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2010 Annual Meeting

Recognition of the recipients of the Pat Cameron Peacekeeper Award took place at the Peace Center Annual Meeting on December 3. The award, named for one of the founders of the Peace and Social Justice Center, began last year and is given every year to a person who exemplifies the work of the Center. This year there were two recipients of this award, Diane Wahto and Cathy Benton. Diane has served on the Peace Center board for the past eight years; as board chair, a member of the finance committee, she has served on all committees, as well as the P.E.A.C.E. art and essay challenge, and took part in demonstrations, vigils, and workshops before resigning from her position as board chair in October.

Cathy Benton has been the director of the Peace Center the past three years. During her time as director she has worked to carry out the mission of the Peace Center. Cathy has resigned from the director position of the Peace Center and will be leaving this month. Diane and Cathy will truly be missed at the Peace Center.



Cathy Benton left and
Diane Wahto right 2010
Peacekeeper Award recipients.

Aimee Geist, Education Curator of the Ulrich Museum of Art spoke about the upcoming Alfredo Jaar exhibition, which culminates his Rwanda Project. This exhibit *WE WISH TO INFORM YOU THAT WE DID NOT KNOW* will begin January 22 and end March 27, 2011 in the Amsden Gallery. Aimee explained how the exhibit corresponds with the 2011 Peace Essay Art Challenge Experience, a long time program of the Peace Center. This year the focus of the challenge will be on tolerance. Students K-12 are encouraged to enter. Details will appear in the Peace Center Weekly Calendar of Events. Awards and recognition will be handed out to students at the Ulrich Museum Saturday, March 12, at 2:00 p.m.



Carolyn Marie Fugit
Peace Center
Board Chair

Outgoing board members Connie Pace-Adair and Karen Fitzgerald, acting board chair, were recognized for their past service. New officers elected were Carolyn Marie Fugit, chair, Pat Cameron, vice chair, James Lynch secretary and Dorlan Bales, treasurer. New board members to the Peace Center and Education Fund elected were Mary Cole, Beverly-Danley

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American Association for Palestinian Equal Rights Presentation at the Peace House

At our October 27 potluck we saw a presentation by Julia Hurley from AAPER, American Association for Palestinian Equal Rights. This group works to inform the American public about the human and national rights of the Palestinian people and the role of the United States in the Middle East. Julia explained that AAPER is a lobbying group that began in 2007. They produce presentations, brochures, film showings and other material to inform Americans and our legislators about the situation in Palestine. The goal is encourage our government to have a more equitable US policy toward Palestine that advances equality in Israel and Palestine. AAPER believes that U.S. policy toward Israel and Palestine should: (1) support the rights of Palestinian Christians and Muslims to freedom and equality; (2) stand with those Israeli citizens and civic organizations that have demonstrated their commitment to equality and reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians; and (3) support those Palestinians who seek freedom and equality through nonviolent actions against Israel's occupation and discriminatory laws. Julia described one of their current campaigns, the Free Palestine Walks. These are silent walks to (a) raise awareness about Palestine among Americans who take part in, sponsor and observe the walks and (b) to raise funds to educate millions of Americans about Palestine. Last year more than 1,000 walkers in 25 cities across the U.S. raised over \$25,000.

For more information on AAPER this is their website: <http://www.aaper.org/site/?c=quIXL8MPJpE&b=3794785>

Half the Sky

from the Chinese proverb "Women hold up half the sky"
Women represent half the world population,
two-thirds of the labor force, receive one-tenth of the world income
and own less than one percent of world property

Friends All - this is the last column I'll be writing for *Half the Sky* - it's been a privilege and pleasure to write for the Peace Center Newsletter for many years. We chose *Half the Sky* because the proverb amply portrays the role of women in the world...some say it is an old Chinese proverb - others attribute it to Mao Zedong - either way we felt it worthy for this newsletter.

In my travels throughout the world - Europe, Central America - I encountered waves of women who were chiseling out a role for themselves in their patriarchal society - church, mosque, temple, synagogue, family, politics, mainstreet. The Madres - Latin America - have suffered indignities and death; the women at Greenham Common (England) ridicule and harassment; Women in Black, CodePink, Another Mother for Peace, Woman to Woman, the list goes on and on.

Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn in their groundbreaking book *Half the Sky* identify three major abuses of women (globally): sex trafficking and forced prostitution, gender-based violence, and maternal mortality. They emphasize the importance of the enhancement, empowerment and education of girls - indeed, this is the on-going theme in Greg Mortenson's books - *Three cups of Tea* and *Stones into Schools* - my granddaughters are receiving them for Christmas.

It would be foolish to believe American women share half the sky. We don't. The gender makeup of the House and Senate prove we have a long way to go. The 19th Amendment gave us the right to vote, the right to own property, the right to our own bank accounts and above all...the right to our children in case of divorce. Later struggles include the right to our own credit (and credit cards), the right to share our deceased or divorced husband's social security - and more. My eyes glaze over when I hear Sweet Young Things deny they are feminists. Sigh! It all begins again - every generation - the struggle goes on. Never underestimate the power of a woman.

Peace and special greetings as we approach Channukkah, Kwanzaa, Christmas, Ashura - and the holidays.

MMcDH

Eleven Travel to School of Americas Watch Vigil Nov.18-22

"Solidarity at its best! College and high school students, nuns, priests, military vets, union leaders, parents, grandparents, all saying with one voice, 'Close the SOA!'" (Roy Bourgeois)

Those participating in the Peace Center trip to Fort Benning, GA, and the annual SOAW vigil/protest were two McPherson College students who made the trip two years ago, three others from McPherson, one student and one professor from Newman University, one student from Friends University, and three Peace Center board members joined thousands of others raising our voices for justice. We heard stories of torture victims, participated in workshops and caucuses, attended film showings, musical performances, networked with others, and participated in the solemn funeral procession commemorating those killed by graduates of the SOA. We left more inspired in our work for social transformation.

Students' comments included that awareness was raised; they were energized and encouraged by being around so many others who are passionate about the same injustices, and they no longer felt like they were in the minority. They learned a lot from the Killer Coke.org presentation and rally which cited abuses by Coca Cola, particularly against unions in Columbia and Guatemala.

Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, one of the most active voices in the faith-based movement for justice and peace, spoke at the Pax Christi gathering and also celebrated the Mass on Saturday night. He offered a compelling case for the urgent need to abolish war and build peace in our day and advocated seeking to serve others rather than accruing power over others.

Four human rights workers were arrested, charged with federal trespassing for crossing into the fort; two of those pleaded no contest, put the SOA on trial by their court statements, have been sentenced to the maximum six months in prison and are currently in a Georgia county jail. The other two pleaded not guilty and face trial on January 5th. Please see soaw.org for more information and mailing addresses. Twenty-two others were arrested on city and state charges as they left the demonstration on Saturday. Charges included unlawful assembly, failure to disperse, and parading without a permit. All were released from jail by Monday, November 22 with fines and bonds as high as \$4,152.50 each.

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Charlie King, Nicole Scheid, Jeff Wicks and Linda Kusse-Wolfe. Returning board members are Janice Bradley, Joni Bradley, Pat Cameron, Pat Ciotti, Doug Everingham, Steve Otto, Alice Powell, Frank Smith, Terry Tedman, Rannfrid Thelle, Laura Tillem and Capri Zimmerman, who were elected to serve on the board.

Medication Policy

On August 23, the Peace and Social Justice Center approached the Wichita Board of Education to call for change in their policy on over-the-counter (OTC) medications to allow parental consent for OTC medications at school. USD 259 has an overly restrictive policy, which demands a doctor's authorization for OTC medications. As parents are denied the choice to consent for OTC medications during the school day, students often go untreated for minor physical complaints, headache, earache, dental procedures and minor injuries; families suffer unnecessary hardships and costs and doctors are burdened with unnecessary paperwork. With 300,000 Kansans lacking health insurance, this policy further compounds the problem of providing immediate and reasonable care for ailing children. Parental consent would mean: fewer lost classroom hours; a heightened sense of service by families; less lost work time for parents; the provision of more direct services by school nurses and the release of doctors from paperwork. We have seen overwhelming support for this initiative, from letters to the editor, doctors' letters in support of the change and support from the Kansas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics. The Peace Center is working to bring this issue to the Kansas Legislature to allow parental consent for OTC medications at schools statewide. We welcome support and participation.

More Peace Less Toys

Alice Powell contributed to the Peace Center in honor of her grandchildren Jaelynn Voth and Griffin Powell instead of buying toys for their birthdays and the coming holiday season. Consider doing the same. Our children and grandchildren deserve a world at Peace.

Collateral Murder

In August and September, the Peace Center sponsored two video/talks by local Iraq War veteran, Ethan McCord, an eyewitness to the carnage exposed in the "Collateral Murder" video released by WikiLeaks in April, 2010. The video shows a US helicopter mowing down a group of Iraqis on a street in Baghdad, including two Reuters journalists, one of whom was carrying a video camera (mistakenly identified as a weapon). A van then pulls up, the driver trying to load up a wounded man to take him to get help. The helicopter then destroys the van. McCord was one of the first soldiers on the ground in the video. He pulled two badly wounded children out of the van, and carried them to an Army vehicle nearby to be taken for treatment. McCord left Iraq disabled with wounds from an IED, and is currently working with Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW). McCord detailed how US soldiers are desensitized and brutalized to fulfill their combat roles, how they were given orders for 360° rotational fire when ever they were hit with an IED resulting in civilian deaths and how soldiers are resisting such inhumane orders. With other IVAW members, William Stewart-Starks and Chris Hopkins, McCord outlined the new campaign by the IVAW's Soldier/Civilian Alliance, to stop the deployment of traumatized troops, where 20-25% suffer from PTSD and traumatic brain injury. Peace Center members and guests donated over \$200 to support the work of the IVAW in its work to end the wars. Peace Center members and the IVAW are working to gather support for PFC Bradley Manning, 23, held in solitary confinement, accused of leaking the Collateral Murder video.

Turn Disappointment Into Action

President Obama has extended the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan to 2014 and possibly beyond. Now more than ever, it is our moral imperative to say "No" to war. We at the Peace Center must redouble our efforts to make our wish for peace visible and viable.

Molly's Brigade

Demonstrations every Friday weather permitting at 4:45 p.m. on the corner of Central and Broadway.

Dress warm and bring your own sign or signs will be available.

We Oppose All Attempts to Weaken Social Security

- ◇ Remove the cap on taxing high incomes
 - ◇ Don't cut benefits
 - ◇ Don't raid the trust fund
 - ◇ Don't privatize this critical program
-

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Dec. 2010