



Fall 2011

## For Our Latest News and Calendar: [www.wichitapeace.org](http://www.wichitapeace.org)

Are you receiving our weekly email calendar? We plan many events between newsletters! We've shown films, worked to pass social justice legislation, and held demonstrations against the wars on short notice. To receive the weekly email calendar or quarterly newsletter via email contact us at [director@wichitapeace.org](mailto:director@wichitapeace.org) to our list! You can also Like us on Facebook.

### ***Dr. Margaret Flowers speaking September 27th at the Murdock Theatre 7-9pm 'How to Improve Medicare and save money at the same time'***

What do the health insurance companies and the politicians not want you to talk about? They don't want to admit that only a single-payer system can solve America's health-care mess.

Dr. Margaret Flowers, from Physicians for a National Health Program, (PNHP.com) a research and advocacy organization of 18,000 medical personnel, will be speaking in Wichita on this issue September 27, at the Murdock Theatre, 7pm – 9pm, with a reception following her presentation.

Her talk will explain why Medicare For All/Single Payer is the way to provide us all with access to quality healthcare, save money, save lives, provide for peace of mind and promote a standard for community morality.

From PNHP we learn that: "By replacing the private insurers with a streamlined system of public financing, our nation could save \$400 billion annually in unnecessary, wasteful administrative costs... enough to cover all the uninsured and to upgrade everyone else's coverage without having to increase overall US health spending one penny". Administrative cost would drop from the current 30% of total health spending to per-

haps 15%. Given these statistics how does the adopted Obama bill compare?

Doctors with PNHP also explain the problems with the recently passed Obama plan, which is called The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA): "As much as we would like to join in the celebration of the House passage of the health bill...in good conscience we cannot. We take no comfort in seeing aspirin dispensed for the treatment of cancer".

Here is a list of some of their objections:

- About 23 million remain uninsured.
- Millions of middle-income people will be pressured to buy commercial health insurance policies costing up to 9.5% of their income
- Insurance companies will be handed at least \$447 million in taxpayer money.
- Health care costs will continue to skyrocket
- Medicare payments will be drained by \$40 billion to safety-net hospitals, threatening the care of tens of millions who will remain uninsured.

Dr. Flowers will be speaking and answering your questions, so this is a great opportunity to learn how to advocate for a health care system that meets the needs of our economy and provides health care for all.

### **Upcoming Fundraisers !**

Come One Come All! On **Wednesday, September 21<sup>st</sup>** the Peace Center will celebrate the International Day of Peace and we want to celebrate with you. From **6 to 9 p.m.** your \$5 cover charge will provide you with international desserts to feed your body as well as international music to feed your soul. There will also be a silent auction with items from The Artichoke, Five Guys Burgers, Meads Corner, Starbucks, and IHOP. We'll also have a special surprise auction item you won't want to miss. Proceeds from this event will go into our house fund to cover any unexpected repairs.

On **October 29<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.** you won't want to miss our Halloween party. The Hearty Party for Peace will feature chilli and soup (including vegetarian of each). We'll have games and activities for kids and the whole family. Feel free to wear your costume. \$10 for adults, children 12 and under \$5.

### **SOA Watch taking trip to annual protest**

The SOA Watch committee is still looking for individuals who want to go on a bus with others fellow protesters to Ft Benning, GA to protest the School of the Americas. Join us as we voice our outrage and demand our government shut down the "School for Assassins" which has taught too many Latin and South American military soldiers how to torture and abuse their own citizens.

We leave from the Peace Center on Nov. 17 in the afternoon and return on November 21 about noon. The cost for transportation and lodging is \$275 per person. We are taking a tour bus with a bathroom in the back. Your \$100 deposit is due by Oct. 1. The remainder is due on November 1. You are responsible for your own meals. Come and join us as we have fun all the way to Georgia and back.

Sponsored by the Peace and Social Justice Center of South Central Kansas. Call 316-263-5886 for more information or to reserve your space.

## Father Roy Bourgeois Visits Wichita



Father Roy Bourgeois, M.M, was a guest of the School of the Americas Watch-Wichita and the Peace Center on August 28-30. He spoke at a variety of venues. Sunday evening he was at the FMCC church where he showed a film " Pick Smoke over the Vatican", which addresses the issue of women's ordination in the Roman Catholic Church. He also talked about the

injustice at the School of the Americas and the need to shut it down. Fr. Roy is best known for his opposition to training Latin and South American soldiers at the Ft Benning, Georgia location. The School of the Americas (SOA) is commonly referred to as the "School for Assassins". It trains Latin and South American soldiers to abuse human rights and torture in order to maintain dictatorships. The presentation was followed by a lively and stimulating discussion. His message of being true to one's conscience and not remaining silent in the face of injustice was well received.

Monday morning Fr. Roy talked to a gathering at Lorraine Avenue Mennonite church. He addressed at length the need for many people to come down for the protest in November at Ft. Benning, Georgia. This was a People of Faith for Peace sponsored breakfast.

The remainder of Monday was filled with stops in Hesston, where he spoke at the chapel service, McPherson, and KIPCOR in North Newton. By the end of the day Fr. Roy's voice was a little weak but he was thankful for being able to reach so many in our area with his message.

Tuesday morning Fr. Roy joined us at the Peace Center for a more relaxed atmosphere to listen to him talk. We were disappointed he had to leave early but it was so good to have him visit us. What an inspirational life.

Fr. Roy commented several times how well organized we were to have so many opportunities for him to be heard . A special thanks goes to our director, Bill Brittendall, and the SOA Watch committee who put in a lot of time and effort making sure we had many places and venues for Fr. Roy to speak.

### Tuesday Breakfast with Father Roy

### Jobs not Spending Cuts, End the Bush Tax Cuts

The latest economy news isn't great. We still have unemployment near 10% with actual unemployment even higher. Underemployment continues to be a problem. Politicians gearing up for another tough election year are, once again, promising jobs and deep cuts to state and federal budgets. These cuts revolve around social programs that assist the poor, disabled, and elderly.

The recent debt ceiling debate as well as the budget debate earlier this year has lead to an increasing recession. Both "debates" obscure the real issues. Social Security and Medicare have absolutely nothing to do with the deficit. We pay for these programs all our working lives. Making Social Security solvent for the future is as simple as raising the withholding cap, allowing Americans making over \$106,800 to put more into Social Security. Even raising the cap just a few percent could wipe out any future shortfall.

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## Ten Years in Afghanistan—Get Out Now

We are entering the 10th year of the war in Afghanistan. October 7, 2001 was the day the first Army Rangers landed on Afghan soil. This war, which was a response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, has ultimately become a drawn out disastrous conflict with no end in sight. It has become a nasty, dirty war with no clear purpose or end. The purpose and reason given for this war has changed several times over the decade but the end result is the same—the US military is killing more civilians every year. Government spokespeople now project that we won't leave Afghanistan until 2024.

And what does all this killing get us? We are sowing more hatred with drones, bombs, and nighttime raiding parties. We are no safer than we were before. Security in Afghanistan is at its lowest level for a decade and two-fifths of the country is off-limits. In the US we are still playing 'security theatre' in our airports. We have become a nation that is conditioned to fear.

But it is not just that we are at endless war. Equally disturbing is "the transformation of government institutions and their relationship to the citizenry to sustain war, and, most enduringly of all, the mentality that it has spawned" [in our culture] (Glenn Greenwald). We are seeing a complete renouncement of holding our political leaders responsible. We are encouraged to be the partisan cheerleaders who refrain from criticizing anything which our runaway military empire does or wants to do. The US Empire can do what it wants because it is the biggest bully on the block.

The growing price tag for this unwanted (by the American population) war is \$ 5.7 billion dollars a month. While the government is wasting our tax dollars on war the politicians are slashing funding for our schools, our hospitals, our day care centers, our food banks, our infrastructure, our elderly, and the least among us. Peace has faded from debate in Washington policy circles. Earlier this year the House of Representatives voted to cut all funding for the U.S. Institute of Peace. While the funding was eventually restored Richard Soloman, the Institute's president said "Peace does not reflect the world we live in". No money for peace but trillions for war. What message does this send our children?

The hard questions must be asked—Why are we still in Afghanistan? What will it take for the government to do what the majority of the electorate wants? It's time to get out and bring our troops home.

**Join us on Oct 7 at the Peace Center for our candlelight vigil . 7pm – 8 pm.**

## Peace House Mortgage Burning



## Peace Center 2011

The Peace House of the Peace and Social Justice Center was the site of a joyous celebration on July 30<sup>th</sup> 2011. We were pleased to be able to pay off our remaining house loans. This was because Ken and Marjorie Stewart foundation gave us a grant of \$5000.00 which enabled us to pay off the remaining house loans. This helps put our organization to continue to be a force in our community.

The event was modeled after an old fashioned ice cream social complete with barbershop quartet. Thanks to Freddy's for providing the gallons of frozen custard and the Wichita Air Capital Chorus for the music.

Rev. Jackie Carter offered a prayer at the beginning celebrating the ecumenical nature and legacy of the Peace House roots from Churches United for Peace. Many certificates were presented to those people who made significant contributions to the organization. A plaque was presented which had all the names of those who have left a bequest to the Peace Center.

We were very pleased to have the Stewart relatives in attendance at the celebration.

JR and Julie Russell (daughter and son-in-law), Gail Stewart (daughter), and Ken's sister, Vyvian Hanson. Marti Stewart, of Minneapolis, was unable to attend.

If you are interested in leaving the Peace Center a bequest please call Pat Cameron at the Peace Center 316-263-5886

## Serving Kansans or Serving Kochs?

Voters with a wide variety of interests have been appalled at the enormous damage that Gov. Brownback has done to Kansas institutions and its budget in a relatively short time.

Virtually all of his actions appear to have been dictated by his big campaign funders, Charles de Gahl and David H. Koch, worth \$21.5 billion a piece.

Gov. Brownback deleted \$100 million dollars in education funding for Kansas children. Wichita lost over \$36 million from its budget.

No one should have been surprised: Brownback's Senate record was such that education and children's advocacy organizations have given him dismal ratings over the years. These included ratings of zero percent in 2007 by the Association For Supervision and Curriculum Development and the National Association of Elementary School Principals. He supported the interests of the Children's Defense Fund and the National Association for College Admission Counseling at zero percent in 2006 as well as, the National Parent Teacher Association in 2003-2004.

Gov. Brownback has vetoed Kansas state financial support for the arts resulting in the loss of millions of grant dollars supporting 200 arts programs in Kansas and proposed slashing funding for public broadcasting.

He signed election law changes that may make voting more burdensome for tens of thousands of Kansans. Requiring proof of citizenship for voter registration will mean door-to-door and table registration will disappear. The law suppresses the vote with what is ultimately a poll tax, as some of the poorest citizens won't have access to their birth certificates or passport to register. Suppressing vote turnouts among minorities, students, union members, and independents benefits the Koch agenda.

However, his most draconian cuts and deliberate program destruction have targeted those groups most vulnerable in society and those who are least able to advocate for themselves: those without access to affordable health care, the disabled, mentally ill, abused and neglected children and the poor.

Brownback refused \$900 million in federal funds to help communities reduce chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease, while requesting over \$2 million in federal help to fund faith-based marriage enhancement programs.

Brownback's administration alleges it wants to 'improve' Medicare but at the same time is slashing spending by \$200 to \$400 million. Turning the proactive initiatives of Gov. Sebelius on their heads, he returned the \$31.5 million federal Early Innovator grant to set up a health insurance exchange as part of the Affordable Health Act.

Brownback signed into law new regulations, which make it virtually impossible for healthcare facilities providing reproductive services for women to remain open under the new state guidelines. The new restrictions are higher than those for hospitals. His administration is keeping the records secret of how the clinic regulations were determined, defying Kansas Open Records Act information requests.

In his most deadly action to date, Brownback slashed funding for the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, choosing to sacrifice the well being of endangered and disabled children by closing offices in Lawrence, as well as those servicing mostly rural Lyndon, Coffeyville, Fort Scott, Garnett, Marysville, Pratt, Wellington, and McPherson.

He jeopardized 30 years of SRS support of mental health consumer-run organizations (CROs) that have been an extremely effective and cost-effective way for people with severe mental illness to achieve recovery and lead full, productive lives as taxpayers, so as to avoid becoming tax burdens.

He fired 15 SRS senior managers in a month, replacing them with purely political appointments, amateurs devoid of the aptitude or the inclination to perform competently.

Brownback is preparing to unveil a proposal to eliminate state income tax and corporate income taxes which will drastically reduce state funding and lead to disastrous cuts and increases in property and other taxes.

Brownback has been the scorn of op-eds and articles in local, state and national media for eliminating the Kansas Arts Council, for giving back a \$31.5 million Early Innovator Federal Grant for Kansas to set up a health care exchange as required by the Affordable Care Act of 2010, and for blocking Federal funding for Planned Parenthood.

We support the movement to defend programs that benefit the poor and working people against Brownback's program of program cuts and restrictions of our rights. Brownback is doing his best to implement the Koch Industries political agenda: huge cuts in government spending for the poor in favor of tax cuts and tax policy favoring the rich and their corporations.

## Pharmaceutical costs endanger Medicare

One of the biggest drivers of escalating medical insurance costs is the cost of pharmaceuticals. The Republicans' 2003 Medicare "Modernization" and Prescription Drug "Improvement" Act deliberately drove up the cost of Medicare without dealing with that problem at all, and provide Medicare Part D with no means to pay for it, endangering the future of Medicare.

The act was forced through by Tom DeLay who got the bill passed by holding the vote open until the wee hours of the morning, instead of the normal 15 minutes, while he terrorized his remaining reluctant members. (Still, only Tiahrt voted for it among Kansas reps.)

## Film Series Highlights Struggle for Palestinian Human Rights

In the context of the uprisings of people in the Middle-East and the upcoming vote in the UN on Palestine Statehood, the PSJC hosted our summer film series, which helped to answer various questions of history, politics and religion in Palestine/Israel.

The screenings began with *The General's Son*, with Miko Peled, also the title of his new book. The following quote opens the film: "My grandfather was a signer on the Israeli declaration of independence, and my father, a general, one of the giants who planned and executed Israel's most definitive military victories, namely 1948 and 1967". So I know what you were taught and I know what you think. But it's time to sweep away the Zionist myths and uncover the truth so that we may all finally live in peace. The myths I will address tonight are the three most common myths:

1. The myth of 1948: "a land without people for a people without land."
2. The myth of the existential threat of 1967.
3. The myth of the Jewish democracy.

The second film was *Crime of the Century*, a story of the war against Gaza in late December, 2008.

This showed the deliberate and knowing destruction of civilians and civilian facilities, starting with the information that the Israeli bombing onslaught started at 11:30 AM, when thousands of Gaza school kids were changing shifts.

We also showed the film *With God on our Side*, a film by a Christian evangelical against Christian Zionism. The film demonstrates that there is a biblical alternative for Christians who want to love and support the people of Israel, a theology that doesn't favor one people group over another but instead promotes peace and reconciliation for both Jews and Palestinians."

This is a timely issue with the Oakland's Museum of Children's Art, which scheduled an exhibit of Palestinian children's depiction of the War on Gaza during December 2008 to January 2009 only to cancel the exhibit before it ever opened.

We encourage people to stay informed and follow the vote on Palestinian Statehood at the UN in September.

Watch for our monthly film showings usually at the Peace Center. We try and screen more obscure films which deserve a much wider audience but aren't shown in the Wichita area. If you have suggestions for a film or wish to see one that you have missed please call the Peace Center at 316-263-5886 and ask if it is available to check out from our library.

## Peace Center Calls for Renewed Opt-Out Effort

The Peace and Social Justice Center of South Central Kansas has been monitoring the results of the Opt-Out of Military Recruitment forms for USD 259 since the Board of Education (BOE) adopted the program in the summer of 2006, after a one year trial. The BOE agreed to provide a form in the enrollment packets to allow parents to protect their students' private contact information from being automatically sent to the military recruiters.

Parents are grateful for the form and if provided the form, many choose to Opt-Out. We saw a steady rise in Opt-Outs with the wider availability of the form until 2010-11 when the Opt-Outs dropped from 57% to 40%.

In 2010-11, because the system changed to mostly online enrollment, it was more difficult for parents to find or even notice the Opt-Out form. Thus the percentage of Opt-Outs at South dropped from 63% to 4%, at Heights from 48% to 19% and at Northwest from 60% to 34%.

We have requested that the administrations of all high schools make efforts to get the forms to the parents and have asked that the schools consider passing out the forms to the junior and senior English classes, which would target only the students affected. We have a link on our website [wichitapeace.org](http://wichitapeace.org) which has a printable opt out form available. Call the Peace Center at 263-5886 if you need assistance.

## Jobs not cuts continued from page 2...

Instead of closing corporate tax loopholes and raising taxes on the wealthy, the lawmakers are blaming people who need health care. If they were truly interested in lowering health care costs, they would deal with an unaffordable health care system bloated by the private insurance industry's \$400 billion a year of profits and administrative wastes. What would actually cut health care costs for everyone? Improving and expanding an efficient public program, like Medicare, to everybody.

The deficit is made up of four things: the Bush tax cuts to the wealthiest 2% of the population; subsidies to the most profitable industries; giveaways of taxpayer money to the Wall Street bankers who crashed the global economy; and wars of choice which were originally not part of the budget. Cutting social programs that aid most everyone will not solve economic problems and only cause more misery.

We can afford health care for everyone, and a good public education for our children. What we can't afford are endless, unpopular wars and tax breaks and subsidies for the wealthiest among us and their corporations.

Given a choice between cutting the deficit and putting Americans back to work, Americans choose JOBS! Americans across the political spectrum also demand that Congress and the President eliminate the tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans and eliminate the subsidies, offshore tax havens and other tax loopholes for the giant US corporations, many of whom pay no taxes.

**Peace and Social Justice  
Education Fund  
1407 N. Topeka Street  
Wichita, Kansas 67214**

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Email: [director@wichtapeace.org](mailto:director@wichtapeace.org)  
Phone: 316-263-5886

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<b><i>Upcoming Events</i></b>	<b>Many thanks</b>
<p><b>September</b></p> <p><b>21st—International Day of Peace Fundraiser. 6-9 pm.</b></p> <p><b>27th—Dr Margaret Flowers at Murdock Theatre, 7-9 pm</b></p> <p><b>October</b></p> <p><b>8th—What’s Next Committee 10:30 am</b></p> <p><b>8th—Board Meeting.</b> Noon to 2 pm. Everyone is welcome but only board members can vote.</p> <p><b>29th—Hearty Party for Peace. 6 pm.</b></p>	<p>Thanks to generous bequests and volunteers, we not only paid outstanding loans on the Peace House, but we have also upgraded our heating and cooling system, installed a wheelchair ramp, updated the kitchen, and worked hard to show off the beauty of the Peace House.</p> <p>We need your help to continue keeping it wonderful. The Peace and Social Justice Center has started a Rainy Day Fund to help pay for future repairs on this nearly century old building.</p> <p>In the next few years, we know we need to replace the roof and upgrade the windows.</p> <p>You can help today by remembering the Peace Center and Education Fund in your will or donating to the Rainy Day Fund.</p>
<p><b>Call or write your representatives today!</b> Find Senators’ email at: <a href="http://www.kslegislature.org/legsrv-senate/searchSenate.do">http://www.kslegislature.org/legsrv-senate/searchSenate.do</a> Find Representative’s email at: <a href="http://www.kslegislature.org/legsrv-house/index.do">http://www.kslegislature.org/legsrv-house/index.do</a></p>	<p>Call Pat Cameron at 316-263-5886 if you have any questions.</p>