opened a little, with President Obama allowing Cubans residing in the U.S. to travel freely to the island. One hopes we will all be able soon to visit this island. After all, is Vietnam more "communist" than Cuba? We have full diplomatic and trade with Vietnam.

U.S. hands are not clean with regard to Cuba. *The Miami Herald* reported on April 8: "A federal grand jury (in El Paso, Texas—I.G.) handed up a new indictment against Luis Posada Carriles, for the first time linking the Cuban exile militant in a U.S. legal proceeding to a series of 1997 tourist-site bombings in Cuba that killed an Italian national.

"The perjury counts were added to the previous indictment that accused Posada of lying in his citizenship application about how he got into the United States. Another new charge is obstruction of a U.S. investigation into international terrorism."

Truth be told, there have been numerous attempts to overthrow the Cuban

government, by force and violence, most notable being the Bay of Pigs invasion (La Batalla de Girón), in 1961.

Should Cuba sit still while possibly Mr. Posada Carriles, and others like him, plan invasions, possible murders? Which brings us to a terrible injustice. The Cuban Five are five Cuban men who are in U.S. prison, serving four life sentences and 75 years collectively, after being wrongly convicted in U.S. federal court in Miami, on June 8, 2001.

They are Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González and René González. The Five were falsely accused by the U.S. government of committing espionage conspiracy against the United States, and other related charges.

But the Five pointed out, in their defense, that they were involved in monitoring the actions of Miami-based terrorist groups, in order to prevent terrorist attacks on Cuba. Their actions were never directed at the U.S. government. They never harmed anyone, nor ever possessed nor used any weapons while in the United States. The Cuban Five's mission was to stop terrorism. Over the years, more than 3,000 Cubans have died as a result of terrorist attacks.

Terrorist Miami groups like Comandos F4 and Brothers to the Rescue operate with complete impunity, from within the United States—with, they claim, the knowledge and support of the FBI and CIA. So, Cuba decided to send the Five Cubans to Miami to monitor the terrorists. The Cuban Five infiltrated the terrorist organizations in Miami to inform Cuba of imminent attacks.

But instead of arresting the terrorists, the FBI arrested the Cuban Five ANTI-terrorists on September 12, 1998, and held them in solitary confinement for 17 months in Miami. They were put on trial in November 2000. With the seven-month trial based in Miami, a virtual witch hunt atmosphere existed. Defense attorneys' motions for a change of venue were denied five times by the judge, although it was obvious that a fair trial was impossible in that city.

The Cuban Five were convicted June 8, 2001 and sentenced to four life terms and 75 years in December, 2001. On August 9, 2005, after seven years of imprisonment, the Cuban Five won an unprecedented victory on appeal. A three-judge panel of the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals overturned the convictions of the Cuban Five and ordered a new trial outside of Miami.

However, on Oct. 31, the 11th Circuit Court vacated the three-judge panel's ruling and granted an "en banc" hearing before the full panel of 12 judges. Exactly one year after the victory that granted the Five a new trial, the panel voted 10 to 2 to deny the Five a new trial, and instead affirmed the trial court.

This case is a political case; the Cuban Five are political prisoners. They were never charged with espionage. No classified documents were alleged to have been stolen or seen by the defendants.

Important declarations have been made by hundreds of parliamentarians in Britain, Italy, and the European and Latin American parliaments. The U.N. Working Group on Arbitrary Detentions, with five judges, ruled that there were irregularities in the Five's trial and arrest, effectively denying them a fair trial and calling on the U.S. government to remedy this injustice.

Adriana Pérez, wife of Gerardo Hernández, has requested, and been denied, a visa to see her husband in prison in the U.S. For a decade, the United States government has denied this couple the possibility of seeing each other. Doesn't she, and don't the other wives, have the right to visit their husbands?

Contact Ira Grupper at irag@iglou.com.

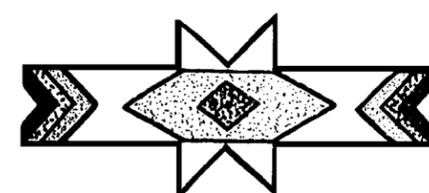
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American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)/Kentucky Chapter (502.893.9828) www.adckentucky.com

Calendar for peacemakers

May 3 (Sun) **VIGIL FOR PEACE** every first Sunday evening, remembering all those suffering from conflicts in the Middle East. Bring a sign. 7-8 PM, Bardstown Road at Douglass Blvd. Sponsored by LPAC (Louisville Peace Action Community). For more information, call Judy Munro-Leighton at 456-6914.

May 3 (Sun) **SUSTAINABLE LOCAL PUBLIC POLICY**. Every Sunday at 2 PM at the Legal Aid Society, 416 W. Muhammad Ali. Become a part of this grassroots movement bringing principles of sustainability into local public policy. For details, contact: j@bikecourier.org.

May 4 (Mon) **SUSTAINABLE LOCAL PUBLIC POLICY**. Every Monday at 6 PM at the Center for Neighborhoods, 610 South Fourth Street, #701. Become a part of this grassroots movement bringing principles of sustainability into local public policy. For details, contact: j@bikecourier.org.

May 6 (Wed) **THE LOUISVILLE SUSTAINABILITY FORUM**. Meets the first Wednesday of each month. The forum's purpose is to hold and promote the intention of sustainability for Louisville; establish and nourish relationships that strengthen community and create change; and create a space for discussion that inspires, motivates and deepens our ability to catalyze social change. Special meeting time: 5:30 PM to 7 PM. Join us to hear guest presenter Nate Pederson of EarthSave Louisville speak of the global benefits of adopting a vegetarian diet. Passionist Earth & Spirit Center, The Barn at 1924 Newburg Road.

May 7-24. **PANDORA PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS MARTIN SHERMAN'S "BENT."** This 1979 play revolves around the persecution of gay men in Nazi Germany. For more information on show times and ticket prices, visit www.pandoraprods.org.

May 8-10 (Fri-Sun) **CONTEMPLATIVE LECTIO DIVINA RETREAT**. Led by Terry Taylor, author of *A Spirituality for Brokenness*, this retreat will introduce participants to the ancient practice of *lectio divina* (divine reading) and explore how the technique can be used to explore the most significant events in one's own life story. Retreat will be held at Bethany Spring, near the Abbey of Gethsemane. For more information or to register, contact Vanessa Hurst at 899-1991 or vhurst@mertoninstitute.org.

May 9 (Sat) **PEAK OIL**. Every 2nd Saturday, Main Library, 4th & York, Mezzanine, Boardroom. 9:00 AM. Call George Perkins, 425-6645.

May 9 (Sat) **MAY FRIENDSHIP DAY: "BUILDING ON OUR STORIES"**. Join Church Women United for its annual May Friendship Day service and lunch. We will hear personal stories from sisters who have helped to mobilize our movement and who have been inspired to action on local and national issues. St. Stephen Martyr Catholic Church, 2931 Pindell Ave (off Hess Lane in Audubon Park neighborhood). Registration at 10 AM, service at 10:30 AM, with lunch following. For more information, call 635-5813.

May 13 (Wed) **KITLAC (Ky Interfaith Taskforce on Latin America and the Caribbean)**. Every second Wednesday at the Presbyterian Seminary. 7:30 pm. Call David Horvath, 479-9262, or Pat Geier, 456-6586.

May 14 (Thu) **THE FDR/LINCOLN LEGACY CLUB**. Meets the second Thursday of the month, for those interested in learning about fair trade and the American system of economics of Hamilton and Clay. 6:30 PM, 1838 Frankfort Ave. For more information, contact John Miller at papajohn15@bellsouth.net.

May 14-23 **PANDORA PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS "I AM MY OWN WIFE."** Winner of the 2004 Pulitzer Prize, and based on a true story, this play tells the fascinating tale of Charlotte von Mahlsdorf, a German transvestite who managed to survive both the Nazi onslaught and the repressive East German Communist regime. For more information on show times and ticket prices, visit www.pandoraprods.org.

May 14 (Thurs) **APPAP (American Palestine Public Affairs Forum)**. Every second Thursday. A documentary film exploring the situation in Middle East will be presented. 7:30 PM, Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, 1044 Alta Vista Road, Nelson Hall, Room 118. For more information, call Bashar Masri, 773-1836.

May 14 (Thurs) **QUEER MOVIE NIGHT**. Join us for a viewing of Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin, pioneer of civil rights for the African American and LGBTQ communities. Free snacks will be provided. 8 PM, Fairness Campaign Office, 2263 Frankfort Avenue. For more information, call Fairness at 893-0788 or visit www.fairness.org.

May 16 (Sat) **SATURDAY ACADEMY**. Black and African World History with Dr. Blaine Hudson (11 AM to 12:30 PM). Followed by "Calling All Concerned: Update on the Kentucky Center for African American Heritage (12:45 PM to 2 PM). DuValle Education Center Cafeteria, 3610 Bohne Avenue. Call Bani Hines-Hudson, 295-7531.

May 17 (Sun) **LOUISVILLE COMMITTEE FOR ISRAELI/PALESTINIAN STATES**. Every third Sunday. First Unitarian Church, 4th & York Streets, 3:00 PM. Call Beverley Marmion, 451-5658.

May 17 (Sun) **"AIM HIGHER"** focusing on military counter-recruitment. Usually meets every 2nd Sunday at 7:00 PM, but is meeting a week later this month due to Mother's Day. 2236 Kaelin Avenue at the FOR office. This group welcomes invitations to speak about conscientious objection, military recruitment, and the possibility for high school students to "opt out" of having their names given to recruiters. Call Chris Harmer, 893-2334. colonel221@yahoo.com.

May 21 (Thurs) **THIRD THURSDAY LUNCH: THE CRISIS IN DARFUR** will be addressed by two local leaders involved with a relatively new organization, The Kentuckiana Interfaith Taskforce on Darfur (KITOD). Bob Brousseau and Phil Nippert will speak about the current situation in Darfur, how it has evolved over the last few years, both in the Darfur region and as a movement here in the United States. KITOD's work has been recognized nationally. Members have attended conferences in Washington, worked with the media in keeping Darfur in the news and conferred with political leaders on solutions. Phil also has been a member of Amnesty International for some thirteen years. He has lobbied legislators' offices as a delegation leader for AIUSA. Phil is a serious student of the history and policies of Darfur. We feel very fortunate to have Bob and Phil share their insights with us. The Lunch is sponsored by the Fellowship of Reconciliation in cooperation with Interfaith Paths to Peace. Rudyard Kipling, 422 West Oak. Buffet lunch at 11:30; presentation begins at noon. \$6. For reservations, call Jean Edwards at 458-8056 or email .

May 21 (Thurs) **KENTUCKY SINGLE PAYER HEALTH CARE**. Every third Thursday, 5:30 PM. Main Library, 4th & York Streets, Mezzanine Board Room. Call Kay Tillow, 636-1551.

May 23 (Sat) **SATURDAY ACADEMY**. Black and African World History with Dr. Blaine Hudson (11 AM to 12:30 PM). Followed by "Black and Jewish Relations in the Age of Obama" (12:45 PM to 2 PM). DuValle Education Center Cafeteria, 3610 Bohne Avenue. Call Bani Hines-Hudson, 295-7531.

May 25 (Mon) **DEADLINE FOR THE JUNE ISSUE OF FORsooth**. Contact **George Morrison, editor, at 454-2752**, or klm86@att.net. **Note: Please email new or updated calendar listings to calendar.peace@gmail.com, or call Nikki at 451-3402.**

May 25 (Mon) **MEMORIAL DAY SERVICE FOR PEACE**. Sponsored by Interfaith Paths to Peace. 11 AM, Christ Church Cathedral, 421 South Second Street. For more information, call 214-7322 or email terry@interfaithpathstopeace.org.

May 25 (Mon) **F.O.R. STEERING COMMITTEE**. Presbyterian Seminary, 1044 Alta Vista Road. Meets every fourth Monday. Visitors encouraged. Call Dennis Bricking, 298-0590, or Phil Schervish, 558-7175.

May 29 (Fri) **DESSERTS! DESSERTS! FESTIVAL**. Sponsored by the Cathedral of the Assumption AIDS Ministry & Awareness Committee. Desserts donated by Metro Louisville businesses will be sold beginning at 11:30 AM at the Cathedral of Assumption Undercroft, 433 South Fifth Street. All proceeds benefit the House of Ruth, a social service agency that provides comprehensive services to persons with HIV and AIDS. For more information, contact Sarah Scheibe at 582-2971.

May 29-30 (Fri-Sat) **VOICES OF KENTUCKIANA CONCERT: "CELLULOID BROADWAY."** Doors open at 7:30, concert begins at 8 PM both nights. Clifton Center, 2117 Payne Street. Tickets \$20; \$15 for students and seniors. For more information or to purchase tickets online, visit www.voicesky.org.

June 4 (Thurs) **METROPOLITAN HOUSING COALITION 2009 ANNUAL MEETING**. Featuring keynote speaker Michael Bodaken, President of the National Housing Trust. Louisville Hyatt Downtown, 320 W. Jefferson Street. Social hour begins at 5 PM; program and dinner at 6 PM. Single tickets are \$50 and a table of 8 seats is \$500. Call MHC for sponsorship opportunities and ticket sales at 584-6858.

June 4 (Thurs) **FORsooth LABELING** at Beverley Marmion's, 6:30 pm. We need you for one hour! Please stop by and socialize while your fingers do the work. Bouquets to those who do this important work every month! Call 451-5658.

(continued on page 3)

Regular Meeting Times for Area Organizations

- ADDICTION RECOVERY ADVOCATES OF KENTUCKIANA – 2nd Thursday (585-3375)
- AIDS INTERFAITH MINISTRIES (AIM) OF KENTUCKIANA, INC. – 1st Tuesday (574-6085 or 574-6086)
- AMERICA 2000 DEMOCRATIC CLUB – 4th Tuesday (459-0616)
- AMERICANS UNITED FOR SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE – 3rd Thursday, every other month at noon (608-7517)
- AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL – 1st Saturday (637-8951)
- APPAP (American Palestine Public Affairs Forum) – 2nd Thursday (895-8155)
- BREAD FOR THE WORLD – Last Monday (239-4317)
- CAPA (Citizens Against Police Abuse) – 2nd Thursday (778-8130)
- CART (Coalition for the Advancement of Regional Transportation) – 3rd Wednesday, 1578 Bardstown Road (895-5172)
- CLOUT [Citizens of Louisville Organized and Working Together] – (583-1267)
- COMMITTEE FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST – 2nd Monday (456-6586)
- COMMON CAUSE – 1st Tuesday, every other month (454-7797)
- COMMUNIST PARTY USA – First Sunday at 5:00 PM (384-3875)
- COMMUNITY FARM ALLIANCE OF JEFFERSON COUNTY – 2nd Tuesday (775-4041)
- CONVERSATION CAFE – Wednesday evenings (560-0085)
- 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 (558-7175 or 895-8516)
- FRIENDSHIP FORCE OF LOUISVILLE – 2nd Tuesday (893-8436)
- GREATER LOUISVILLE SIERRA CLUB – 3rd Tuesday (897-3335)
- HABITAT FOR HUMANITY – Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays & Saturdays (637-6265)
- INTERFAITH PATHS TO PEACE – 1st Tuesday (214-7322)
- IRFI (Islamic Research Foundation International, Inc.) – Sundays at 6:00 PM (502-423-1988)
- JOBS WITH JUSTICE KENTUCKY (582-5454)
- JURISDICTIONARY CLUB OF LOUISVILLE – Know the law and how to use it (500-8161)
- JUSTICE RESOURCE CENTER – 3rd Saturday (562-6737)
- KFTC [KENTUCKIANS FOR THE COMMONWEALTH] – 2nd Monday (589-3188)
- KY ALLIANCE AGAINST RACIST & POLITICAL REPRESSION – 3rd Monday (778-8130)
- KY COALITION TO ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY – Last Tuesday (541-9998)
- KITLAC (KY INTERFAITH TASKFORCE ON LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN) – 2nd Wednesday (479-9262)
- KY RAINBOW/PUSH COALITION – (245-2272)
- LOUISVILLE COMMITTEE FOR ISRAELI/PALESTINIAN STATES – 3rd Sunday (451-5658)
- LOUISVILLE PEAK OIL GROUP – 2nd Saturday (425-6645)
- LPAC (LOUISVILLE PEACE ACTION COMMUNITY) – (558-9124)
- LOUISVILLE WOMEN CHURCH – Meditation 1st & 3rd Sundays (473-8435)
- LOUISVILLE YOUTH GROUP – Friday nights (893-0788), www.louisvilleyouthgroup.org
- 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)
- 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)
- 911 TRUTH LOUISVILLE (502-609-6020)
- US DEPARTMENT OF PEACE CAMPAIGN OF KY – 3rd Sunday (472-1772)
- YOUNG DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISTS – every Friday at 2:30 PM (712-2338)

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.