

Listen to Women for A CHANGE

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom,
Minnesota Metro Branch
P. O. Box 14752, Minneapolis, MN 55414, 651-458-7090
<http://www.wilpfn.org>, wilpf@earthlink.net

September - October 2007

Remember our FALL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Saturday, October 6, 1 to 4 pm
Becketwood Co-op Housing, Kensington
Room (under the chapel)
4300 W. River Parkway, Minneapolis

Learn about changing branch relationships
with National WILPF, hear about the
Bite the Bullet war profiteering campaign,
discuss actions for Blue (water) October,
help decide new programs, AND enjoy
the company of other WILPF members!

A segment of "Women, Water, and Spirituality"
will be presented by Arts Committee

Coffee and refreshments provided

*Next WILPF "Coffee With"
Saturday, October 13
See announcement on page 3*



**Over 100,000 people marched in
Washington, DC against the war (many
marched for impeachment) on
September 15, 2007**

On Saturday, nearly 100,000 people from all walks
of life, young and old, of all nationalities and creeds,
marched together, united by a single purpose, de-
termined to end the war. The impeachment move-
ment was a huge part of this demonstration.
People took buses, trains, vans, and planes from all
over the country to make it to Washington DC for
the March, and it was reflected in the massive
turnout.

The protest included one of the anti-war move-
ment's largest collective acts of civil disobedience.

Antiwar Continued on page 6

DARFUR, DARFUR

Wednesday, October 24, 2007 Minneapolis Convention Center, 1301 Second Avenue S, Minneapolis
Program: 9 am-2 pm (registration 9-9:30)
\$25.00 Luncheon and Speakers

Keynote Speaker: Brian Steidle "The Devil Came on Horseback"

Brian Steidle completed his service with the US Marine Corps at the end of 2003. In January 2004 he accepted a contract position with the Joint Military Commission in Sudan working on the North-South ceasefire. In September 2004 he was invited to serve in Darfur as an unarmed military observer, but after six months he became convinced he could be more effective by bringing the story of what he witnessed to the world. A documentary about his experience in Darfur, "The Devil Came on Horseback," recently premiered at the Sundance Film Festival. (See also calendar page 6)

Seminars: Two repeated 60-minute sessions 9:30-10:30 a.m., 10:45-11:45 a.m. Choose two of three to attend.

- * Working in Darfur — Perspectives from the American Refugee Committee
- * Genocide in Darfur — Never Again Must Mean Never, Ellen J. Kennedy, Ph.D., Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, U of M
- * Genocide with Impunity — A Torture Treatment Perspective, Douglas A. Johnson, The Center for Victims of Torture

Reservation Deadline: Monday, October 15. Checks to UN Rally Fund, mail to Margaret Severe, 7420 Sheridan Ave S, Richfield 55423, 612-869-0559. FFI Zehra Avsar Keye, UN Rally Chair, 612-377-0214.
Special Parking \$5.75; Front Ramp Entrance at 1401 3rd Avenue South

U.S. SECTION NEWS

Big Changes Afoot

First, WILPF's Executive Director, Mary Day Kent, has resigned, effective September 28. The organization will be without a director during a search process, which may last months.

Second, at the last international WILPF conference, held in Bolivia this summer, members voted to increase U.S. Section dues from \$22,000 per year to \$50,000, reasoning that the U.S. Section is the richest section and has the most members, and members do not pay as much per capita as in other sections. National thus has a hugely increased obligation of support for international.

WILPF is an international organization. It was formed internationally in 1915 and has spread around the world since then. Every U.S. branch member belongs to a truly global organization. The increased dues, support desperately needed by other sections and the international office, will make a heavy burden for the U.S. Section, and branches need to be aware of this.

Because of increased dues and for many other reasons including increasing WILPF's effectiveness, national WILPF is in the process of making several changes that will affect our branch. A major one is that all members of WILPF recognize that they are members of the U.S. Section first and of a branch second. This means that people henceforth will join national WILPF rather than a local branch. Joining National includes membership in the local branch, if there is one. (Only 10 people are needed to form a new local branch.)

There are many more changes, some of which will be discussed by MN Metro at the membership meeting on October 6. See page 3.

Campaign and Committee Reports (From Fall Mail Packet)

Save the Water Campaign

Save the Water calls for celebrating "Blue October," the month that the people of Uruguay voted to amend their constitution to recognize the fundamental right to water.

Suggested actions:

1. Take Back the Tap. Observe the 35th anniversary of the Clean Water Act by calling on Congress to invest in clean, affordable public tap water.

2. Host a tap water challenge in your community. Expose the truth behind the bottled water industry. (Call MN Metro hotline if you are interested in this--651-458-7090.)

3. Find out who controls your water. Call your mayor, city council member, or public works department. Ask who makes decisions about your local water supply, and tell them you're a voter who opposes the privatization of your local water supply.

4. Pledge to break the bottled water habit, and urge any groups you are part of to do the same and switch to serving pitchers of tap water at public events.

5. Stop bulk water transport and sales. The Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP) launched by Mr. Bush with Mexican and Canadian leaders in 2005 would create super-corridors between the three countries with privatized highways (NAFTA highways) and pipelines carrying bulk water for profit. Sign the petition opposing SPP at www.thealliancefordemocracy.org/SPP or 781-894-1179.

Tucson WILPF has developed a Tucson Water Bill of Rights and is working to have it adopted into the city charter. It calls for: the right to pay only reasonable, necessary, and directly related fees (no refuse fee, no money for advertising, no payment for hookups needed for new development; the right to continued

services and city maintenance of those services; the right to the purest possible water, no toilet-to-tap water; and no new development when need for water exceeds yearly maximum reliable water supply.

WILPF DISARM Committee

Keep Space for Peace Week (October 4-13)

We will co-sponsor major events at Offutt Air Force Base in Omaha, Nebraska. Offutt is now the com-mand center for war in, from, and through space, as well as for extensive data collection from global internet traffic. A huge aerospace trade fair will also be held in Omaha to coincide with the annual UN World Space Week (Oct. 4-10). Details are on www.disarm.wilpf.org.

Reports from Keep Space for Peace Week activities are submitted to the UN agencies monitoring existing space treaties, and to World Space Week Association, which promotes UN World Space Week. We have been concerned for several years because WSWA is co-sponsored by Lockheed Martin, Raytheon, and other aerospace corporations involved in space militarization. We suspect they promote the week to draw young people into Star Wars R&D.

Bite the Bullet

Bite the Bullet is a new national network of over 37 organizations and individuals determined to stop the war profiteers and merchants of death from producing and peddling their wares (wars). The network was launched at the WILPF-WRL (War Resisters League) Stop the Merchants of Death conference held in the Twin Cities last September. At the Bolivia international Congress we agreed to support the evolving international network as well. Reaching Critical Will is developing resources on contractors for nuclear weapons and space militarization, and U.S. WILPF provides resources on U.S. university involvement in biodefense/bioweapons programs.

MN Metro News

MN Metro Coffee With Program
Saturday, October 13, 10 am to noon
 Van Cleve Community Center,
 901 15th Ave. SE, Minneapolis

Recovering a Culture of Peace

Mary Jane LaVigne
 co- founder of Do Peace Minnesota

Peace seekers are often called to draw the line in the sand, to stand in opposition to wars, whether that means ending current wars or calling attention to saber rattles of the next misadventure. This is critical work. Yet underneath is a deep desire to create, to make the world better. Can we move beyond this time? Beyond feeding the need, when can we begin to fire the desire? How could the creation of a U.S. cabinet level Department of Peace help prevent violence of all kinds?

Do Peace Minnesota is a statewide group dedicated to promoting a culture of peace and lobbying for creation of a U.S. Department of Peace.

Free; refreshments served; everyone welcome. FFI 651-458-7090 or 651-645-6992.

will be available at the membership meeting on October 6 and will be discussed and reported by the Steering Committee in the future.

Book Club

The new MN Metro Book Club met for the first time on September 25, to discuss the book *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man*. This club will meet monthly, choosing a new book at each meeting. Newcomers are welcome. E-mail CorinKagan@aol.com to get details about book, date, and time of next meeting in October.

Please register interest by e-mailing Corin Kagan@aol.com and you will be informed of the location of the first meeting.

Arts Committee Workshop at "Women and Spirituality" Conference

On Saturday, October 13, the Committee will lead a workshop at the Women and Spirituality Conference at MN State University, Mankato. The workshop will consider the historic connections between women and water and how that is being affected by the global struggle for ownership and commodification of the world's water supply.

Participants will be asked to examine their own beliefs and spiritual feelings about water and its meaning in their personal and/or public lives and express this in the creation of a work of art. The Arts Committee is supplying the materials and inspiration for this activity.

The Water Bottle Band will accompany the presentation as an example of how the arts can draw attention to issues needing immediate action.

Changes at MN Metro

MN Metro is no longer a 501(C)3 organization, a new requirement of national WILPF and implementation of which we have reported over the last few months. We are newly registered as a nonprofit with the Minnesota Secretary of State. We currently have 113 paid members and 160 people are on our e-mail alert list.

MN Metro has 40 members who are not members of national WILPF. These members will be grandfathered in to national as members. When it is time for them to renew, they will receive a notice from national rather than from MN Metro.

Information about many other large and small changes

"Questioning Capitalism"

By Member Karen Redleaf

Karen, trained as an economist in the 1980s, and since observing the fruits of what she learned, writes a regular column about various aspects of this "dismal science" that now determines a great deal of how we live today. Send questions to Karen at vegan14ever@riseup.net.

I received two questions after my first column. I had hoped for more, but perhaps this topic so confuses people that it is hard to even formulate a question (I felt this way in almost every math class I ever took). Or, admittedly, people may not be interested in the topic (I felt this way in almost every math class I ever took). However, since economics runs our lives, I'll keep writing.

Question 1

This question asked for suggestions for books with good information and basic definitions on economics and globalization.

Confession: since leaving Graduate School I have read few economics books. I find them frustrating. I read a bit and then hurl them violently

across the room. I especially stay away from books by Thomas Friedman (e.g., *The Lexus and the Olive* Capitalism continued on page 5

Listen to women for A CHANGE is produced every other month by MN Metro WILPF. Please submit letters/articles/complaints (!) to the editor at 1233 Ingerson Road, St. Paul MN 55112 or alteravista@earthlink.net.

Copy is due on the 10th of the month preceding publication. Next issue: November-December.

Editor: Leslie Reindl

Follow-up to July-August report

**U.S. SOCIAL FORUM MIDWEST REGION
Initial Resolutions**



Here are the resolutions of the Midwest Region of the U.S. Social Forum, that were decided at the forum itself. More resolutions will be posted on the USSF website (www.ussf2007.org). This is also an opportunity to connect with folks who are doing work in this region (or any other) that you would like to get behind, endorse, and/or propose. Best, Shannon Gibney

Midwest Region of USSF, June 30, 2007 – Peoples' Assembly

We want to take this opportunity to thank all the Atlanta folks who made this forum happen, the USSF national planning committee, all the organizations that have worked long, long hours, and all the volunteers who have labored on behalf of building this movement.

1. We resolve to stand in solidarity with the people of the Gulf South. We support your movement for self determination and the right of return, and we resolve to educate the peoples of our region so we do not forget your struggle.
2. We resolve to continue our collective efforts to fight US imperialism, war, white supremacy and militarism. We also resolve to continue to fight against the prison industrial complex, in our region and all over the US.
3. We resolve to continue our collective efforts as both Native and non-Native peoples to address racist injustices confronting indigenous communities, particularly working to preserve our air, water and precious lands of this planet, and we resolve to continue to fight for Native sovereignty.
4. We resolve to fight for the rights of all immigrant communities in our region, and address the increased state repression immigrants face on a daily basis.
5. We resolve to always integrate gender and sexual justice across all aspects of our work, and be clear in our vision of the presence of and leadership from gay, lesbian, bisexual, two spirited and transgender peoples.
6. We resolve to continue to fight against neoliberalism and corporate globalization and to support workers' rights and the labor movement throughout our region.
7. We resolve to address anti Arab racism and anti Muslim oppression throughout the Midwest, especially since so many Arab peoples live in Midwestern communities.
8. Lastly, we resolve to fight for public schools that are integrated, even though *Brown v. Board of Education* has been reversed. We are also resolved to support youth and educators who are challenging No Child Left Behind.

We declare that we will actively participate across our region in all the united days of action that the WSF and the USSF have proposed for January, 2008.

We declare that we will return to our Midwestern communities and organize events across all our communities to share the knowledge we have gained at this USSF.

Lastly, we declare that we will organize a Midwest regional gathering by 2009 in conjunction with planning for the 2010 USSF. We pledge that any gathering that we organize will be built around the principle of bringing all the incredibly diverse communities of our region to the table to plan and participate in the gathering.

Shannon Gibney
www.shannongibney.net
612-210-8049 (cell)

Capitalism continued from page 3

Tree, The World Is Flat). Friedman is a journalist (I use the term loosely) who writes, *inter alia*, on economics for a mass audience. If you read his writings on a topic you know well and care about, you will soon decide that you can't trust him to teach you anything. He is an apologist for the status quo.

Noam Chomsky says that the role of intellectuals in any society is to defend the status quo. So don't read intellectuals, unless they are dissident intellectuals like Chomsky. You will learn more economics from a Chomsky book that isn't even *about* economics than you will learn from anything most economists write. Books like John Perkins' *Confessions of an Economic Hitman* and Antonia Juhasz' *The Bush Agenda* are reasonably easy to read and have good economic underpinnings – they pull back the curtain a bit and explain how things work.

Global Exchange (especially author Kevin Danaher) puts out very good material on globalization and has lots of basic information on its website (www.globalexchange.org). Public Citizen (www.citizen.org) has a publication called "Whose Trade Organization?" that deciphers trade agreements for a lay audience, a very worthwhile project.

The Wikipedia website offers good information on many topics (although you may spend countless hours following endless links and forget why you went to the site in the first place).

Finally, I strongly recommend the publications of the Dollars and Sense collective (www.dollarsandsense.org). These economists put out *Dollars and Sense* magazine 6 times a year and produce an alternative textbook series that includes "Real World Micro," "Real World Macro," and "Real World Banking." Check out the publications section of their website.

Question 2

This question is related to the first although it doesn't sound like it: Doesn't capitalism lift all boats? And if it doesn't lift all boats doesn't it at least lift some boats more than non-capitalism so that what we need is capitalism along with a fair system of taxation to redistribute the proceeds?

I consider these questions related, because they touch underlying assumptions that are the main reason I cannot recommend any "mainstream" economics texts, even for basic definitions. There is an assumption in capitalist economics that

capitalism causes the tide to rise more than any other economic system, and that this rising tide lifts all boats. Recently there has been recognition that the tide may not lift all boats, but this has come with the assertion that those who benefit are so much better off that they can compensate those who are left behind or harmed and everyone will end up better off.

There are problems with this analysis on many levels. At the most fundamental level, many question why a rising tide is even a good thing. Many point out that a rising tide drowns those without boats (it is difficult to design an appropriate compensation package for the dead).

The notion that "economic growth" is always good is simply an assumption and carries with it certain (unstated) ideas about who / what matters. In a finite system, growth comes from stealing, killing, and poisoning the planet. Global warming has just opened the Northwest Passage for the first time in modern history. From an economic perspective this is a great thing - it will massively increase trade and reduce transportation time and costs. The species that will soon be extinct thanks to global warming may have a different perspective on the issue, but polar bears have no say.

This brings me to the question of power. Economists love to talk about what is possible "in theory." It might be possible in many cases for those who benefit from economic policies to compensate those who are harmed. It is not always possible, as I argued above, because it is hard to calculate the cost of losing an entire species, poisoning an entire community, etc.

But even if we could put a price on what is lost, the theoretical compensation doesn't take place in reality. To create such a system of compensation would require a political system that is willing and able to exercise control over the economic system. We would need a political system that could represent the interests of the weak against the powerful. But our political system is increasingly just the democratic façade of our undemocratic economic system. Political candidates are only "viable" if they advance the interests of the wealthiest people and corporations.

The rest of us still get to vote. We have the right to choose between the candidate who will shoot us in the head and the candidate who will stab us in the back.

What a great system--we do have a choice.

Minnesota Metro WILPF, P.O. Box 14752, Minneapolis, MN 55414, 651-458-7090, www.wilpfn.org

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____

U.S. Section membership \$35 _____ Low-income \$15 _____ Renewing member _____ New member _____

Making a donation to MN Metro WILPF: Not tax deductible _____ Tax deductible (make check out to JAPA) _____

Subscription to WILPF International \$15 (Make check payable to WILPF, mail to MN Metro)

Calendar

Sun. Oct. 7, 7-9 pm: Talk by **William Rodriguez**, honored as national hero for helping save hundreds of people trapped in World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. Last person to leave North Tower alive. First Universalist Church, 3400 Dupont Ave. S, Minneapolis; \$5 donation requested. Sponsored by MN 911 Truth. FFI 651-633-4410

Wed. Oct.12-Mon. Oct. 17: Show of documentary "**The Devil Came on Horseback**" about Marine Captain Brian Steidle who, over 18 months in Darfur, learns to change the world through peaceful means while as military observer for the African Union. (See page 1.) Bell Auditorium, 10 Church St SE, Mpls. www.mnfilmarts.org

Sat. Oct.13, 10am-5pm: Camp Darfur exhibit, MN State Capitol Mall, 75 Martin Luther King Blvd, St Paul. <http://www.mnhumanrightsweek.org>

Sat. Oct. 13, 10am-noon: WILPF Coffee With: "**Recovering a Culture of Peace,**" with Mary Jane LaVigne. Van Cleve Community Center, 901 15th Ave. SE, Minneapolis. FFI 651-458-7090

Mon. Oct. 22-Tues. Oct. 23: "Lessons from NAFTA: Building a New Fair Trade Agenda." Minneapolis Convention Center (details at: www.iatp.org). Conference features national and international experts on NAFTA and globalization, including: John Nichols – political columnist for The Nation (keynote), Maude Barlow – author and President of the Council on Canadians, Mark Ritchie – Minnesota Secretary of State and former President of the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, Elizabeth May – Green Party Leader – Canada, Dan Magraw – Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL), Victor Suarez – former Mexico legislator and director of Asociación Nacional de Empresas Comercializadoras de Productores del Campo (ANEC), and more. FFI Ben Lilliston, 612-870-3416, blilliston@iatp.org.

Sat. Oct. 27: National antiwar rally. Watch for announcements.

Nov. 2-4, Northland Bioneers Conference, Ford Training Center, Ford Parkway and River Road, St. Paul. Over 12 nationally recognized keynotes recorded at National Bioneers Conference, San Rafael, CA, followed by facilitated community dialogue on the topics. Also 30+ workshops on ecological and social well being, 30+ exhibitors demonstrating products and services that support a healthy planet, cash ala carte food vendors that prioritize local, organic, and sustainable farming. Register on line at UptownTix or call 651-209-6799 or 888-279-0089.

Ongoing - Nov. 25. "Documenting China: Contemporary Photography and Social Change." Photography exhibit developed by Bates College Museum of Art, Lewiston, Maine; organized for travel by Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service. Weismann Art Museum, East Bank Campus, University of Minnesota (parking underneath in garage)

Third Friday of every month: Day of activity against war, beginning September 21, 2007. Called by Iraq Moratorium Committee and General Strike for Peace. Break from regular routine to participate in activities where you live, work, and study, calling for an end to the war in Iraq. Vigils, protests, forums, wearing black armbands, special religious services, film showings, pressure politicians and media, etc. Be creative in personal actions. FFI 612-522-1861, www.iraqmoratorium.org

War Protest *continued from p. 1*

Around 5,000 people lay down as part of a dramatic die-in at the foot of the Capitol steps to symbolize all those lives that have been lost in this war. Another 200 were arrested when they tried to take an anti-war message to the Congress and were stopped by riot police.

In his speech at the rally at the White House, Ramsey Clark called for a three-month push for Congress to introduce Articles of Impeachment. He called on all impeachment supporters to rededicate themselves to the cause. Congressional representatives don't have the right to take impeachment off the table. The Constitution-- of, by and for the people -- puts impeachment on the table out of legal necessity.

Congress has returned from vacationing while more and more soldiers and Iraqis have died. Now they are planning to capitulate once again and fund this war with no end in sight. Tell them vote No on war funding, vote Yes on impeachment.

Women's International League for Peace
& Freedom, MN Metro Branch
P.O. Box 14752
Minneapolis, MN 55414

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 6844
St. Paul MN

Return Service Requested