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Spring 2009
Circulation 1000+

PEACE ESSAY AND ART CONTEST

The Peace Essay and Art Challenge Experience (PEACE) participants were recognized at a ceremony held at the Second Annual Midwest Green Earthfest. The challenge for 2008-2009 focused on Earth Day, April 22, 2009, with question, "What can you do to keep the environment safe for future generations?" This topic motivated students to think about peace and justice as not just an absence of war, but also as a local and global movement to conserve and share resources. Their answers to this question took either written or visual form. The submissions were on display in the Rhatigan Center at Wichita State University for ten days during the Earth Fest events.

The recognition ceremony held on Saturday, April 25, 2009, at Wichita State University, featured Dr. Walt Chappell, Kansas State Board of Education member and leading environmentalist. Dr. Chappell presented Watermark gift certificates and other awards to the participating students. After the awards ceremony, Dr. Chappell spoke on the topic, "The First Earth Day, The First Sunday."

The Peace Essay/Art Challenge Experience (PEACE) has been sponsored by the Peace Center Education Fund for several years. It is a challenge for students in the USD 259 school district and other area students. Every year the PEACE committee chooses a theme relating to peace and justice.

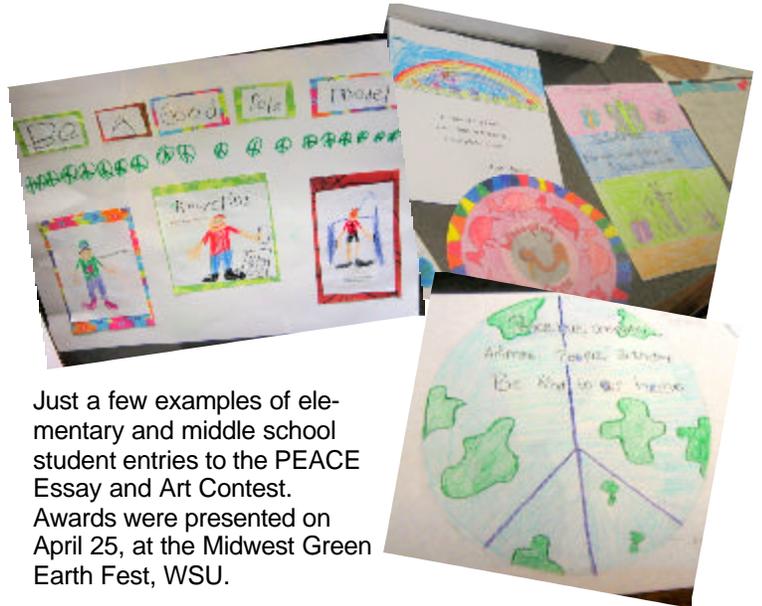
Honors for the 2008-2009 PEACE Challenge went to the following students:

Harold Plenert Memorial Award: "Environmental Poem," Jeneal Delis.

High school awards: first place, "One World," Brittany Long; second place, "Time for a Change," Justin Bosley; third place; "How to Keep the Environment Safe," Royce Estes; 1st HM, "Our Carelessness," Hannah Johnson; 2nd HM, "A Known Disguise," Julie Stroud.

Middle school awards: first place, Nayuvel Winesberry; second place, (tie), Shannon Tillotson and Sandy Le.

Grades 3-5: first place, Kody Atlee; second place, Jordan Brees; third place, Carolyn Crandall; HM, Giizhig Rutledge.



Just a few examples of elementary and middle school student entries to the PEACE Essay and Art Contest. Awards were presented on April 25, at the Midwest Green Earth Fest, WSU.

Grades K-2: first place, Luke Fritz; second place, Kadyn Franklyn; third place, Austin Parcell; HM, Elijah Cornelius, Zeke Brown, Skyler Watts, Troy Kempfski, John Michael Bazzelle, Noah Calvery, Gabriel Ebert, Jayden Hymer. Connor Loney, Kariah Shourbaji, and Julien Fuson.

Coal Burning Plants and Social Justice

Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius recently vetoed, for the fourth time, a bill that would allow two new coal power plants to be built in Holcomb. As it becomes more difficult for these plants to be built, their parent company in Colorado is beginning to back out of coal and invest more in green power. The current recession and a national push for clean energy make this decision wise. It will allow Kansans to breathe a little easier.

Keeping our environment clean is an issue for the Peace and Social Justice Center. Not only does coal pollute, it is also dangerous to miners. Coal miners suffer serious health conditions and put their lives at risk every time they enter the mine.

Locally, the burning of coal has devastating effects on
Continued on page 3—Coal

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

Our friend, **Kathy Kelly** (Voices for Creative Nonviolence – www.vcnf.org) Catholic Worker Community, Chicago, writes in *Common Dreams* about her journey to Creech Air Force Base, close by Cactus Spring, NV. Creech is headquarters for coordinating the latest high tech weapons that use unmanned aerial systems (UASs) for surveillance and increasingly lethal attacks in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iraq. The Predator and Reaper drones glide into the skies once every two minutes, and though both are used basically for surveillance, both can and do carry weapons – two 500 pound bombs as well as Hellfire missiles. These weapons, the "creative" products of human minds are used increasingly in our wars against the people of Pakistan and Afghanistan – taking out schools and many small villages – not exactly a *Three Cups of Tea* project (see Greg Mortensen, author).

MOLLY'S BRIGADE will reintroduce demonstrations on the downtown streets each Friday – a small effort but

highly visible as we intend our signs be CODEPINK inspired. We must say "NO" to this madness.

Lynn Woolsey, (D-CA) will not vote for congressional approval for the \$75.5 billion additional funding for our on-going wars. Other members of the *Progressive Caucus*, **Barbara Lee**, **Maxine Waters** – both California Democrats – as well as **Rep. John Conyers** (D-Mich.) join her. Conyers called Pres. Obama's plans as "embarrassingly naïve."

Our wars produce our hero class – the winners of medals, trophies, while it is women's role, for the most part to subsidize our troops and war effort. Florence Nightingale received honors for her valor in WWI but **Jeanette Rankin** (R-MN) and now **Barbara Lee** were ridiculed for refusing to vote for 'their' war. Hold on **Barbara Lee** – you're a first class heroine.

"The rising of the women means the rising of the race."
Bread and Roses —Mary McDonough-Harren



Mary Harren receives the Human Rights Award from Church Women United of Wichita, from Marge Zakoura-Vaughan.

Honoring Mary McDonough Harren

Long-time peace advocate Mary McDonough Harren, founding member of the Peace and Social Justice Center of South Central Kansas, received the Human Rights Award given by the Church Women United of Wichita. Marge Zakoura-Vaughan, Church Women United president, announced that the award at the Human Rights Celebration, "**Seeking Shalom,**" on Friday, Feb. 6, 2009, at Interfaith Ministries. The Celebration opened with fellowship and refreshments.

The Wichita chapter of CWU recommended to the National Church Women United that Mary receives the award this year, based on her more than forty years of peace and justice activism. Mary is the only person from Wichita to receive the award this year.

Gaza: The Environmental Impact of War and Occupation

The UN will send experts from its environmental agencies to investigate the intensifying environmental disaster in the Gaza Strip following the 3-week military assault by Israel there. The Israelis damaged and destroyed thousands of homes, buildings, hospitals, schools and water and sewer lines. There is probable asbestos contamination and there are serious problems with waste disposal.

Israel and Egypt have virtually sealed Gaza for the last two years after 1.5 million Palestinians in Gaza elected Hamas to represent them. Palestinians continue to be denied access through check points to travel, even for emergency medical care. The blockade and siege also prevent the flow of raw materials and spare parts for rebuilding homes and infrastructure. Even the most basic goods like pipes and cement are restricted, paralyzing repairs and long-term rehabilitation. Raw sewage spills into the Mediterranean and surrounding living areas because waste treatment stations cannot be fixed.

The US is Israel's biggest supporter. The US sends
(continued next page...Gaza)

Upcoming Events

A Molly's Brigade Alert!
Friday, May 1st (May Day!)
Douglas and Waco at the island.
4:45 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

We'll resume demonstrations to protest President Obama's promise to send more troops to Afghanistan and Pakistan.

May Day WalMart Action
Friday, May 1st, 3-4:00 pm
Pawnee and Broadway
Action to support unions for WalMart workers.

May Day Potluck and Musicians The St'ates will perform for International Workers' Day
Friday, May 1st, 6:00 to 9:00 pm
Peace Center
1407 N. Topeka

Janie Stein and Marty Bates of Salina People for Peace also known as The St'ates will provide songs and stories about the Southern Tenant Farmers Union. Presentation will begin at 7:00 pm--come early for the potluck.

Spring Dance: Women in the NAACP
Saturday, May 9, 8pm-Midnight
Beech Activity Center
9710 E. Central

Tickets are \$25 and are available at the **Peace Center**
For more information call: **Mary Dean @ 371-2253.**

Peace Picnic
Monday, May 25, Noon to 3:00 pm
Riverside Park at the Gazebo
Please bring a picnic lunch and chairs or blankets.
Come out and enjoy music and time with fellow peace people.

Peace Center Workday
Saturday, May 30, 9am-1pm
We hope to work on the porch roof soffit. Calling all carpenters!

Gaza...(continued from previous page)

more money per year to Israel in domestic and military aid than it sends to any other country in the world. Unfortunately, the United States has a long history of standing against the entire international community in order to shield Israel from criticism, censure and sanctions. The US has used its veto in the UN 32 times in about 30 years to protect Israel from international condemnation and defend its brutal occupation of Palestine.

In our hearts and memories: Pat Valko

Patricia Irene Ridder Valko, 62, clinical social worker, died on March 25, 2009. She was the former Coordinator of Social Work Services in the Wichita Public Schools. Most recently, she worked part-time as a contract therapist at Community Counseling Catholic Charities. A Memorial has been established with The Peace and Social Justice Center.

Marking Six Long Years in Iraq



The Peace Center marked 6 years of the Iraq War marching in the Delano St. Patrick's Day Parade and with a "Speak Out Against the Wars" on March 20, in Old Town Plaza. We joined with other activists from Molly's Brigade, WSU Peace and War Group, Muslim Public Affairs Council, WSU Young Social Democrats and Partners for Sacred Activism. Since the US has a timetable for partial withdrawal from Iraq, many people feel that the war issue is over. However, there is planned escalation in Afghanistan, arrangements to keep 50,000 US troops in Iraq and we heard a deafening silence on Israel's assault on Gaza. We remain steadfastly opposed to the wars and call for the war money to be spent on universal health care.

Coal—continued from page 1

humans and long-lasting effects on the world around us. Coal plants produce carbon dioxide, mercury, lead, cadmium, thorium, and uranium. The Holcomb plants would require more than five billion gallons of water a year from the Ogallala aquifer. Ogallala provides water to portions of eight states, including western Kansas. As we use more of its water for crop irrigation and public use, the available water drops and complex water rights issues emerge. These coal burning plants would further reduce the amount of water available to western Kansas for food crops.

Western Kansas has been in the grips of economic uncertainty for many years. Job creation continues to be the chief argument proponents use in favor of the plants. But with the known health, environmental, and agricultural effects of these plants, is this the best option? And what are the long-term monetary costs?

The best solution for all of us is to reduce energy use. We must find effective, just, and economical ways to provide our energy, care for poverty-stricken communities, and provide the Earth as much as she has provided us.

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

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2009 Membership Drive

Annual membership dues for the Peace and Social Justice Center and the Education Fund start at \$30 per year, but we welcome gifts of any amount.

Please complete the pledge form below and send it with your contribution to 1407 N. Topeka. We thank you in advance for considering this appeal to make a pledge for Peace in 2009.

Our pledge to you is that we will make wise use of your contributions. Among other projects, your gifts will support anti-war education and action, the Peace Essay and Art contest, the School of the Americas vigil, counter-military recruitment information and organizing and other important work.

**YES!! I WANT TO BE INVOLVED IN THE WORK OF PEACE AND JUSTICE IN WICHITA
and here is my contribution**

Apply to: [] Peace Center or [] Education Fund (tax-deductible)

[] Peace Supporter \$ _____ up to \$25 [] Peace Seeker \$ _____ \$26 to \$100 [] Peace Keeper \$ _____ \$101 to \$300

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