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Summer 2010  
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## Passing the Torch: Youth Peace Group Visits Neighborhood Association Summer Camps

A young branch on the old Peace Center tree bloomed this summer with the fruition of a partnership with four Neighborhood Association summer camps. We've never done this before, so why now?

In late January, long-time educator Cindi Donaldson sat in a WSU lecture hall with about 20 others and saw for the first time Southern Poverty Law Center's short-film, *The Children's March*. Until that day she was not very involved at the Peace Center, but the movie lit a spark inside her which ignited into the Youth Peace Group, a new Peace Center initiative approved by the board this April.

By June the once uninvolved "Miss Cindi" found herself as the center hub of a project connecting her with other educators and several young people to reach out through the summer camps to 238 children ages 5 to 17, all learning about community, diversity, peace, and social action.

Children participated in age-appropriate lessons. Younger children between ages 5 and 8 had a civil rights-themed children's book read to them, then colored on butcher paper representations of themselves of what's on the inside, not just the color of their skin, the theme of the book. Later after learning about Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott, they added their faces to a drawing of a bus. Older children viewed *The Children's March*, which was followed by a short discussion and then a sign-making event, using markers to inscribe signs in preparation for the June 26th Restoring Our Community March.

To view or arrange a showing of *The Children's March* call the Peace Center at 316-263-5886 or Cindi at 316-733-6645.



## Restoring Our Community March

The Peace Center joined with other community groups to organize an event aimed at reuniting Northeast Wichita.

On Saturday June 26th about 450 people took part in a four-hour event in the spirit of the common good of all Wichitans. The event began with a march which took place under the late June noon-time sun. The march, which began and ended at Tabernacle Bible Church, covered just under 4 miles between 21st and Grove to 17th and Hillside.

Along the way the Peace Center megaphone changed hands many times to facilitate prayers of preachers, or the chants most marchers took part in like, "Stop the Violence, Restore the Community!"

After the march a series of speakers selected from the many organizations (20 churches and 20 community organizations, according to the *Wichita Eagle*) spoke their messages of community. During this succession of speakers, which included Mayor Carl Brewer, NAACP head Kevin Myles called on all participants to agree to an 8-point plan toward restoring community.

One goal of the march was to continue forward, not just to come together for a day. The Peace Center will continue to work with this coalition and will attend the next meeting in August.



## 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

We are now commemorating the 90th anniversary of Women's Suffrage, made possible on August 26, 1920 with the signing of the 19th Amendment to the US Constitution. African-Americans would have to wait until 1965 and the Voting Rights Act before they were finally guaranteed their right to exercise their vote.

Often, I find myself wondering about how this came about. But get the vote we did — despite the fact that people of many faiths opposed women's right to vote. In my own family, my mother and grandmothers were told from the pulpit, "Mary, mother of Jesus, wouldn't like it." How the priests knew this, I don't know.

Mary Knecht, president of the Wichita League of Women Voters, has invited us to a showing of *Iron Jawed Angels*, a film about women's struggle for the vote, on Tuesday July 20th at 6:30 p.m. at the Downtown Senior Center, 220 S. Walnut. I'll see you there!

In case you didn't know it, we women outnumber men as activists in the U.S. peace movement — and probably the world over. Sheryl WuDunn and her husband Nicholas Kristof, a *New York Times* columnist, co-authored a book called *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*. WuDunn and Kristof remind us, "When women are educated, they tend to marry later in life, to have children later in life, and to have fewer children. In effect you have a form of population control that is peaceful, voluntary, and efficient. Plus, educated women do better in business; raising economic growth rates and lowering societal conflict."

"Listen to women for a change." Women's International League for Peace & Freedom.  
Mary McDonough Harren

## May Day March for Immigration Reform

On May 1st, concerned residents came together in solidarity to march for immigration reform. Below is a statement given by Peace Center chair, Diane Wahto, at the rally afterwards.

As its name implies, the Peace and Social Justice Center operates on the principle that peace cannot exist without social justice. Right now, some Americans are waging a war against immigrants, a war that will be ended, not by creating laws unfairly targeting certain people based on skin color or stereotypical behavior, but by creating laws that bring social justice to all people. It is a matter of social justice that if we want to deal with people coming across U. S. borders, lawmakers need to enact laws that take into account that these people are just as hard-working, decent and worthy of regard as those who were born here.

In a way, because most of us here have immigrant forefathers and others, this war against immigrants is a war against most Americans. More importantly, no border created by human beings can strip other human beings of their humanity.

Each immigrant deserves to be treated as an equal member of the human race. Social justice dictates that no member of the human race is illegal. Only when we acknowledge this will we find peace.



Peace Center Board Members Steve Otto and Alice Powell march with others. Signs include "Workers Taxpayers Citizens" and "reform NOT racism".

## Deficit Being Used to Weaken Safety Net

There is a lot of talk about the U.S. government deficit right now but most of it is being used as an excuse to cut back on the social safety net. This is misguided because the policy of cutting back benefits — for example, cutting of unemployment benefits — will only make the deficit worse. The reason is that without paying customers, businesses are going under.

The only way to fix our economy is by enacting a stimulus program that creates jobs. Without jobs, there is no way to help small businesses, or any businesses, because their customers have so little money to spend. Where is the demand for more products supposed to come from if people are just scraping by or going under? Benefits to low-income people stimulate the economy because the money gets spent on goods and services. Benefits to upper-income people, like the Bush tax cuts, do not stimulate the economy because the money just goes into their bank accounts.

It is misguided to think that cutting taxes for rich people and cutting spending on poor people will fix the deficit. That only ensures the deficit will get worse. The only way deficits have ever shrunk has been when the economy expands and tax revenues go up. This means that if we stimulate the economy now by creating jobs, we are actually acting to lower the long-term deficit.

Here is an example of how this affects us in Wichita: on the one hand, we see the Wichita community mobilizing to inspire and support young people in reaching better lives. On the other hand, we see the state cutting public school teachers and many services for poor people, like cutting out the \$500 burial expense for indigent members of the community. This latter cruelty not only offends the dignity of human beings, it also depresses the parts of the economy that serve that need.

But the deficit talk does have a political purpose for those who want to keep the rich getting richer and the rest of us poorer. For example the talk of a crisis in Social Security funding is bogus: all they have to do is raise the cap on Social Security withholdings. Currently, if you make more than \$106,000, then everything you make above that amount is not calculated for withholding. Even just raising that a few percent would completely wipe out any shortfall in Social Security payments. This would dramatically improve the long-term debt question, but there are extra advantages in focusing increases on the rich, especially now. Focusing taxes on the rich does two additional things: it takes money away from private spending and speculation and gives it to the government which is certain to spend it, even if not necessarily all that wisely, by accelerating the flow of money through the economy and thereby putting more people to work.

### P.E.A.C.E. Winners Honored at Annual Peace Picnic

More than one hundred students from throughout south-central Kansas created a representation or symbol of peace through words or artwork in the 2010 Peace Essay and Art Challenge Experience (P.E.A.C.E.). Winners and participants received their prizes, certificates, and a Peace Center t-shirt at the annual Peace Picnic, co-sponsored by the Peace Center and People of Faith for Peace, at Central Riverside Park on Memorial Day. The prize winners as well as honorable mention winners were recognized at a Peace Picnic ceremony with Geneva Hershberger, an Earhart teacher, handing out the awards.

In the high school category, Isaias Trejo won first place. Second place went to essays by Hillary Harder and Victor Hugo Lopez Paredes. Aly Keller took third place and Brittany Johnson won fourth place. Gladys Venzor won first place in the middle school category. Elementary school winners were Anna Voncannon in first place, Jetzlyn Rojas in second place, and Joe Niblett in third place.

Bethel College student Brittany Voth helped as part of her internship with the Peace Center. Funding for the P.E.A.C.E. event was provided by a grant administered by Duane Harms of the Kansas West Conference of the United Methodist Church.



First place artwork by Isaias Trejo

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Summer Newsletter

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<p><b><i>Important Upcoming Reminders</i></b></p>	<p><b>Don't forget about Opt-Out!</b></p>
<p>August 3rd and Kansas Primary elections are almost upon us. For U.S. citizens, it is important that we do our best to participate in elections. If you can get out to your polling place, try to help a neighbor who can't! You can also receive a ballot in advance and vote at home. For information on where you vote, your own registration information, and any other questions you have, visit the Kansas Secretary of State's election website at <a href="http://www.voteks.org">www.voteks.org</a> or call (800) 262-8683</p>	<p>School enrollment for 2010-2011 is right around the corner. Please notify any parents of high school juniors and seniors to be sure to file an "Opt-Out Notification for Military Recruiters" form at your school during the enrollment process. This form is available at all Wichita high schools. Some schools around Wichita have similar forms while others have no forms at all but must still allow parents to opt-out. Ask if you can put a notice in your community newsletter or church bulletin to remind parents to opt out of releasing their students' contact information to the military recruiters. Last year, 57% of Wichita students and their parents opted out. Even if you don't live in Wichita, please call the Peace Center at 316-263-5886 if you cannot find the form at your school.</p>
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<p><b>Office space for rent!</b> We have had most of our upstairs space rented, but our corner office is now available! It has all hardwood floors, freshly painted walls, new energy-efficient ceiling fan, and free wireless internet. Call Cathy at 263-5886 for more information and a tour!</p>	
<p><b>Our mission is to support the worldwide struggle for justice and peace through education, conflict mediation and non-violent action.</b></p>	