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Spring 2016

*"We have to wake up!
We have to wake up,
humankind!
We're out of time."
~Berta Cáceres*

Murder of Honduran Activists Traced to 2009 US Backed Coup

On March 3 the Honduran death squads assassinated indigenous activist Berta Cáceres in her home. The US bears much responsibility for this - years of training at the School of the Americas have produced brutal Latin American militaries that routinely eliminate indigenous activists.

Berta, a Lenca Native, cofounded the Civic Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH) in 1993. Berta created



COPINH to build the political strength of Lencas, campesinos, and other grassroots sectors to transform one of the most corrupt, anti-democratic, and

unequal societies in the hemisphere.

COPINH successfully reclaimed ancestral lands, winning unheard-of communal land titles. They stalled or stopped dams, logging operations,

and mining exploration – not to mention free-trade agreements. They prevented many precious and sacred places from being plundered and destroyed.

The tragedy is that the US refused to stop sending military aid to the 2009 coup d'etat which overthrew the democratically elected President Zelaya. Zelaya had angered the Honduran elite by supporting a minimum wage law. We know that the US has backed military coups as a regular feature of US foreign policy overthrowing democratically elected governments, such as in Chile in 1973, Guatemala in 1954, Haiti in 2004 and the 2002 coup in Venezuela that failed to overthrow the elected president, Hugo Chavez.

After the military coup earmarked 30 percent of the resource-rich country for mining projects, the Honduran government approved hundreds of dam projects, privatizing indigenous land and natural resources without the consent of the indigenous community. More than 100 environmental activists have been murdered in Honduras since 2010.

What does protecting the environment mean to you?

The Peace Essay and Art Challenge Experience (PEACE) encourages students (grades K-12) to reflect on the issues and challenges faced by society. This year we're asking students to consider the environment. From global climate change to fracking-related earthquakes, it's important for students to begin exploring issues that will affect their future.

Students are welcome to write essays, poems, and/or make illustrations.

This year's prompt: What does protecting the environment mean to you? Why is protecting the environment important and what are some approaches we can use to protect it?

Prizes: Participating students will receive t-shirts *while supplies last*. **For information packet & rules contact:** admin@wichitapeace.org or call 263-5886

Sustainable Is Possible: Creating Low Carbon, High Quality Lives--Together

Monday, April 4, 7:00 pm

Tuesday, April 5, 9:30 am

Friends University – Alumni Auditorium, Davis Hall

Ma'ikwe Ludwig, the executive director of the Center for Sustainable and Cooperative Culture at Dancing Rabbit Ecovillage, invites you to imagine living on 10% for the resources of the average American while living a high quality life. 10% is critical because it matches current estimates from the scientific community for the goals we need to achieve to live sustainably and to head off the worst effects of climate disruption.

Dancing Rabbit Ecovillage, an intentional community of 60 people in NE Missouri, is achieving that goal, and thus is a timely, relevant and needed model as our society struggles to figure out what a livable, low-carbon future might look like. Q&A will follow the talk.

Marijuana Sentencing Reform Continues

The movement to reform marijuana sentencing through the Wichita petition and successful vote suffered a major setback with the Kansas Supreme Court striking down the ordinance due to a procedural omission error made even before the vote. The Marijuana Reform Initiative coalition has not given up. JENI is working with the coalition to build support for a city council charter ordinance reducing penalties to a \$50 fine and no jail for small possession in Wichita, similar to what voters passed in April 2015.

The work in Wichita with the voter passed initiative helped to change the political culture statewide and now these issues are being addressed in the Kansas Legislature. Last year the House passed HB 2049, a bill to de-felonize the first two marijuana possession convictions and reduce the penalties. The bill sets new maximum fines of \$1000 and/or six months in jail for the first offense. While we are working for further fine reduction and no jail time, we recognize that as it is, HB 2049 will reduce the prison population and will cover everyone in the state when and if it is signed into law.

JENI is currently involved in voter registration and juvenile justice reform.

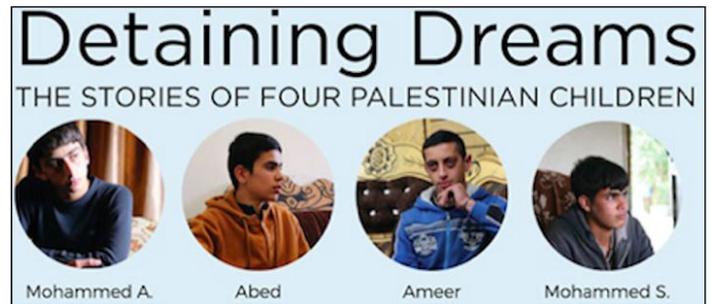
On the Injustices Faced by both Christians and Muslims in Israel

We are fortunate to be able to co-sponsor an evening with Archbishop Elias Chacour on June 3 at College Hill United Methodist Church in Wichita. Archbishop Chacour's family were internal refugees, displaced from their homes and village when Israel was established in 1948. A kibbutz sits on the remains of their village, Ba'ram. Although Chacour and his Muslim and Christian students are Israeli citizens, they do not have the same rights and privileges that are endowed to Jewish citizens of Israel. He will speak to the injustices that both Muslims and Christians face in Israel and Palestine.

A three-time Nobel Peace Prize nominee, Elias Chacour retired in January 2014 from serving as Archbishop of the Melkite Catholic Church for Akko, Haifa, Nazareth, and all Galilee. He founded the Mar Elias Educational Institutions over 30 years ago. Archbishop Chacour will be in the US visiting Kansas and Nebraska at the invitation of the Great Plains Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Support the AFSC campaign "No Way to Treat a Child"

The Palestine Study Group will be showing the film *Detaining Dreams* on Tuesday, April 26, at 7 pm. *Detaining Dreams* is an intimate documentary featuring the stories of four Palestinian youth and their families undergoing the ordeal of Israeli military detention. This 20-minute short film was commissioned by the No Way to Treat a Child Campaign (begun in January 2014), and produced by Amr Kawji and Nawal Musleh. *Detaining Dreams* is sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee, and Defense for Children International Palestine.



The campaign includes the exhibit, "Night Raid" a photo exhibition curated by photo journalist Richard Cahan, based on a visit he took to the West Bank in 2013. Concerned by the impact that Israeli army night raids have on Palestinian communities, Cahan decided to make his own photographic "Night Raid." The sixteen photos are comprised primarily of people standing in their doorways in the West Bank village of Bil'in, a village featured in the Oscar nominated documentary *Five Broken Cameras*. The exhibit also includes photos of actual army night raids.



Wichita Coalition Against Gun Violence mourning innocent lives and calling for action to end the epidemic of shootings from Littleton to Newtown to Hesston.

Call to Action: Border Mobilization for Justice in Nogales this October!

SOA Watch is heading to Nogales, Arizona/Sonora for its first bi-national convergence on October 7-10, 2016. The three day gathering will focus on demanding a fundamental shift in U.S. foreign policy. The Peace & Social Justice Center's Latin America Action Committee is excited to be a part of this first SOA Watch [Border Mobilization](#).

Latin American refugees fleeing the violence are being called criminals and rapists by politicians. Now it is imperative that people of conscience offer a different narrative.

The SOA Watch theme for this gathering is **“As politicians build walls, we must build bridges.”** The SOA Watch is building a grassroots challenge to the discriminatory status quo and to take action. Immigration has been a big issue in the 2016 presidential election campaign, and no politician acknowledges that people flee here for their lives because of militarized U.S. foreign policy, trade agreements that exacerbate poverty, and the failed ‘war on drugs’.

Instead of refugees being welcomed as required under international humanitarian standards, they are treated as criminals and imprisoned for profit in the U.S. Moreover, the U.S. "solution" to the so-called child migrant crisis has been to further militarize the borders of Mexico and Central America. Mexico now deports more Central Americans than the U.S. does - with our tax dollars. Enough is Enough!

Beginning in the Spring of 2015, the SOA Watch started talking about moving the annual vigil to the U.S./Mexico border. This would expand

our focus and shine a light on the destructive U.S. foreign policy that the SOA represents.

The SOA Watch movement began as a response to what was happening in El Salvador in the 1980's when many people joined the solidarity movement. How do we respond to this current reality in the same way we responded to the violence in the 1980's? What should be our call to action?

This year's vigil in Nogales is a response to the present-day call to solidarity. The border mobilization in Nogales is one more way to fight for the closure of the School of the Americas, and to work towards a world that is free of suffering and violence.

Join us in Nogales with fellow human rights activists, torture survivors, union workers, veterans, community organizers, migrants, faith communities, students and educators from across the Americas.



King Sam Outdoes Henry the VIII

Sam Brownback's tax cuts were supposed to be a shot of adrenaline to the Kansas economy. Instead he has driven a stake through its heart. Schools no longer have the money to stay open and they are being shorted so badly that the five day week is in doubt. When the courts tell Brownback that his plan to finance schools is unconstitutional, Brownback wants to fire the justices. Since the Kochs have already purchased the legislature, when Brownback takes out the Supreme Court, he will have, in effect, crowned himself king.

Will the Real Death Panel Please Stand Up?

Kansas hospitals are closing because Brownback and his cronies are blocking Medicaid expansion. In their maniacal eagerness to attack anything associated with Obama, they are punishing the people they call freeloaders but who are actually people who work low-paying jobs with no health care benefits. Statewide polls indicate more than two thirds of Kansans support Medicaid expansion. Speaker of the House Merrick has purged several moderates from various committees who indicated they would support Medicaid expansion.

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

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We are grateful for the contact with our members during the 2016 Peace Center Phoneathon and we appreciate your generous pledges of support.

We promised an envelope for your convenience, but if you'd prefer to donate online, please go to www.wichitapeace.org! Thanks!

Upcoming Events

**She Made a Difference: Dinner and Awards
Friday, March 25, 6:00 pm**

Homewood Suites, 1550 N. Waterfront Parkway
The Wichita chapter of the National Organization for Women will honor Carol Wolfe Konek, Ph.D., Senator Oletha Faust-Godeau, and Mary McDonough Harren.

**JENI—Jobs & Education-Not Incarceration
Wednesday, March 30, 5:30 pm**

At the Peace Center
We'll discuss voter registration, key legislation in Kansas and update our local campaign.

**Sustainable Is Possible: Creating Low
Carbon, High Quality Lives--Together
Monday, April 4, 7:00 pm**

Tuesday, April 5, 9:30 am
Friends Univ– Alumni Auditorium, Davis Hall
Hear Ma'ikwe Ludwig of Dancing Rabbit Ecovillage.

**GLC—Global Water Crisis:
Climate Change and International Law
Sunday, April 10, 2016**

Olive Tree Banquet & Catering, 2949 N Rock Rd

**Film: *The Empire Files - The U.S. School
That Trains Dictators & Death Squads***

Tuesday, April 12, 7:00 pm

At the Peace Center

Latin American Action Group—Available online:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GUtumGkoE6Q&feature=youtu.be>

**Film: *Detaining Dreams: No way
to Treat a Child***

Tuesday, April 26, 7:00 pm

At the Peace Center

**PEACE—Call for K-12 Entries (see page 1)
Deadline: Saturday, April 30**

“What does protecting the environment mean to you?” Explore in essay or art!