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Nov-Dec 2014

“WORK FOR PEACE”
#10 in Pope Francis’
10 Secrets to Happiness

Bonita Gooch to speak at the Peace & Social Justice Center Annual Dinner

Friday, December 5, 6:00 pm
Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, 655 S
Lorraine Ave (2 blks south of Kellogg, 1 block west of Hillside)

Join us for our 22nd Annual Dinner with speaker, Bonita Gooch, editor and publisher of *The Community Voice*, the newspaper and heart of Wichita’s Northeast Community. Bonita will speak about police/community issues before and after the protests in Ferguson, MO, that followed the police shooting of Michael Brown in August, 2014. Tickets are a \$20 donation that includes a delicious Mediterranean dinner. Please call 316-263-5886 or email admin@wichitapeace.org to RSVP. Seating is limited. You can reserve your place at www.wichitapeace.org, donate \$20 for each and post a message; or mark the coupon on the back and send it in



JENI joins coalition to reform penalties for small marijuana possession



JENI, Jobs & Education-Not Incarceration has joined the Marijuana Reform Initiative-Wichita (MRI-ICT) in a second attempt at a ballot initiative. JENI, a Peace Center action group to do

what we can locally to end mass incarceration and the failed costly drug war.

60% of drug arrests in Wichita are for possession of marijuana or paraphernalia. Blacks are 3.7 times more likely to be arrested and introduced into the criminal system than whites, even though use rates are similar. These small, easy arrests drive the drug war; fill our courtrooms, prisons & probation offices at great expense to the tax payer for prosecution, court-ordered drug treatment and supervision of nonviolent citizens.

These arrests ruin the lives of taxpayers and their families. Penalties are harsher for those who cannot afford an attorney. Drug convictions and forced pleas bring lifelong consequences that make positive lifestyle changes impossible through the systematic denial of student loans, job

opportunities, the right to vote, and housing. It is time to change these laws and end criminal penalties for marijuana possession.

The petition seeks to amend the current ordinance to reduce criminal penalties for first offense marijuana & paraphernalia possession for those over 21 years old, making the penalty an infraction with a maximum fine of \$50 and no jail.

On Nov. 4, Election Day, MRI-ICT mobilized over 30 activists to collect signatures at the voting polls, we collected more than the 3000 signatures from citizens after they voted!

We will now go on collecting signatures, but focusing on **registering new voters**, including ex-felons. There are new hurdles with registering, proof of citizenship requirements that make it more difficult, but it can be done. Last year JENI activists joined with the League of Women Voters to register high school students and their parents during parent/teacher conferences. We want to do this again and need your help. Call 316 263-5886 to volunteer.

Go to www.wichitapeace.org or mri-ict.com for more information on the campaign.

Call **316.737.5911** or **316.269.3729** for more info.

Join us in the national reading and discussion campaign, *Mornings in Jenin*

Join the Palestine Study Group in participating in a national reading and discussion campaign, initiated by Librarians and Archivists with Palestine. The first book in the series is *Mornings in Jenin*, an historical saga by Palestinian-American writer Susan Abulhawa. It is the story of four generations of the Abulheja family. From Jenin to Jerusalem to Beirut to Philadelphia, the novel follows the family from its displacement from Ein Hod village in 1948 through life in Palestine and the diaspora. Our discussion will take place Thursday, January 22, at 7 PM, at the Peace Center.

The book is available online and at bookstores.

You can order it from **Watermark Books** in Wichita, or you can purchase *Mornings in Jenin* directly from Susan Abulhawa. Use the promotional code **lap1book** for a discount! <http://morningsinjenin.com/>



Author Susan Abulhawa

PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE CENTER
PEACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE EDUCATION FUND

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WICHITA, KS

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Dear Friend,

The election season is finally over. The voters have spoken, that is, those whose votes were not suppressed; although we're reminded of Thomas Frank's argument in his best-selling book, *What's the Matter with Kansas?* that when Kansans vote, they often vote against their own self-interests.

But because you're a smart voter, we count on your vote of support for the Peace and Social Justice Center. We work for justice and peace through the following action groups:

- **Palestine Study Group.** PSG participates in the world-wide movement for freedom and equality in Israel/Palestine.
- **Latin America Action Group.** LAAG seeks to reform U.S. foreign policy toward Latin America and participates in the annual vigil to close School of the Americas, the notorious Latin American terrorist training program. Activists will soon be traveling to the vigil November 20-24, 2014.
- **Justice and Education—Not Incarceration.** JENI is committed to ending the mass incarceration of minor drug offenders by a petition drive allowing Wichita voters to reduce the penalties for first offense marijuana possession for adults in the April 2015 election including a mass voter registration drive.
- **Peace Essay/Art Challenge Experience.** P.E.A.C.E. challenges school-age children and youth to express their thoughts about a topic related to peace and justice through written work and artistic expression.
- **End Gun Violence:** This new initiative will respond to the senseless violence caused by the easy access to guns with actions such as demonstrating at gun shows and advocating for sensible gun laws.

Can we count on your vote? As with any campaign, it takes money to fund these initiatives and the staff and office support that keeps them going. Please use the form below and the enclosed envelope to send us your end of the year gift. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Pat Cameron, Board Chair

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

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*I want to support the work of peace & justice in Wichita in 2015 and beyond!
Here is my end of year contribution*

We thrive on small, medium and several large pledges and donations to fund our educational and activist work in Wichita and South Central Kansas. We are grateful to you for your continuing support!

Check one: ___ **The Education Fund (tax-deductible)** or ___ **The Peace Center (No tax-deduction)**

Peace Supporter \$ _____ up to \$30 Peace Seeker \$ _____ \$31 - \$100 Peace Keeper \$ _____ \$101 to \$300
Peace Maker \$ _____ \$301 to \$600 Peace Teacher \$ _____ over \$601

Annual Dinner Tickets: \$20 each x _____

Name _____ Phone (H) _____ Phone (C) _____

Address _____ City _____

St _____ ZIP _____ Email _____

Please mail this coupon with your contribution to peace, social justice and social responsibility in our community:
Peace Center, 1407 N. Topeka St., Wichita, KS 67214 To make contribution with a credit card on-line visit www.wichitapeace.org