

# Peace & Freedom

MAGAZINE OF THE WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

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## WILPF: WORKING FOR WOMEN LOCAL TO GLOBAL



**INSIDE:**  
TOWARD A NUCLEAR-FREE FUTURE  
FOSTERING FEMINISM AT THE U.N.  
BUILDING U.S. DEMOCRACY

**PLUS: Y-WILPF • RACHEL CORRIE PLAY IN PORTLAND  
JANE ADDAMS WALKS IN TUCSON • COME TO CONGRESS IN COSTA RICA**





## CHANGES AT WILPF

On March 15, Tanya E. Henderson began her tenure as National Director (see page 17), joining Director of Operations Laurie R. Belton in WILPF's U.S. Section. With these two full-time staff members, plus a growing intern program, WILPF outgrew its space at the Community Church of Boston, necessitating an office move.



WILPF has moved to new space at 11 Arlington Street, Boston, which it shares with the Tellis Institute, a non-profit engaged in research, education, and action for a global civilization of sustainability, equity, and well-being. WILPF shares many goals with the Institute and looks forward to deepening ties between the organizations. ♦

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*Cover Photo: Judy Anderson, left, and Amina Dualle at the Des Moines Third Annual "Strong, Feisty Women Award Banquet." Anderson is a WILPF member, and Dualle, from Somalia, owns a small, African store and has been attending branch meetings with WILPF member Jane Magers. Dualle is concerned about the Des Moines City Council's refusal to license a Somali taxi company, thus threatening the livelihood of some Somali cab drivers. Some WILPF members have attended City Council meetings on their behalf.*

Photo: Susan Seitz

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♦  
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## The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)

has been working since 1915 to unite women worldwide who oppose oppression and exploitation. WILPF stands for equality of all people in a world free of racism, sexism, and homophobia; the building of a constructive peace through world disarmament; and the changing of government priorities to meet human needs.

### WILPF has sections in 37 countries

coordinated by an international office in Geneva. U.S. WILPF carries out its work through grassroots organizing by WILPF branches. WILPF supports the work of the United Nations and has NGO (non-governmental organization) status.

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# Holding Space in the WILPF Commons

By Nancy Munger and Laura Roskos

Think of WILPF as a commons holding an accumulation of ideas, information, human energies, and history, where women of all persuasions can come together to put an end to war. We each pay dues and make donations, and these monies are allocated to achieve our collective political and social goals. It is this ideal of organization as a collective enterprise strengthened by diversity of participants that animated us and the other members of the 2005-8 National Board in developing the strategic plan that the current board, serving from 2008-11, was tasked with implementing. But, as Maud Barlow and others have argued, the commons must be regulated to prevent exploitation by the few. As the 2008-11 Board cycle comes to a close, it seems appropriate to inventory and assess the systems put into place to democratize and regulate access to the WILPF commons, and ask: has WILPF become more or less diverse and inclusive in the intervening years?

In fall 2007, we began implementation of a strategic plan developed to make WILPF financially sustainable and more inclusive, more responsive to members' concerns, and more adaptive to rapidly changing political realities. More than three years later, we have made wonderful progress towards achieving financial stability, building reserves through steady fundraising and careful spending, such that we recently hired a National Director to complement our Director of Operations in providing stewardship and support for our work. But financial security is simply the foundation on which an inclusive space can be built. The 2005-08 National Board opened new pathways for participation in WILPF decision-making and adopted a communications strategy that would give every member access to critical organizational information.

Our communications strategy was intended to democratize access to organizational information, particularly for the 40 percent of our members who do not belong to a local branch. Starting in 2008, the National Board began to communicate directly with individual members via email on a quarterly basis. We moved to the Democracy in Action/Salsa platform for e-mail communication in August 2008 because this platform would allow members to more easily update their contact information, including current email address, in our records, thus facilitating continuity of communication. Through the quarterly eLetters, we've been able to share more broadly and in a timelier manner information about board decisions, staff changes, progress towards financial sustainability, and opportunities for greater involvement at the national leadership level. At the same time, we've created archives on our website where



these eLetters, minutes from biannual meetings of the National Board, annual financial reports, as well as past editions of our monthly *eNews* and *Peace and Freedom*, can be easily accessed by all. Information that was once only available to WILPF's innermost circle is now available to all our members, potential members, and allied organizations, and all members can access the WILPF National Board directly by writing to [dialogue@wilpf.org](mailto:dialogue@wilpf.org).

The changes in WILPF's advocacy program reflect similar core values. Rather than committing our resources to just a handful of three-year campaigns, our advocacy program is now determined by the members who comprise our Issue Committees, a sub-unit that any five members can petition to create, in conjunction with our branches. WILPF U.S. offers activists working as Issue Committees access to our e-distribution network for sharing action alerts and online campaigns, space on our website, and in our magazine *Peace and Freedom* for publishing educational materials and articles, and the opportunity to apply—along with branches—for project funding through our internal “mini-grant” program. To date, six Issue Committees and twelve branches have procured funding for their projects. Issue Committee members are also offered other avenues of support, such as a training retreat in February 2010 and assistance in participating in the U.S. Social Forum in June 2010.

While the new communication and program structures were created to enable more WILPF members access to WILPF resources and to enhance the relevance of our political campaigns, the institutionalization of democratizing structures doesn't seem, in and of itself, to have sent a clear invitation to all of the women we would hope to include in our organization's leadership.

Ensuring equal access isn't synonymous with “holding the space” that signals a welcome to diverse identities. For example, in 2009 WILPF saw the disbanding of two Issue Committees: the Pan African Women's Issues Committee and the Committee on Haiti, both of which were created to facilitate solidarity work with women of African descent or black women. We've also heard complaints and have at times ourselves felt that WILPF is not a space that welcomes visible expression of lesbian identity. After a recent

*Continued on page 26* ➤



# New Secretary General Brings Human Rights Focus to WILPF Campaigns

By Joan Bazar and Robin Ash

To say that Madeleine Rees brings a human rights perspective to her job as WILPF International's Secretary General is a major understatement. She sees human rights as the foundation of WILPF's traditional campaign for disarmament as well as our efforts to eliminate the causes of conflict.

She traces her passion for human rights to early childhood in the United Kingdom, growing up "in an era when feminism was really starting to make a difference and challenging existing norms. Because of that I started working with women's rights through rape crisis centers, through domestic violence centers."

In Nicaragua, after the Sandinista revolution, she spent time with AMNLAE, the organization working on the women's part of the constitution. "They were looking to me to tell them what we had done in terms of domestic violence in Britain because they had the same problems." The women strongly suggested that she become a lawyer. "I thought, 'Actually, you're right!' And that was completely responsible for my transition from teacher to lawyer."

The next step, to international law, came with her growing sense that the discrimination cases she was pursuing in the UK "were dwarfed by the horrors of Rwanda and of Bosnia, and our lack of action." So in 1997 she went to Bosnia, where she joined the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights the following year. "I was very, very lucky to have been serving under Mary Robinson, who is one of the great advocates of human rights.

"The office had just done an evaluation of what was happening in Bosnia so they saw what was needed and gave me an incredible mandate, which was basically: rule of law, discrimination, economic and social rights, and gender. So basically I had carte blanche to do what I needed to do."

The United Nations was running a program to train police in post-conflict Bosnia, staffed by members of national police forces from various UN member countries. The United States, which does not have a national police force, contracted with DynCorp International to provide its share of the staffing.

The opportunity to earn extra pay and participate in international police work attracted Kathryn Bolkovac, a Nebraska police investigator. Hired as an International Police Task Force human rights investigator, she was posted to the U.N. operation in Bosnia, where she met

Madeleine. Kathryn Bolkovac describes the human rights lawyer as "a fast-thinking, fast-talking, no-nonsense woman who was passionate about her human rights work and unconcerned about whom she befriended or whom she offended."

The respect was mutual, and the Nebraska cop became the gender officer. "Kathy's position involved training, which morphed into a position on trafficking because by the time she came to Bosnia it

was clear that there was a very serious problem, and nothing was being done about it." Bolkovac began investigating, interviewing women who had been trafficked, many of them teenagers from surrounding countries lured by promises of work but then held prisoner in brothels and abused.

"She was finding out what was going on and found out a bit too much and challenged the United Nations (and her DynCorp supervisors) as to what they were doing about it." Madeleine backed her up. "We were both challenging, only I had protection and she did not."

In retaliation, Bolkovac's DynCorp supervisors "said she was burnt out, that she was incorrect, and they demoted her." Madeleine worked on her behalf, but "essentially they sacked her. They made fraudulent claims of timesheet fraud and they removed her completely." That was possible since she was a direct employee of the private corporation, which had jurisdiction over her and was not subject to U.S. military regulations, the Geneva Conventions, or local law.

But Madeleine refused to be stymied. "When she showed me her contract, I saw that DynCorp had a registered office in the United Kingdom, so I suggested we sue them in the United Kingdom, and the rest, as they say, is history!"

## THE WHISTLEBLOWER

That history is the subject of a book by Kathryn Bolkovac and a film by Larysa Kondraki, both titled *The Whistleblower*. The film has been making the rounds of film festivals in Canada and the United States, and Samuel



Madeleine Rees was invited to deliver a lecture at Stanford University on the use of human rights to transform law in February 2011.

Photo: George Rindon

Goldwyn Films bought U.S. distribution rights. Madeleine hasn't seen it all the way through yet. "I went to the set. And I must admit that when I saw certain parts of it I went outside and wept because I felt we had not done enough. How dared we be there and not change it!

"It's an amazing film, and the sad thing about it is that everything that happens in the film is absolutely true. It was brilliantly researched." Some characters are composites, but the film is accurate in "trying to bring home what had happened in Bosnia and how it happened."

She is played by Vanessa Redgrave, "one of my greatest heroines of all time and one of the greatest actors of all time, and there's her being me, which is very weird. But she's not me – sort of the essence of me, doing the job slightly differently from the way I actually did it.

"But that's not the point. The point is that it's an excellent vehicle for explaining the nature of trafficking, what it is and what happens when you don't have a sufficient regulatory framework, you don't have sufficient leadership and you don't hold accountable those who should be accountable for committing grave crimes."

## Coming soon to a theater or library near you?

*The Whistleblower* is being distributed by Samuel Goldwyn Films for an August 2011 release in theaters. Contact the manager at your favorite theater ASAP to request that it be booked. Ask your library to purchase *The Whistleblower* book by Kathryn Bolkovac with Cari Lynn, published in 2011 by Palgrave Macmillan.

Madeleine continued her work on trafficking and related issues. In September 2006 she became head of the Women's Rights and Gender Unit for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights – a post she left to become WILPF Secretary General on May 1, 2010. It seemed a logical step. Learning that WILPF is not just an NGO but a social movement, she began enthusiastically applying human rights as the driving force for WILPF's campaigns for disarmament and resolution of conflicts. "It is a powerful organizing issue that can be used to enlist support of other NGOs toward pushing for solutions." For instance, in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the situation calls for implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 requiring participation of women in conflict and post-conflict decisions. Merely stating that, however, is not enough.

WILPF has gained the support of the YWCA, Amnesty International, and other NGOs for a project to

identify the obstacles to participation by Palestinian and Israeli women in negotiations. A new hire in WILPF's Geneva office will do a program of consultations, inquiring about access to health care, housing, employment on the part of Palestinian women, and to document the social pressure against Israeli women who dare to seek peace.

The findings will be delivered to the International Court of Justice for analysis, leading to an advocacy process for women's participation in the political process. "Then we can invoke the responsibility to protect – on the part of U.S. and European Union contractors – to influence Israel and the Palestinian Authority to do the right thing.

"Then we have justification for a boycott, using human rights organizations to add their voices saying the United States must do this." (WILPF International already has signed on to the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions campaign, with the agreement of the Israeli section.)

"We have to stop talking about conflict as being inevitable, and take the necessary measures to prevent it. We have to take a look at how we use human rights to do that. I always sound like a naive idealist. But human rights is law, and it's something everyone can identify with – your needs for security, for health, for food, for water, for education, all those things, those are human rights."

She asks, "Do you know how much money is being spent on conflict and arms? I'm one of those people for whom a trillion dollars means nothing – too many noughts. But translate that into what it means in practice: the war in Afghanistan has cost nearly \$300 billion. That's a check for \$300,000 for each man, woman and child in Afghanistan!" WILPF's online statement goes on to say: "If this sum of money were to be converted for human security use, such as for education, health care or sustainable development, your money would be invested over and over again by real people with real productivity – and ultimately in real and enduring peace."

There's a wealth of information on the [reachingcriticalwill.org](http://reachingcriticalwill.org) and the [peacewomen.org](http://peacewomen.org) sites, as well as the Geneva-based [wilpfinternational.org](http://wilpfinternational.org) site. More work on human rights issues and disarmament is being developed and will be of use in lobbying legislators, especially when the United States comes up for its Universal Periodic Review at the Human Rights Council in 2014.

Among key issues are the U.S. government's abandonment of the prohibition on torture, and its use of private military contractors. As Madeleine points out, once the profit motive enters the picture, individual rights are put in jeopardy.

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*Joan Bazar is chair of the WILPF International Communications Committee. Robin Ash works with the [48south7th.org](http://48south7th.org) video project of San José Peace and Justice Center.*

# U.S. WILPF's Year-long Initiative: Advancing Women as Peacemakers

By Robin Lloyd



Advancing Women as Peacemakers (AWP) was a U.S. WILPF project designed to combine the organization's history with current U.N. efforts, primarily through UNSCR 1325, to empower women as peacemakers. Significant achievements included:

- over 300 people in 14 venues in California and Oregon heard two international WILPF activists;
- a new website ([www.ja1325.org](http://www.ja1325.org));
- a symposium;
- a film screening;
- a workshop at the Peace and Justice Studies Association Annual Conference in Winnipeg, Canada; and
- a well-attended panel discussion during the "Peace Fair" in New York City.

All told, over 600 people attended AWP events and the speaking tour; more than half of them knew nothing, or very little, about UNSCR 1325 when they came to the event, but post-program evaluations show they gained a solid working knowledge of the instrument.

For me, it was exciting to get to know our wonderful WILPF historians and to see their commitment to educating a new generation of students on the seminal role women have played in fomenting peace and speaking out against injustice. I also grew to realize what an opportunity U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) presents to link women in the U.S. with women in other countries. Thanks to our web managers, our WILPF website [www.peacewomen.org](http://www.peacewomen.org) has been heroically documenting this link for ten years.

The AWP project began with a conference call at the WILPF Gathering in Vermont in 2009. Then, 2010 marked two significant dates in the history of women's activism: the 150th anniversary of the birth of Jane Addams (September 6), and the 10th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 (October 30).



WILPF members (left to right) Catia Cecilia Confortini, who represents U.S. WILPF on the WILPF International Board; Kristen E. Gwinn, editor of *Peace & Freedom*; Robin Lloyd, author; and Marilyn Fischer at the Peace and Justice Studies Association conference in Winnipeg, October 2010.

Jane was the courageous activist and intellectual who joined spirit with action (as the title of Louise W. Knight's biography proclaims) to create, with hundreds of women, a platform for women to speak and agitate for justice. Her work culminated in a

movement within the U.N. that is forcing the male-dominated nations of the world to make room at the peace table for women.

Our program was ambitious. Several generous donors helped us raise the \$45,000 shoestring budget to implement the three-pronged program and enable us to hire Intern Tanya Burovtseva, who, with Laurie Belton in the office, and co-president Laura Roskos, did a magnificent job in coordinating the project. Tanya's final report is available online ([www.ja1325.org/AWP](http://www.ja1325.org/AWP)).

## The Website

We created an interactive website [www.ja1325.org](http://www.ja1325.org) to document the history of women as peacemakers and provide a venue for women to share stories of women activists. We formed a committee – the Jane Committee – with a subcommittee of historians, including Harriet Alonso (*Peace as a Women's Issue: The History of the U.S. Movement for World Peace and Women's Rights*), Louise W. Knight (*Jane Addams: Spirit in Action*), Kristen E. Gwinn (*Emily Greene Balch: The Long Road to Internationalism*), Catia Confortini (whose Ph.D. thesis is entitled "Imaginative Identification: Feminist Critical Methodology in WILPF, 1945- 1975"), and Cyndy Bittinger (historian and commentator on women for Vermont Public Radio). All of these women contributed to the creation of the website and advised Kristen, the web manager. The site garnered approximately 14,000 "hits" by the time of the 10th anniversary in October. Do visit it; it's still going strong.

## The Practicum

The AWP sponsored two seminar sessions for college students who attended one of the U.N. conferences, either the Commission on the Status of Women, or the review conference on the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty. Several of the student participants have subsequently been integrated into WILPF national standing committees and local branches where they are continuing their activism.

## The Speaking Tour and Peace Fair

In October, the AWP tour featured two international women peacemakers: Sushma Pankule and Marie Lyse Numuhoza. Sushma, who is concerned with the status of women in India, is an activist and professor at Nagpur University. Her WILPF branch has translated the UNSCR 1325 into their native language. Marie Lyse Numuhoza of Rwanda, lives in the U.K., and founded Women Peacemakers of The Great Lakes Region of Africa. Together, the women shared stories of women who have



been on the front lines of conflict and explained the importance of UNSCR 1325 in protecting the victims of war and empowering women to prevent war. WILPF Vice-President Amparo Guerrero also served as a speaker for a mini tour on the east coast.

Finally, WILPF/Peacewomen sponsored a panel discussion, entitled “U.N.: Women and Conflict Prevention: Why participation and disarmament matter,” during the Peace Fair (October 25-29) across from the U.N. There, WILPF Secretary General Madeleine Rees was joined by Theresa DeLangis (Women, Peace and Governance, previously UNIFEM-Afghanistan) and Annie Matundu Mbambi (Chair of WILPF-DRC). This event also witnessed the launch of the *Women, Peace and Security Handbook*, PeaceWomen/ WILPF’s analysis on how the Security Council’s country resolutions (2000 to 2010) have reflected the language and intent of UNSCR 1325.

We were encouraged when Hillary Clinton, speaking before the U.N. General Assembly on October 26, 2010 (her 63rd birthday), announced that the U.S. would commit

## HUMAN RIGHTS DAY: HONORING ACTIVISTS



Rhonda Copelon and Peggy Lipschutz; Lipschutz self-portrait.

On International Human Rights Day, WILPF held a special event in NYC honoring two human rights activists, Rhonda Copelon and Peggy Lipschutz. Organized by Blanche Weisen Cook, Clare Coss, Jerri Zbiral, and Robin Lloyd, the event brought together a fabulous group of women to read poetry, sing, and honor two very special women who epitomize all that is the very best of our humanity, and who inspire us into the future. ❖

**We will, Hillary Clinton said,  
“develop our own National Action Plan  
to accelerate the implementation of  
Resolution 1325 across our government  
and with our partners in civil society.”**

revived. Thank you to Laura Roskos and Theresa DeLangis for your steadfast commitment to this endeavor.

.....  
*Filmmaker Robin Lloyd of Burlington, VT has served two terms on WILPF’s national board.*

nearly \$44 million to a set of initiatives designed to empower women. We will, she said, “develop our own National Action Plan to accelerate the implementation of Resolution 1325 across our government and with our partners in civil society. And to measure progress on our plan, we will adopt the indicators laid out in the Secretary General’s report.”

Wrapping up our year of activities around Advancing Women as Peacemakers, building on the renewed enthusiasm for implementing women’s human rights through UNSCR 1325, and delighting in the creation of the new comprehensive organization within the U.N. devoted to women’s issues (U.N. Women, headed by U.N. Under-Secretary General Michelle Bachelet), our Human Rights Issue Committee has been

## EXCERPTS FROM THE AWP TOUR REPORT

### SPEAKERS’ REFLECTIONS

*AWP speaker Marie Lyse Numuhoza from Rwanda (see photo at right) passed along her reflections of her experiences on tour in the U.S. Excerpts below:*

- “[The] Advancing Women as Peacemakers project was a successful advocacy tool and a learning platform for both WILPF branches in the State of California and the visiting representatives of other international WILPF branches.”
- “We together realised that as Global women activists we have the UNSCR 1325 and other supporting resolutions as tools/guides given by the UN Security Council to advance our participation and hold

accountable our leaders who have ratified those resolutions. We do not have to wait for our leaders to implement the resolution on our behalf but we have to work hand in hand and take on the responsibility to challenge our leaders to advance/consider *Human Security* rather than *Military Security* for promoting peace in our communities, nationally and on the international level.” ❖



**At left: AWP speakers Marie Lyse Numuhoza and Sushma Pankule at the Jane Addams statue in Fresno, CA.**

# Y-WILPF and WILPF Are One

Sydney Gliserman

It is no secret that WILPFers—especially in the United States—are an aging group. While this clearly hasn't diminished our fire, it is necessary to involve younger people in the organization to ensure its continued presence for the next 50, or even 100, years. In 2005, the idea emerged to create Y-WILPF (Young-WILPF), a section of the organization specific to women under the age of 35. An international meeting for Y-WILPF members was held in Stockholm, Sweden this past October, and drew young women from all over the globe. We accomplished a great deal at this meeting, but the question was raised: what is the identity of Y-WILPF within the larger organization?

It is difficult to get young women in today's world excited about feminism, and this fact greatly hinders the growth of WILPF membership. Y-WILPF helps to translate WILPF's ideas to a new generation. In addition, WILPF evolves by gaining new perspectives, new members, and who knows, maybe even some computer guides! The creation of Y-WILPF is undoubtedly beneficial for the organization, but Y-WILPFers in Stockholm agreed that one point must be made clear: Y-WILPF and WILPF are one. Both organizations share the same goals. Y-WILPF exists to recognize and to help smooth over age gaps within the group. Members of one are members of both; WILPF and Y-WILPF together will ultimately shape the future of our organization by learning across generations.

The meeting in Stockholm was organized around the "UNSCR 1325: Ten Years Later" conference, where WILPF joined many other women's and human rights groups to discuss progress made and points for improvement for the resolution's implementation. Twenty Y-WILPF women stayed in a house outside of the city for a week and attended the conference for several days. The group included women from the United States, Australia, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Finland, Sweden,

Nigeria, Costa Rica, and Colombia—and they were as diverse as their roots.

The gathering was composed of women ranging from ages 19 to 35 and included activists, students, WILPF sec-

tion presidents, non-profit workers, and more. We were productive both in and out of the UNSCR 1325 conference, and had a great time while getting to know and learning from each other. From navigating the Stockholm public transportation system to nights out on the town, Y-WILPF grew as an organization and is excited for the future. Keep Y-WILPF in mind with your local branches and endeavor to involve younger generations; collectively, we can—and will—make a larger impact.

Sydney Gliserman is a YWILPF member and an under graduate student at Northeastern University studying International Affairs.

**Y-WILPF exists to recognize and to help smooth over age gaps within the group. Members of one are members of both; WILPF and Y-WILPF together will ultimately shape the future of our organization by learning across generations.**

## REPORT FROM THE STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

# Operation 1325 from a Y-WILPFer's Perspective

Maureen Saduwa

As my flight taxied from Boston Logan International Airport via London Heathrow to Arlanda International Airport in Sweden, I began to review the program of events for the Y-WILPF meeting in Stockholm (October 20-24, 2010). As excited as I was to meet the other participants from different regions of the world, I was also enthusiastic about the Stockholm International Conference on United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325, which took place during the week of the Y-WILPF meeting. The conference was organized by the Swedish Organization 1325, a non-

profit partnership of five women's and peace organizations.

The tenth anniversary of UNSCR 1325 provided a central theme around which the 160 participants from twenty countries could examine the work to date. The delegation included government officials, researchers, policy makers, journalists, and representatives from NGOs.

Together, they examined the key challenges and solutions, as well as good and bad practices in the implementation of UNSCR 1325 at community, regional, national, and global levels. Through dialogue, open space, and most



especially the use of anecdotes, conference organizers created a participatory environment for everyone to brainstorm on pressing issues.

As the conference kicked off, deliberations focused on bridging the gap between policy and practice, the need for benchmarks in charting roadmaps and measuring impact, the need for gender experts in the development arena, advocating UNSCR 1325 at the grassroots level, engaging men to foster the implementation UNSCR 1325, and promoting women as change agents.

Advocates from Sudan, India, and Israel shared their stories of grassroots activism. Rita Martin, from Sudan, works for EVE, a civil society organization based in Juba with the goal of developing educational opportunities for women. She noted that expanding women's education will likely yield exponential dividends, especially in the political landscape of the war-torn country.

With women accounting for approximately 65 percent of the population, it is probable that the huge number of women voters made the landslide victory for secession by the South possible during the referendum. Yet, despite increased literacy levels among women in Sudan, limitations still exist. One example is the area of household labor, which is seen as the sole responsibility of women. This has made it practically impossible for Sudanese women to attend meetings and participate in literacy workshops, as they spend long hours acquiring food, water and fuel for their households.

Beena Sebastian, from India, is the Founder of the Cultural Academy for Peace, in Kerala. She highlighted the effects of the ongoing conflict in the disputed Kashmir region, especially on women and girls. Her story described the ineffectiveness of the judicial system to address injustices faced by victims. Despite the many challenges in India, Beena's organization is committed to training youth in justice and peace building. The Cultural Academy also works to engage men in the peace building process. I strongly support this strategy, because, as a native of the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria, I easily empathize with Beena. The ongoing conflicts in the Niger-Delta region produce an outstanding number of victims—mainly women and girls. In spite of this, women remain largely

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## The global development agenda . . . has yet to translate into tangible outcomes . . . in the lives of grassroots women in conflict areas.

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underrepresented at the key national institutions that shape conflict prevention and management. To successfully address issues of gender, peace, and security, it is pertinent that all actors, irrespective of belief or gender, participate in decision and policy creation, program implementation and evaluation, and knowledge

sharing.

Aliyah Strauss, President of WILPF Israel, took us on a journey to Israel and Palestine. She titled her story,



**Y-WILPF in Stockholm. From left to right: Ailyn Ulloa, Joy Onyesoh, Ximena Correal, Zarlash Ghazi, Maureen Saduwa, Jennifer Roberta Korty, Sydney Gliserman, Fiona McAlpine, Emilia Fagerlund, Annika Skogar, Cara Gleeson, Rozemarijn Vernooij, Rebeca Wekstetter, Cliona Martyn.**

“Better to Laugh than to Cry” and stressed that using humor is an effective method to challenge conflict situations. She gave an example of how the Raging Grannies sang at the gates of an Israeli police station to protest the arrest of a fellow advocate, which eventually led to the release of the advocate. The police personnel were amused by their song and found it difficult to hide their amusement. Yet, just like Rita and Beena, Aliyah argued that women in Israel are underrepresented at the peace table, even though research has shown that the participation of women ultimately results in addressing key issues normally considered

insignificant by male negotiators. Perhaps that's why after 20 years of negotiations, the peace process between Israel and Palestine is still in gridlock. Most likely, the inclusion of women peace negotiators would result in a win-win situation for all stakeholders, as argued in one of the parallel sessions.

A number of parallel sessions took place in the course of the conference. One of these sessions was organized by WILPF Sweden, titled “Participation is Protection – Time to Reclaim 1325,” featured Secretary General of WILPF Madeleine Rees, who highlighted the need for grassroots women to be heard at the global policy level. She emphasized that women's socio-economic rights must be addressed to enable them to fully participate at policy levels. Drawing from her experience, she observed that women, especially in post-war situations, are often unable to participate in policy matters, because they face such immediate dangers as food shortages, inadequate shelter, and poor health.

*Continued on page 11* ➤

# Triangle Branch Marks 75 Years of Work for Peace and Freedom

By Lucy Lewis

The Triangle (NC) branch of WILPF not only has a long history, but a long history of working for peace and freedom. As we prepared for our 75th anniversary in 2010, several members visited the Triangle WILPF archives at Duke University's Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library. This research resulted in an extensive display at the 75th Anniversary celebration, and readings by members from minutes, press releases, and flyers written since 1935.

While these records are filled with information about actions taken to oppose World War II and all declared and undeclared wars since, they also present a picture of a Branch deeply engaged in the resistance against white supremacy and supporting the black freedom struggle. This has also meant continuing work for economic justice, as issues of race and class are inextricably intertwined. At a time when Jim Crow laws ruled the South, WILPF minutes from June 24, 1942 record the following: "Mrs. Newell thought the work on Negroes should be emphasized, and thought members of the W.I.L. should work through other organizations to further the cause of better race relationships." During the next four decades, branch members would continue to be active leaders in anti-racist struggles, ranging from the picket lines of the 1960s to co-chairing the statewide Coalition to Free the Wilmington 10 in the 1970s.

## Forging Ties with NAACP

The relationship between WILPF and the NAACP goes back to Jane Addams herself, who was an early board member. Coretta Scott King and Ella Baker were among civil rights leaders who were WILPF members. In the 1980s, local WILPF members were active in the local Rainbow Coalition that emerged from the Rev. Jesse Jackson's campaign for president. This Coalition was followed by the re-organization of the Chapel Hill-Carrboro NAACP. Again, several WILPF members became NAACP members and were active in the fight for justice for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH) housekeepers, a predominantly female African-American workforce. Lori Hoyt was the official liaison from the branch to the Chapel Hill-Carrboro NAACP during the 1990s. As she continued to report to the branch about important issues that the local NAACP chapter was working on, a growing number of WILPF members joined the NAACP. More recently, the women of WILPF invited the women of the NAACP to joint gatherings to share information about our organizations, develop stronger working relationships and greater unity. The NAACP's first woman

president, Michelle Cotton-Laws, is now a proud member of WILPF, as are several other women of the NAACP. Lori is the recently elected third vice-president of our NAACP chapter; WILPFer Miriam Thompson is co-chair of the NAACP labor committee, and chairs our WILPF labor committee. WILPF member Brenda Hines is secretary of the Alamance County NAACP.

At the same time that there has been a deepening relationship between WILPF and NAACP at the local level, a prophetic leader, the Reverend William Barber, has emerged as not only the president of the North Carolina NAACP, but also a key leader in the national NAACP. Rev. Barber has led the NAACP and more than 90 partners across North Carolina, including the Triangle branch, in creating a 14-Point People's Agenda; the agenda includes education equality, equal protection under the law, and ending the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. WILPF members mobilized with our NAACP sisters and brothers for the 5th Annual HKonJ (Historic Thousands on Jones Street) March and rally in support of the People's Agenda at the NC State Legislature on February 12.

## Engaging in Anti-Racist, Economic Justice Issues

The branch's commitment to racial and economic justice has also led the branch to support the Rogers Eubanks Neighborhood Association-Coalition to End Environmental



**UNC-CH HOUSEKEEPERS:** Triangle WILPF members Ann Powers, Miriam Thompson, and Jean Chapman join members of UE 150 and Students Allied with Workers (SAW) to protest discriminatory housekeeping policies at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. Photo: Jerry Markatos

Racism in their struggle against more than three decades of landfills and hazardous waste dumps in their backyard. Triangle WILPF has also been an important catalyst in key local labor struggles, offering material support, helping workers develop effective strategies, and broadening their community support. When the Moncure Plywood

International Association of Machinists (IAM) Local 369 workers went on strike in August 2008, protesting against cutbacks including a mandatory 60-hour work week, WILPF was the first community organization to join the picket line, and organized a broad multi-county solidarity coalition. Last fall, WILPF joined the NAACP in once again protesting the racist treatment of UNC-CH house-

keepers. And for the last several months, WILPF has joined the NAACP in organizing against the firing of two black city sanitation workers, unfairly fired for union activity and filing grievances against racist policies.

Through Triangle WILPF's continued efforts to promote peace, freedom and justice, and joining and helping to organize a network of strong social justice allies, our influence has extended far beyond our numbers. At the recent open hearing for one of the two fired workers, WILPF's Raging Grannies led other supporters in singing "Ain't gonna let nobody turn us around." As Triangle branch WILPF members go forward, united in purpose and in persons, "ain't nobody gonna turn us around!"



**Triangle WILPF members Miriam Thompson and Lori Hoyt join striking Moncure Plywood workers.**

Photo: Lucy Lewis

*Lucy Lewis is a Triangle steering committee member and a member of Chapel Hill Carrboro NAACP.*

## TRIANGLE BRANCH CELEBRATES 75 YEARS

Chapel Hill-Carrboro NAACP president and WILPF member Michelle Laws (*top, right*) kicks off Triangle WILPF 75th Anniversary with a rousing welcome.

Sacrificial Poet C.J. Suitt (*at right*) inspires the crowd with his poems.



***"Members of the W.I.L. should work through other organizations to further the cause of better race relationships."***

WILPF Triangle Branch minutes, June 24, 1942



Mel Montford, IAM Local 369, and Mary Montford receive an ovation from the crowd for their work helping to lead the Moncure Plywood workers struggle.

Photos: Jerry Markatos

## ➤ Y-WILPF

*Continued from page 9*

In the course of deliberations, Ximena Correal (a fellow YWILPer representing Columbia) and I reviewed the current political situation in Columbia. She acknowledged that women's underrepresentation in politics has not only worsened their social and economic rights, but has further exacerbated gender inequalities. Currently, WILPF Columbia, in collaboration with other peace activists and organizations, advocates for policy reforms that address gender inequality and women's political participation.

Following this presentation, Ada Joy Onyesoh, the President of WILPF Nigeria, explicitly stated that UNSCR 1325 is still at the global policy stage and yet to be implemented at the grassroots level in Nigeria. Accordingly, she stated that national plans and initiatives do not take UNSCR 1325 into account and women who are supposed to be the beneficiaries are unaware that such tools even exist. Through this conference Ximena and Ada are working towards building their advocacy networks and organizing workshops on UNSCR 1325 in their respective countries.

Without a doubt, ten years after the existence of UNSCR 1325, the role of women in the global peace and conflict resolution arena is still at a disappointing level. This drawback may be related to the male dominated institutions that shape regional, national, and global policies and practices. In line with this, Mavic Cabreea-Balleza, the International Coordinator of the Global Network of Women Peace Builders (GNWP), stated that, despite the important role women play at local peace processes, they make up only 7 percent of the global peace negotiators.

Reflecting on these stories and deliberations on my return flight to Boston, I came to the conclusion that, ten years later, UNSCR 1325 is yet to achieve its objective. Though keeping the issue on the global development agenda is making progress, it has yet to translate into tangible outcomes, especially in the lives of grassroots women in conflict areas. The need for a strategic framework with measurable indicators is imperative in bridging the gap between policy and practice.

As a Y-WILPfer, this conference has further built my resolve to passionately pursue my work in gender and human security, to expand existing advocacy networks, and to initiate programs and projects that enhance women's economic empowerment and political participation at grassroots levels.

*Maureen Saduwa is a YWILPF member and is currently studying for an MA in Sustainable International Development at the Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University.*



# Portland Branch Assists in Production of Controversial Corrie Play

By Jean Fitzgerald and Anne McLaughlin

In fall 2010, Portland branch helped two of its members mount the first local full-run production of the play *My Name Is Rachel Corrie*. It tells the story of Rachel Corrie, a young Olympia woman who left her studies at Evergreen State College to go to Gaza and work there to prevent the demolition of Palestinians’



Amanda Jensen and Madeleine Rogers as Rachel in Gaza in the Portland production.

Photo: Rio-Hugo Rios

homes. On March 16, 2003, less than two months into her mission and three days before the U.S. invasion of Iraq, Rachel was crushed by an armored Caterpillar bulldozer operated by members of the Israel Defense Force.

The play is taken from Rachel’s writings, edited by actor Alan Rickman and writer Katherine Viner. It has been performed in many cities, including London and New York. The production is often met with local protestors, who object to raising issues of Israeli Occupation. Some productions have been canceled or relocated due to controversy and to threats to the long-term funding of nonprofit production companies.

Such objections have generally focused on the play’s omission of the Israeli perspective, and its lack of condemnation of Palestinian terrorism. Some have made incorrect assertions, such as claiming that Rachel was – knowingly or inadvertently – assisting terrorists and that the home she was defending concealed an entrance to an arms-smuggling tunnel. The producers and Portland WILPF felt that helping Rachel tell her story, in her own words, would offer an opportunity for Portland audiences to hear a frequently-hidden side of this conflict.

## How did WILPF come to be involved in staging the play in Portland?

In April 2009 Portland WILPF member Jean Fitzgerald watched Amy Goodman interviewing Rachel’s parents, commemorating what would have been Rachel’s 30th birthday, and Jean determined to see this play performed in Portland. She recruited fellow WILPF member Anne McLaughlin. A few months later, as they contacted local theaters looking for support, one company connected them with Bibi Walton, a theater veteran tenaciously interested in the same play. The production company “Three Good Friends” was born.

## Three Good Friends make it happen

Three Good Friends set to work contacting theaters and raising money, and soon decided to produce the play themselves rather than at a local theater. They obtained endorsements from a variety of peace and justice organizations. Portland WILPF made a significant donation along with its endorsement. The women invited churches, synagogues, and student groups, to take part in discussion and dialogue following each performance.

A respected local director, Megan Kate Ward, signed on and enlisted the help of other theater tech professionals. The group secured and prepared a space in an inner

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**The producers and Portland WILPF felt that helping Rachel tell her story, in her own words, would offer an opportunity for Portland audiences to hear a frequently-hidden side of this conflict.**

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city industrial area. Twenty-five actors auditioned and Megan chose two wonderful young women to portray Rachel— Amanda Jensen, a Portland nurse and actor, and Madeleine Rogers, a junior at Portland’s Grant High School. Other community members pitched in with publicity, graphic art, carpentry, and many other contributions to make the production a success, including the very generous Northwest Classical Theater Company as a fiscal agent.

Continued on page 29 ►

# Movement Growing in America to Build Real Democracy of, for, and by the People

By Nancy Price

After occupying Tahrir Square in Cairo for days and ousting President Mubarek, February 13 was declared the “Day of Cleaning” the Square and the *New York Times* showed pictures of people with signs around their necks reading: “Sorry to Disturb. We build Democracy.”

The U.S. media has made a great deal that Facebook and the Internet were responsible for the “Egyptian revolution,” while other reports detail the Egyptian government’s success in shutting down the Internet and social media during the weeks of protest. The emphasis on the immediacy of social media complements Marwan Bihar’s point that for “much of the world’s media, the story of popular revolution that transformed Egypt is that an oppressed people who had suffered bitterly in silence suddenly decided that enough



Muhammad Saladin Nusair at a protest in Tahrir Square.  
Photo: Courtesy of Mr. Nusair

was enough and spontaneously rose up to claim their freedom.” But, Bihar, a senior analyst for *Al Jazeera*, reminds us, “Like most revolutions, this one was the culmination of countless sit-ins, strikes, pickets and demonstrations over the last decades, by Egyptians who have

risked and suffered repeated beatings, torture and imprisonment.” Inspired by the thrilling popular revolt in Egypt, millions in countries across the region have mobilized to build democracy and enact long-hoped-for political, economic, and social reforms. These revolutions will take a different path based on the unique political, cultural, and religious histories of each country, and we won’t know for some time the outcome or how peaceful or violent the process will be.

At the time of this writing, populist protests and threats of a general strike are spreading throughout the United States. As we turn from Cairo to Madison, Wisconsin, or other state capitals, the grassroots coalition of teachers, students, fireman, small farmers, businesspeople, police, and many more are protesting the draconian budget cuts, attacks on workers’ rights to collective bargaining, and deep cuts in public pensions and benefits. In Madison, tens of thousands gathered in peaceful assembly on February 26 to demand that Governor Walker join them in open, democratic conversation to find a solution to the state’s fiscal problems – an invitation he has so far refused.

Wisconsin workers call the Governor’s budget that is balanced on the backs of working people “heartless” and “undemocratic.” While acknowledging there are serious budget problems in Wisconsin, as is true for so many other states, they point out that this year’s deficit is the direct result of tax breaks and other measures Walker pushed through for corporations, supported by the Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce business lobby that spent nearly \$1 million on his campaign.<sup>1</sup>

The unity in spirit for freedom, democracy, and human rights taking place now across America and in the Middle East at the moment was expressed recently by a young man in Tahrir Square holding a sign that read: “Egypt supports Wisconsin: One World, One Pain.” In Madison, signs read “Egypt Help Us.” Clearly, the mass mobilization in Cairo has inspired those American workers facing the destruction of their long-held rights and all who support them. Indeed, while Egyptians fight for the right to build a new democracy, Americans are beginning the fight to keep from losing what remains of our democracy.

To understand how we have come to this point, we need to understand the roots of our own crisis.

## NEOLIBERAL REVOLUTION AND STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT

It is tempting to explain the present national economic crisis as the result of the Wall Street financial fiasco and associated housing foreclosures, the job crisis, the federal, state, and municipal debt, and the massive trade deficit with China. Many politicians argue that this is just the “shrinking pie” problem and that we must all learn to live within our means. This is a lie meant to mask the roots of our own crisis.

In reality, this crisis has been in the making for decades as Republicans and Democrats, the wealthy and the corporate elite, deliberately carried out their own “revolution” to firmly establish corporate rule based on the fundamental neo-liberal economic principles of tax cuts for the wealthy and corporations, corporate tax breaks and subsidies, free markets and free trade, deregulation of financial markets to favor Wall Street, lower environmental protections, privatization of the public sector, and attacks on labor.

Since at least the mid-1990s when the U.S. joined the World Trade Organization and signed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and President Clinton deregulated Wall Street, the destructive impacts on our society and economy have been accumulating. The resulting

*Continued on page 28* ➤

# Threats to Peace: The Militarization of Costa Rica

By Carol Marujo

Costa Ricans are proud of their history of avoiding war and living in peace. By presidential decree, Costa Rica disbanded its military on December 1, 1948, following a brief civil war. The Constitution of 1949 prohibited the formation of a standing army and required neutrality in international conflicts. Abolition Day is celebrated as a national holiday each December 1.

In 2003, then-president Abel Pacheco yielded to intense United States pressure and allowed Costa Rica to become part of the “coalition of the willing,” which supported the invasion of Iraq. Doing so violated the Costa Rican Constitution. Roberto Zamora, a law student at the time, brought a case to the Supreme Court (Sala IV) to remove Costa Rica from the coalition. He prevailed and Costa Rica withdrew.

The comedian Jon Stewart of *The Daily Show* joked that Costa Rica had not sent any troops or other resources, but when they withdrew, the U.S. had to return two bomb-sniffing toucans. Despite the joke, Costa Rica’s participation in the coalition carried great symbolic weight and damaged its national pride and its reputation as a neutral, peace-loving nation.

## COSTA RICA & THE U.S. COAST GUARD AND NAVY

Costa Rica has been also enlisted in the war on drugs, because of its location on the route between Colombia and the U.S. Since 1998, Costa Rica has allowed the U.S. Coast Guard to patrol its waters and dock in its ports. This Joint Maritime Agreement was initially acceptable because the Coast Guard was part of the Department of Commerce. The Costa Rican Legislative Assembly must renew the permission every six months. Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, the Coast Guard was placed under the Department of Defense, making it part of the military and thus making its presence a violation of the Costa Rican Constitution. Members of the Legislative Assembly challenged the renewal of the permission, but their numbers were too few to stop it.

The U.S. reactivated the Navy’s fourth fleet in the Caribbean in 2007 and requested permission to sail into Costa Rican waters and ports in 2010. The Costa Rican Legislative Assembly voted to allow up to 46 Navy warships and 16,000 Marines and sailors to visit. Not all ships were expected to arrive, but Costa Rica gave blanket permission for whatever ships might dock to refuel, restock supplies, and carry out maneuvers on land or at sea for its drug-interdiction mission. Costa Rica also gave the mili-

tary personnel diplomatic immunity from prosecution for any behavior while in its territory.

Only a few U.S. ships actually dock in Costa Rica. One was the USS *Iwo Jima*, a Wasp-class amphibious assault ship resembling a small aircraft carrier. It brought 10 helicopters and two landing craft and is also able to carry Harrier attack fighter jets. This huge hulk of a war machine, which notably is not suitable for pursuing high-speed drug runners, also brought medical and construction personnel for a humanitarian mission. During the 10 days at the port of Limon, these personnel provided medical services to Costa Ricans and sent crews out to repair schools and bridges. The media lauded the U.S. presence, but local residents complained of the drunken, brawling, destructive behavior of some Marines and sailors on shore leave. Later in the year, a second ship docked for a few days in the port of Golfito.

## PROTESTING MILITARIZATION

Protests from peace groups were met with surprise and accusations of paranoia. “How can you question the good intentions of free medical care?” “Don’t be paranoid; the U.S. is not invading.” Questions of unconstitutionality and the extreme inefficiency of sending an assault ship to give medical aid did not seem to register with the Costa Rican or U.S. ex-pat communities.

However, at this point, the voices against militarization appear to have had an impact. Opposition did grow in the

## **Many Costa Ricans worry that an eagle is replacing the dove of peace.**

Legislative Assembly, and several lawsuits were introduced in the Supreme Court (Sala IV). At present, those lawsuits have not been decided. Observers speculate that the court prefers to avoid ruling on them, because they pertain to the internal working of the U.S. government (the classification of the U.S. Coast Guard as part of the military, rather than a force for policing commerce). When the six-month renewal came up for a vote, the U.S. requested permission from Costa Rica for only Coast Guard vessels, not Navy warships, to visit. That permission was granted. However, the Coast Guard ships will also carry 80 military helicopters, which are allowed to refuel at Costa Rican airports.

A private citizen who tracks the locations of Navy



ships reports that currently none are in Costa Rican waters. Although the U.S. accepted the interpretation that the arrival of Navy ships violates the Costa Rican Constitution, it has subsequently complained through the media that denying them entry to Costa Rican territory weakens the war on drugs.

The voices against militarization include members of WILPF chapters and the Quaker Peace Center. Some of these peace activists also work with the SOA Watch, an international, grassroots organization

devoted to closing the infamous U.S. Army school in Fort Benning, Georgia. This school, formerly named the School of the Americas (SOA), is a relic of the cold war. In the name of counter-insurgency, it has trained tens of thousands of Latin American military and police in kidnapping, torture, and coups d'état. More recently, its name was changed to the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC). Over the years, peaceful Costa Rica has sent more than 2,500 police there for training, a practice that WILPF members and others in Costa Rica are working hard to stop.

### **A TREND TOWARD MILITARIZATION?**

Another development this past year was a flare up of a long-standing border dispute with Nicaragua. The San Juan River forms part of Costa Rica's northern border, and international treaties govern control of the river and its banks. Nicaragua has been dredging the river and is accused of cutting trees and dumping mud and rocks on the Costa Rican side. Nicaragua claims the silt filling the river is caused by Costa Rica's deforestation and is contaminated with chemical agricultural runoff. Nicaraguan troops took over a small island in the delta formed by the river. Officials in Nicaragua argue that Costa Ricans have used the area for drug trafficking, and there is evidence to support their claim. Both countries claim ownership of the island, and each blames the other for the problem.

One explanation for the conflict is that Nicaraguan politicians wanted to increase nationalistic fervor before an election to ensure a good voter turnout. Others claim the



**Olivia Ramos (Olive Branch) is the pen name of the Heredia Chapter of WILPF (LIMPAL in Spanish). Its political cartoons illustrate the inconsistencies between Costa Rica's image as a neutral, peace-loving country, which abolished its army in 1948, and its recent bowing to U.S. pressure to become more militarized.**

Paul Schmidt, Illustrator

border activity is part of Plan Pueblo Panama, which is a longstanding, NAFTA-type of free trade agreement to allow transnational corporations to "develop" the area. The International Court of Justice in The Hague is deciding the dispute.

Meanwhile, Costa Ricans, known for their reluctance to confront others or to become aggressive, are incensed. Anti-Nicaraguan sentiments are on the rise, and many Costa Ricans seem ready to rush to the border to defend their homeland.

The government has sent

many military police to the border and has plans to build land and river barriers and various armaments and fortifications. The government has also published its intention to change Article 12 of the Constitution to allow Costa Rica to become more militarized. The proposed change would open the door to calling up a military defense force, not just if and when the country is threatened with attack, but under broader conditions to be determined by the Supreme Court (Sala IV).

Given this mood, Costa Rica's foreign minister, René Castro, proposes another idea: spend 2 to 4 percent of the country's gross domestic product on a national defense force. One often hears how Costa Rica enjoys political stability and a large middle class because, for decades, it has invested money in education and health care, instead of supporting an army. Now, Minister Castro would like Costa Rica to emulate other Latin American countries that typically spend 2 to 4 percent of GDP on military. He noted that Costa Rica spends that much on universities. He does not mention that vital services are currently underfunded, and the country already has budget deficits and a large national debt.

Where will all of this lead? Many Costa Ricans are worried that an eagle is replacing the dove of peace.

*Dr. Carol Marujo, a retired psychologist from the Chicago area, is a permanent resident of Costa Rica. She joined the Heredia Chapter of WILPF in 2003. She lives on a small farm in the mountains and is a writer, innkeeper, and practitioner of sustainable farming.*

# WILPF BUILDING A NUCLEAR-FREE FUTURE

By Carol Urner

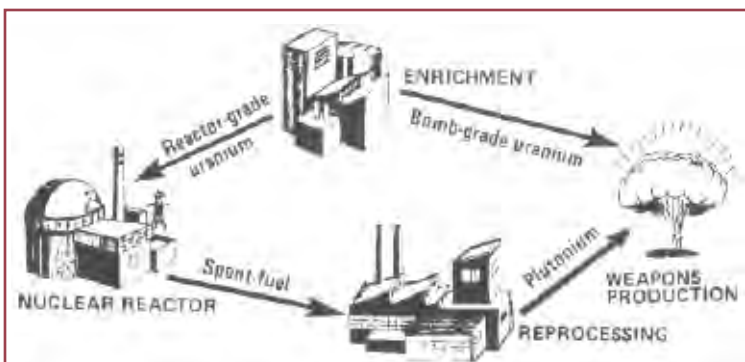
**W**ILPF women began working for nuclear weapons abolition soon after the World War II bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In 1999, international WILPF launched the Reaching Critical Will (RCW) project at the U.N., with the mission of nuclear abolition, total disarmament, reduction of global military spending, and demilitarization of politics and society. In the same year the US WILPF DISARM! Dismantle the War Economy campaign was born. DISARM! and RCW have worked closely together ever since.

Hopes soared after all but three nations ratified the 1972 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and all 189 agreed unanimously on thirteen practical steps toward abolition. In 2001, however, a new U.S. administration gained power. Those leaders, who had controlled the Senate since 1995, had previously blocked U.N. disarmament negotiations, which require consensus for four years. Over the next eight years they continued to obstruct negotiations and set out to destroy the NPT, the Anti Ballistic Missile treaty, and the planned thirteen steps, including ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and implementation of the three START treaties.

## DESPITE SETBACKS, WILPF WOMEN NEVER GIVE UP

RCW's **Felicity Hill** (Australia) and **Merav Datan** (Israel/USA) were contributing authors of the NGO model abolition treaty and accompanying discussion guide. In 2007, Costa Rica introduced this model to the U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki Moon now supports it as a starting point for negotiations.

WILPF Branches, led by **Yoshiko Ikuta** (Cleveland), honed in on RCW's "dirty dozen nuclear weapons profiteers and promoters," including Lockheed, Boeing, Raytheon, Northrup Grumman, Alliant, Bechtel and the University of California. **Pat Birnie** (Tucson) crafted portions of the *Mil-Corp Manual*. **Val Mullen** (Montpelier) developed DISARM's Eye on Congress alerts with help from **Gillian Gilhool** (Philadelphia) and **Yvonne Logan** (St Louis). WILPF Branches initiate or co-sponsor Hiroshima-Nagasaki memorials each year, continuing



This graphic illustrates the basic nuclear chain. Uranium is enriched in a complex process that makes it usable as nuclear reactor fuel. A nation that can enrich its own uranium could, with a great deal of money and effort, also further enrich it for use in nuclear weapons. Spent fuel from nuclear reactors is then reprocessed and plutonium is extracted. Plutonium serves as the "trigger" causing an explosion of bomb-grade uranium in nuclear warheads. Thus, countries that pursue nuclear power have the potential to produce nuclear bombs. Uranium mining is often included in the chain. U.S. WILPF also includes the delivery vehicles (such as Minuteman III ICBMs) and the corporations that profit from them in the chain.

Courtesy, WILPF Reaching Critical Will

community education on the necessity for a nuclear weapons free future. Twenty-one branches, from Oregon to Maine, have submitted reports on these annual re-commitment events.

In 2009 hopes again rose when the new Obama Administration promised to work for nuclear weapons abolition. U.S. WILPF DISARM!, then facilitated by **Claire Gosselin**, launched a new campaign to support the abolition effort in our communities, Congress and the U.N. DISARM! secured a \$2000 WILPF mini-grant to help with costs – the rest came from members' own pockets across the country.

For work at the U.N., DISARM! relied on the wisdom and assistance of Reaching Critical Will. WILPF women also continued to work with allies and friends in the United for Peace and Justice Nuclear Weapons Abolition and Human Security Working Group, facilitated by WILPFer **Jackie Cabasso**. ❖

## Meet the WILPF Women Working For a Nuclear-Free Future

**A**ll of these women share a determination to rid the world of nuclear weapons. Through WILPF they strive for this goal, but they also work on eliminating other links in the nuclear industry chain: uranium mining, nuclear waste, nuclear power, and nuclear weapons delivery systems. WILPF also exposes corporations that promote and profit from weapons and the nuclear chain; all threaten life on mother earth and so, must be eliminated.

**Ray Acheson** (Canada) and **Beatrice Fihn** (Sweden), both brilliant women in their twenties, now guide WILPF RCW at the U.N. They monitor and report in detail on the NPT meetings in the General Assembly First Committee

and the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, which is the sole disarmament treaty negotiating body at the United Nations. They also equip WILPFers and civil society for participation in the U.N. treaty process.

In 2008, **Claire Gosselin** (Boston) obtained an 18-month WILPF \$2000 mini-grant for a Nuclear Free Future Campaign. Claire, then chair of the DISARM! Dismantle the War Economy Issue Committee, her co-chairs **Margaret Harrison Tamulonis** and **Ellen Thomas**, the DISARM! committee, and over twenty branches participated. These included one of our oldest living members,

Continued on page 27 ➤

## New U.S. Section WILPF National Director Greetings from Tanya E. Henderson

### Dear WILPF Members:

I am so happy to introduce myself as your new WILPF National Director, U.S. Section, and to join your ranks of smart, socially conscious, and politically fierce women dedicated to the powerful goals of total disarmament and peace, human rights for all, and care for our Earth. I am so honored! My own work in peace activism has been a constant and present part of my life experience.

I am an international and domestic human rights attorney, specializing in gender, children's rights, and economic development, with substantial experience in non-profit management and program development. I received my B.A. in Political Science from the University of Massachusetts at Boston and my J.D. from Suffolk University Law School, and have earned several certificates in mediation and conflict negotiation. More recently, I completed a Masters of Law (LL.M.) at the Fletcher School of International Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, where I focused on international human rights and economic development.

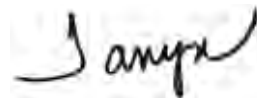
My professional journey began in grassroots program development as the Direct Services Program Manager and Americorps Site Manager for the Patriots Trail Girl Scout Council, where I established a division of Girl Scouts services to meet the needs of minority and under-served populations in the Boston area. I decided to attend law school as a single mother of two young boys in order to advance my belief in the fundamental value of all human beings and to challenge the systems that continue to bar women and girls

from fulfilling their highest potential.

After graduating from law school, I worked in civil rights and as a court-appointed child welfare attorney in Juvenile Court. More recently, my path expanded to include international policy and economic development work. Prior to joining WILPF, I was the Co-Principal Investigator of a research project in Ethiopia, funded by Harvard Medical School, tasked with researching and drafting policy related to gender inequality, poverty, and mental health law; and as a research consultant for Microfinance Opportunities in Washington, D.C. examining the financial challenges women face in developing countries.

I am powerfully committed to advancing the historic and most noble goals of WILPF, and seek to work with the WILPF membership, branches, Board of Directors, and Program Committees to unify and strengthen the impact of WILPF members' knowledge, passion, and dedication. Thank you so much for this opportunity to work with all of you, and to lead WILPF in a dynamic new direction of peace and freedom!

Most warmly,



Tanya E. Henderson, National Director, WILPF, U.S. Section



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# Afghan Women: How Should WILPF and All Feminists Respond to Their Plight? One Woman's Opinion

By Charlotte Dennett

Nothing more poignantly illustrates the dilemma of American feminists opposed to the war in Afghanistan than the shocking picture on the July 29, 2010 cover of *Time Magazine* of a young, beautiful Afghan woman with her nose cut off. Beneath the cover runs the defiant headline, "What Happens if We Leave Afghanistan?," igniting a debate that persists to this day.

Eighteen year old Aisha was mutilated by a Taliban commander for trying to escape her abusive in-laws. She apparently agreed to pose for the picture if her image could serve as a warning about the dangers of the Afghan government reaching "some kind of political accommodation with the Taliban." How, she asks, "can we reconcile with them" when "they are the people that did this to me?" *Time's* underlying message: U.S. troops are needed to protect Afghan women.

While most reactions I've read have viewed *Time's* cover as a sophisticated example of psychological warfare aimed at muting opposition to the U.S. occupation, many women who share this view nonetheless fret over what really would happen if American troops withdrew and abandoned Aisha and millions like her to a Taliban-controlled fate. Complicating the predicament even more is the thought that whatever kind of peace negotiation occurs, Afghan women should have some say in it. This in turn raises the question of what it might take to effectively apply U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325, which advocates women's participation in peace negotiations and post conflict reconstruction, to the situation in Afghanistan. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has publicly declared her intention to honor 1325 in U.S. operations, but how adequate are the measures she's taken? And, how much cooperation does she have from the Department of Defense, the Armed Forces, and private contractor working for the U.S. in Afghanistan?

## A Closer Look at the Dilemma

Rafia Zacaria, a Muslim woman born and raised in Pakistan, sums up the feminist quandary in a *Ms* blog entitled "The Face We Can't Ignore: Women of Afghanistan." The left, she writes, describes the plight of Afghan women as "a pretext" by the Bush Administration to "get into Afghanistan and stay there." But Zacaria worries about the "sudden abandonment" of projects that women just like Aisha believed in: literacy, entrepreneurship initiatives for women, and midwifery training projects aimed at reduc-

ing maternal mortality. "Withdrawing without a plan for safeguarding the women who chose to believe the American promises of empowerment, however deceitfully ... made, is to live in denial of a tragedy in which we are roundly imputed." Americans, she concludes, must "ensure that the very Taliban commanders who burned girls' schools and ordered beatings and mutilations of women like Aisha aren't installed as leaders—even if it impedes our timeline for withdrawal."

## Being Realistic: A View from the Top

But how realistic is that? Let's look at what motivated the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in the first place.

Two weeks after 9/11, a *New York Times* reporter wrote a piece entitled "War will be for the Control of Oil." Beyond America's "determination to hit back," he wrote, was America's need to "defend" energy resources in the Middle East and Central Asia. This, "rather than a simple confrontation between Islam and the West, will be the primary flash point of global conflict for decades to come."

Zbigniew Brzezinski, national security advisor to Jimmy Carter from 1977 to 1981, played a key role in arming the mujahadeen against the Soviet Union even before the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in 1979. Brzezinski was the first director of the Rockefeller-created Trilateral Commission, aimed at attracting some of the best brains in Europe, Japan and the US to chart the course of globalization for the benefit of corporations, including giant oil companies.

It was Brzezinski who persuaded Carter that he needed to bring covert support to Islamic militants in order to "bleed [the Soviets] as much as possible." When asked, years later, whether he regretted supporting Islamic fundamentalists against the Soviets, Brzezinski replied matter of factly, "What is more important in world history? The Taliban or the collapse of the Soviet empire?"

With its collapse came the end to Soviet control over what soon became known as the "Central Asian Republics" bordering Afghanistan and the oil and gas-rich Caspian

**"Complicating the predicament even more is the thought that whatever kind of peace negotiation occurs, Afghan women should have some say in it."**

Sea. Brzezinski believed that the United States should dominate the region he called Eurasia, with Afghanistan at its heart and “a network of pipeline and transportation routes link[ing] the region directly to the major centers of global economic activity via the Mediterranean and Arabian Sea.”

Brzezinski didn't give one whit about Afghan women when it came to supporting the Taliban in order to destabilize Soviet control of Afghanistan. His aim then, and now— as one of Obama's top foreign policy advisors —is to extend US power and hegemony over the oil-rich Middle East.

Recently, work has finally begun on the long-planned TAPI pipeline (named for the countries it will traverse, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India). Its scheduled completion date is 2014 – the same date as the scheduled withdrawal of US troops. As Craig Murray, former British ambassador to neighboring Uzbekistan revealed in 2009, “US forces are positioned to guard the pipeline route. It's what it's about. It's about money, it's about oil, it's not about democracy.” Or Afghan women.

## Afghan Women Today

Ms, in a recent (Fall 2010) article entitled “Afghan women rising,” notes that despite the violence there are “signs of hope” from women entrepreneurs, midwives and military officers. Afghan women “are making progress, often quietly and to little fanfare.” Politically, women now occupy “68 out of 249 seats in the lower house of parliament and 26 out of 102 seats in the upper chamber.” Yet these elected women represent primarily urban areas of the country, and cannot speak to the perspectives of Afghanistan's mostly rural population.

The sheer horror of life for most Afghan women is documented by a 2010 U.N. report, *Harmful Traditional Practices and Implementation of the [Afghan] Law on Elimination of Violence against Women in Afghanistan [EVAW]*. The “harmful practices” include “the selling and buying of women for marriage, forced marriage, marriage before the legal age, forced isolation, forcing a woman to commit self-immolation, and denying the right to education, work, and access to health services.” The problem is, even though EVAW criminalizes these practices, this “law” is really only a presidential decree and has not been enforced.

WILPF, in a 2009 statement on Afghanistan, rightly notes that “The very people the U.S. claims must be protected from Taliban insurgents are actually endangered by the presence of US and NATO troops... Afghan women's organizations such as the Revolutionary Association of Afghan Women [RAWA]... have consistently stated that the occupying U.S military presence increases the level of violence in Afghanistan.” The result: more civilian deaths ... and more dangerous conditions for women seeking to participate in

public life, peace building, and civilian governance.

Last October, on the 10th anniversary of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton observed, “the rights of [Afghan] women... is an essential element of democracy and stability. The United States has backed women's inclusion at all levels, including in the recently formed [in September] High Peace Council.” Yet the High Peace Council was set up to begin negotiations with the Taliban; only tribal elders were invited to preparatory meetings, and the 200-member “Peace” council, while including six women, is dominated by— warlords!

Meanwhile, a U.S. effort to use female marines to win over Afghan women through “female engagement teams” has met with parallel resistance from American battlefield commanders out of fear of “offending the locals.”

Malalai Joya, now a suspended member of the Afghan Parliament, has no illusions about the misuse of women in her country. She's been travelling the world urging support for all the people of Afghanistan, claiming their “battle is in their towns and villages.” The aim of the war, she said in an interview with *Truthout*, “was never to create democracy and justice nor to uproot the terrorist groups. The war's

**“Many women . . . fret over what really would happen if American troops withdrew and abandoned Aisha and millions like her to a Taliban-controlled fate.”**

only purpose has been to perpetuate the occupation, install military bases and safeguard the takeover of a region that has substantial natural resources. All of the troops must leave and the militia of the warlords must be dismantled. Democracy can't be established by an occupying force that does nothing more than spread out and strengthen the Talibanization of my country.” Her message to us: Withdraw your troops now!

This is the bottom line for WILPF. We should support Afghan women's groups like RAWA as they seek an end to their oppression under the rule of the warlords. We insist upon implementation of U.N. Resolution 1325 through extensive consultation and involvement of women's civil society organizations, and, in Congress, enactment of the Afghan Women Empowerment Act (S229/HR2214) through literacy, job training, and health programs, but we should not deceive ourselves into thinking the liberation of Afghan women depends on continued US occupation of their country.

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*Charlotte Dennett is an attorney and the co author of Thy Will be Done: The Conquest of the Amazon: Nelson Rockefeller and Evangelism in the Age of Oil (1995) and The People v Bush: One Lawyer's Campaign to Bring the President to Justice (2010).*



PUPPETS, PEACE, AND CRITICAL LITERACY

## Jane Addams Walks in Tucson

By Jenise Porter and Carole Edelsky, Tucson WILPF

Critical literacy is a pedagogy firmly rooted in attempts to lessen inequities and address societal problems caused by systems of privilege that divide and oppress. It provides a basis for examining and analyzing texts so children learn to read not only “the word,” but “the world.”

Critical literacy helps children construct their own understanding of the world around them within a framework that foregrounds justice. Critical literacy is, thus, the opposite of standardized curriculum, standardized tests and so-called “core knowledge” – all currently in vogue among political and business elites who make educational policy.

Jane Addams would have understood these distinctions between standardized curricula and curricula that encourage questioning. She would have understood the need to read ‘the world,’ not merely the words on the page. Throughout her life, that is just what she did as she pursued social justice. She also supported others, such as her early 20th century contemporary John Dewey, who were similarly intent on promoting a more equitable world.

One of the ways the Jane Addams Peace Association and WILPF honor Jane Addams’s commitments is through its 53-year-old Jane Addams Children’s Book Awards (JACBA) for books that “promote the cause of peace, social justice, world community, and the equality of the sexes and all races.” For more than a decade, Tucson has donated a set of JACBA books to local schools each year.

In 2010, the branch decided to donate two sets of books and to ask the schools that received them to work with us in educating our community about Jane Addams, her work, and her commitment to social justice. We devised a multi-pronged project: presenting JACBA books to parents and teachers through a lens of critical literacy; distributing information about Jane Addams and WILPF at large community gatherings; and attracting attention to WILPF actions in the community.

This multi-project would “star” Jane Addams as a giant puppet. We figured Puppet Jane would elicit interest from large crowds who wouldn’t necessarily know who she was, providing an enticement to read the cards we’d distribute when she was on parade and to augment our efforts to pro-



Jane Addams, head and shoulders above the crowd as usual! surrounded by Tucson WILPF members, in the All-Souls Procession. Photo: Deb Livingston, Tucson WILPF treasurer

mote critical literacy. First, of course, we had to create Puppet Jane. With the aid of a grant from the Joan Patchen Fund to offset costs of materials and consulting help, we built and costumed Puppet Jane. We made a frame with a backpack and foam-wrapped PVC piping, a head made of *papier mache* on a roasting pan base; and stuffed pantyhose with foam for hands and string mops for hair.

Puppet Jane made her debut in the November 2010 All Souls Procession. The Procession reflects a Southern Arizona version of the Mexican holiday *Dia de los Muertos*, the day when people gather in cemeteries to build alters, offer food and flowers and celebrate the lives of their deceased loved ones. In Southern Arizona it has become a day to honor those who have died crossing the desert from Mexico into the United States and whose families may not ever receive notice of their death

Puppet Jane’s appearance garnered enthusiastic acclaim. We distributed 1,800 handouts about Jane Addams and WILPF along the parade route in the heart of the city. Hundreds of people wanted to know more about Jane, and her photo appeared in the on-line *Tucson Daily Citizen*.

Puppet Jane stood in front of Toys “R” Us to promote peaceful toys on Black Friday. She announced WILPF’s presence at the Tucson Peace Fair and in Tucson’s Anti-War Rally on March 19. And she helped WILPF promote critical literacy at the 3rd annual Tucson Festival of Books on March 12 and 13, 2011, where WILPF had a JACBA booth. In two years this book festival has grown to be the fourth largest in the United States.

In the JACBA booth at the festival, children and teachers from Los Amigos Elementary School in the Sunnyside District and Holladay Magnet Arts School and Cragin Elementary School displayed projects based on JACBA award winners. And, of course, Puppet Jane was there. This was our opportunity to introduce WILPF and JAPA to thousands as we showed that high quality literature is an integral part of teaching children to read the world against a yardstick of social justice. ❖

This Peace Education section is funded by the Jane Addams Peace Association.



# Close SOA: Save Millions of Dollars, Innocent Lives

By Ruth Zalph

**A**s a second generation and lifetime member of WILPF, I feel committed to peace, justice, and equality. This is what has driven me to return to Fort Benning in Columbus, Georgia year after year.

In 1946 the U.S. government founded the U.S. Army School of the Americas (SOA)—with our tax dollars—in Panama to train Latin American soldiers. It moved to Fort Benning over 25 years ago, at Panama's request, and now trains roughly 800 soldiers per year. In 2001, the name changed to the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSC).\*

In 1996, the Pentagon, under pressure, released training manuals used at the school, revealing that the trainings advocated torture, extortion, and execution. Yet, no independent investigation into SOA has ever taken place. Since few people outside of Columbus, GA, Fort Benning's home, know about SOA, I offer documented facts.

In **El Salvador**, in December 1980, SOA-trained soldiers assassinated Archbishop Oscar Romero, raped and murdered four U.S. churchwomen (Sister Maura Clarke, Sister Iota Ford, Celia Ramos, and her mother Elba). Also murdered were six Jesuit priests in San Salvador and more than 900 people in the village of El Mozote. In response, Roman Catholic priest Father Roy Bourgeois founded SOA Watch with the stated aim of closing the School.

In **Guatemala** between 1978 and 1986, SOA graduates played a key role in three military dictatorships. Eighteen held either cabinet or high military positions, or served as leaders of G2, the intelligence agency. The counterinsurgency strategies learned at the SOA and then implemented left 200,000 people dead.

In **Argentina**, SOA graduate, Leopoldo Galtiere lead the military junta that ruled throughout the period called "the "Dirty War," during which 30,000 people were killed or "disappeared."

In **Chile**, 10 of the officers indicted with Augusto Pinochet for "crimes against humanity" were SOA-trained.

In **Nicaragua**, more than 4,000 soldiers were trained at the SOA to perform in Somoza's National Guard death squads. During Somoza's 45 -year rule, countless protesters, journalists, and campesinos were killed.

In **Venezuela**, in April of 2002, SOA graduates acted as key players in an attempted coup against the democratically-elected Chavez government. 100 people died.

In **Ecuador** on September 30, 2010, SOA graduate Manuel Rivadeneira Tello lead the uprising, considered an attempted coup, of Rafael Correa, the democratically-elected president. Eight killed, 274 wounded.

June 28, 2009 a SOA graduate-led coup in **Honduras** resulted in the death of at least 83 members of the

\*Editor's Note: *Though SOA's name has been changed, we use it here because it's the name many WILPFers are familiar with.*

Resistance movement and the imprisonment and mistreatment of hundreds.

In **Mexico**, repression against the indigenous communities of Oaxaca, Chiapas, and Guerrero continues, with the assistance of 18 SOA graduates who play key roles. The Zeta Cartel killed 72 migrants in the biggest massacre thus far in the drug war. The Mexican Secretary of Defense says that over a third of the original cartel are graduates of SOA.

**Columbia** has sent over 10,000 soldiers to the SOA, more than any other country. Since 2002 alone, at least 35,000 people have been killed, and another 4.5 million have been internally displaced. WHINSC instructors were arrested for drug trafficking. Gen. Montoya Uribe, the previous head of the army who taught at SOA in 1993, has a history of 30 years collaboration with the para-militaries in killing innocent peasants and destroying villages. Early this year, a mass grave was discovered in La Macarena containing more than 2,000 bodies.

In 2003, people across **Bolivia** protested against unjust economic policies. The government sent troops led by SOA graduates Juan Herrera and Gonzolo Mercado to suppress the dissent. Both men are currently facing charges of torture and murder in the El Alto massacre of 67 civilians.

SOA exists to control the economic and political systems of Latin American countries by aiding and influencing the military establishments. Former SOA instructor Major Joseph Blair wrote in 2006, "The hope is that close personal contacts developed at Fort Benning will result in future U.S. potential to influence Latin American governments which are often dominated by present and former elitists of military regimes and dictatorships."

In 1948, George Keenan, of our State Department said "we have about 50 percent of the world's wealth, but only 6.3 percent of its population. In this situation, we cannot fail to be the object of envy and resentment. Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships, which will permit us to maintain this position of disparity without positive detriment to our national security. To do so, we should cease to talk about vague and unreal objectives such as human rights, the raising of living standards and democratization."

Countries with the worst human rights records have consistently sent the most soldiers for SOA training: Bolivia under Suarez, Nicaragua under Somoza, Mexico after the 1994 uprising, and currently, Colombia.

To date, the targets of the SOA graduates have included union organizers, educators, religious workers, student leaders, and others who work for the rights of the poor.

WILPF members have protested against SOA for many years; last year the group included Marguerite and Francis Coyle, Jane and Wes Hare, Sandy and Dean Irving, and Ann Powers. We go each year to proclaim our solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Latin America. If you wish to participate as part of a WILPF contingent, contact Tanya Henderson at [thenderson@wilpf.org](mailto:thenderson@wilpf.org).

Ruth Zalph is a member of WILPF, Triangle branch.

# Six Young Women Offer Their Views on Beijing+15

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Since 2008, WILPF U.S. has been conducting a weeklong Practicum in Advocacy at the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) review meetings. Participants, who must be enrolled as students at a U.S. institution, spend a week attending U.N. sessions and side events at the CSW, and, guided by two faculty members, learn from experts in the field and from each other about key gender-based issues under discussion at the U.N.

In 2010, the theme of the CSW was “Beijing+15,” a retrospective of developments since the landmark 4th World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995 and attended by many WILPF members, many of whom arrived in Beijing aboard the “Peace Train” that originated in Helsinki, Finland.

Six young women who participated in the 2010 Practicum later presented papers at the National Women's Studies Association Annual Conference, held in Denver in November 2010. They related their experiences at the CSW as the next generation of feminist activists searching for their place among the Beijing veterans. They agreed to let us share their views with *Peace & Freedom* readers. Extracts from their observations appear on the following pages. Full texts of their papers are available at [www.wilpf.org/peaceandfreedomarticles](http://www.wilpf.org/peaceandfreedomarticles).

**YOUNG FEMINISTS AND THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN** by Jasmine Witmer

**THE BEIJING PLATFORM: A COMING OF AGE STORY** by Sara C. Cooley

**THE CASE FOR FEMINIST SOLIDARITY** by Minjon Tholen

**IMPLICATIONS FOR COMMUNICATION THEORY IN MALE-DOMINATED STRUCTURES** by Christine M. Willingham

**RE-ENGAGING THE STATE IN TRANSNATIONAL FEMINISM** by Kristin Alder

**MAKING THE EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN VISIBLE** by Deneil K. Hill

## JASMINE WITMER

### **Hello, Can you Hear Me? Young Feminists and the Commission on the Status of Women**

At twenty-two years old, my thoughts, opinions and experiences may not be like those of many of you who are reading this. My first thought after being invited to speak at the National Women's Studies conference as an undergraduate student was to produce a highly theoretical paper, backed with sources written by women who are older and more experienced than I am. Instead of doing that, I will briefly discuss why I believe the feminist movement, a movement to which many women have dedicated their lives, is faltering with my generation. I hope it will impart a renewed faith in my generation – the women who are continuing your Peace Train, your Beijing, your Millennium Development Goals, for better or worse.

The generational divide between “older” and “younger” feminists has reached such a vital point in our society that I read about “feminism’s ritual matricide” in a recent issue of *Harper’s Magazine*. The topic was awarded enough space in the October 2010 issue that the author, Susan Faludi, was able to effectively summarize two books in one substantial essay. Clearly, this issue is paramount in women’s minds...

Over ten years ago, scholars began to refer to women in their early 20s to mid-30s as the “post-feminist generation” characterized by disinterest in, alienation from, and discontent with feminism. Is this still a problem? Has there been such a negative trend in feminism during the last

twenty years that there is no way for feminism to be successfully passed from one generation to the next anymore? Joan K. Buschman elaborates on the term “post feminist,” writing, “A post-feminist should have a weak collective orientation, primarily because she believes that it is unnecessary since ‘the war has already been won.’” Upon polling a group of women between the ages eighteen and twenty-three at my college, I found that this description is at least partially true for my generation, but that there was something missing as well. While many young women do not feel the fight is necessarily over, they do not know what the fight is about anymore. What are our Beijings and our Peace Trains? Is there room for activism with my generation, or has women’s studies become a strictly academic, passive, dying field? ....

A thorough education about women’s studies, combined with activism relevant to current world events, is the key to reviving the movement under the leadership of my generation of feminists. Rather than hand down older activist models, allow us to create our own. Last year’s Commission on the Status of Women ran like a progress report of Beijing. When will we evolve from this? We have had Beijing+15. Will we have a Beijing+25? While it is important to highlight the previous goals of the movement and make sure we achieve them, we must also make room for new goals. Beijing is certainly a movement worth preserving and continuing, but a fifth world conference on women would be an ideal solution to the “under twenty-five” dilemma.

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*Jasmine Witmer is a WILPF member living in Virginia and working on her BA in History and Women's Studies.*

SARA A. COOLEY

### Am I Woman Now? The Beijing Platform: A Coming of Age Story

At the 2010 Commission on the Status of Women NGO Forum, Beijing+15, there was a noticeable shift to a protective discourse regarding the 15-year-old Beijing Platform for Action by conceptualizing the Platform as a living 15-year-old girl. Gertrude Mongella, President of the Pan-African Parliament, spoke during the first day of the NGO Forum about our responsibility to uphold and protect this document “which we all agreed on” fifteen years ago....

“The Platform for Action agreed in September 1995 at the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing was a more highly contested text than any of the other international statements agreed at recent international conferences.” Fifteen years later, we face challenges questioning the effectiveness of the Platform and calls for a 5th World Conference on Women to address both new issues and those left out of the Platform 15 years ago. In some respects, these challenges have been met by aligning the nurturance and protectiveness of motherhood with the newly-conceptualized view of this document as a 15-year-old girl and confirming our commitment to the Platform by conceptualizing it as a daughter, born of the Beijing Conference, a girl who needed to be protected until she reached maturity. Celebration of the biological maturity, “coming of age” of a girl with the maturity of the Beijing Platform was present in many of the CSW dialogues. It was wielded by some as an answer to those critics who felt the momentum of the Beijing Platform had stalled and new discourses and a new World Conference on Women were needed to meet contemporary challenges. As such, reproductive capacity and life creating force of young women became politicized for the explicit purpose of defending a contested Global Platform for Action.

In my view, the use of a birth and motherhood metaphor at the CSW failed to unify women under a collective “Call to Action.” We are working to build diverse feminist coalitions, but there remains a continued desire to unify women under a common set of values and experiences, often based on motherhood. Although we struggle against maternal essentialism, I believe that the idea that all women are mothers, want to be mothers, or ought to be mothers is still pervasive. This can, and has, resulted in disagreement concerning the strategy of using motherhood to represent a universal feminist construct. The metaphor of the Beijing Platform presented as a 15-year-old girl essentializes women’s experience with the birth and body narrative, orienting a framework of advocacy and politics within the reproductive abilities of women, endowing a political document with a het-

ero-normative identity, and situating the Platform in an uneasy position to face a rescue narrative of the girl child. This is a dangerous statement. If we all accept the Beijing Platform as a teenage girl, who is now ready to create new life of her own, what message does this send to actual 15-year-old girls around the world? Bringing the Beijing Platform to life as the real girl child can be even more divisive. Aligning the Beijing Platform with the ability to give birth further reinforces a hetero-normative view of the Platform for Action....

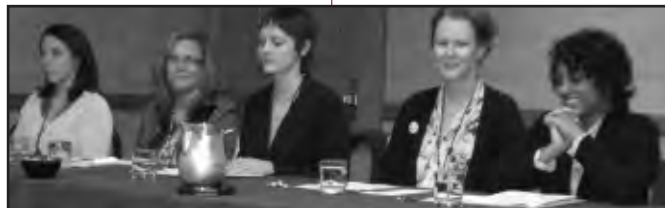
Sara A. Cooley, a Ph.D. student at University of California Santa Barbara, is a member of WILPF, Santa Barbara.

MINJON THOLEN

### The Case for Feminist Solidarity

In many parallel events at the CSW, young women were marginalized or not acknowledged. Our small numbers were explained as a lack of interest, or, as some explicitly stated, that there were no young women present. Like many other young women at the CSW, this made me feel not only invisible, but at times also actively denied. We sometimes even had to stand up and raise our hand to show that we were indeed present and are certainly interested and actively involved in this field. However, many were and are aware that the combination of the new energy and ideas of young women with the valuable experiences and accomplishments of the “seasoned” women’s rights activists will be an unstoppable force necessary for continued progress. It is therefore crucial to invest in active outreach and positive mentorship across generations to capitalize on this synergy, instead of being stifled by (real or perceived) differences and disconnects. WILPF’s Practicum in Advocacy at the U.N. is one such example, and there are many others, but more efforts are needed between generations, as well as among ethnicities and social classes, between Women’s Studies and organizations, and internationally....

One incident occurred during the NGO Forum that precedes the CSW, when two women were repeatedly silenced by panel and audience members who shushed and booed at them. These women were Muslims from Afghanistan, wore hijabs, were the first ones to rush to the microphones during the Q&A, and had a distinctly different communication style than most of the women present. When I talked to these two women afterwards, they expressed their frustration with the white, Western, middle class hegemony that placed them in an inferior position in which they were vulnerable to being silenced. Continued efforts to challenge and intervene into the reproduction of this hegemony are obviously essential,



From left to right: Jasmine Witmer, Christine Willingham, Deneil Hill, Sara Cooley, Minjon Tholen. Missing from this photo is Kristin Alder.

Photo: Laurie Belton

Continued on page 24 ➤



and some suggestions were expressed during the CSW. For instance, gatherings of international women's organizations and the CSW could be held on a different continent each year in order to increase accessibility for a wider variety of attendees. Furthermore, any hostility needs to be explicitly addressed to get to the core of the tensions, and attempts to focus on similarities rather than on differences – while also respecting diversity, such as in communication style and priorities in women's rights advocacy – need to be continued.

*Minjon Tholen, a citizen of the Netherlands, is a WILPF member and a recent M.A. graduate of the Department of Gender and Women's Studies at the University of Wisconsin Madison.*

**CHRISTINE M. WILLINGHAM**

### Implications of Communication Theory in Male-Dominated Structures

Social systems based on masculinity compel men's culture to differ from women's culture. These gendered role expectations require independence and autonomy in men and interdependence and relatedness in women.

Interdependence is defined as "seeing oneself as part of an encompassing social relationship...and recognizing that one's behavior is...organized by what the actor perceives to be the thoughts, feelings, and actions of others in the relationship."

Similarly, the moral orientation of women and men differ; men's ethic of justice understands individuals as "isolated, rational holders of equal rights," whereas the ethic of care, a feminine approach, is defined as "a vision of individuals" being "fundamentally embedded in relationships." N. Goldberger and J. M. Tarule, writing in *The Journal of Education*, observed women's "responsibility orientation" toward resolving conflict by "trying to understand the conflict in the context of each person's perspective, needs, and goals – and doing the best for everyone involved." . . .

At the 2010 Commission on the Status of Women meeting, student participants in the Practicum in Advocacy frequently observed women violating feminine norms for interaction. Women cut in line to secure a ticket to a closed event. Older women asserted their status and spoke of lifetime achievements. Women ignored time limits for speaking and others shouted from the audience for violators to step aside. Women criticized, rather than sought to understand, the event's organization, the selection of speakers, the theme for the meeting, the images on the poster representing the event, as well as each other. . . .

Senator Eve Bazaiba of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) (where women hold 4.6 percent, or five of the 108 Senate seats) spent an evening with our Practicum group. We gathered closely, sitting in chairs and on the floor, as we sought to understand the senator's world. She explained that men in the DRC often utter loud and boister-

ous "boos" to express disagreement with a speaker's viewpoint. As a result, women expressed to her their discomfort about speaking publicly. The Senator counsels women that the "boos" are an expression of disagreement and should be ignored. An article in *Public Opinion Quarterly* theorizes, "women may have problems with political communication... (as) conflict may be... problematic for women who are often more interdependent socially and thus less inclined to engage in activities that might 'rock the boat.'"

Women in the United States are "about 10 percent less likely to try to persuade someone to vote for their candidate than are males."

Women's reluctance to enter into civic debate may partially explain the low representation of U.S. women in civic leadership. In 2009, women held 17 percent of the seats in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives and 24 percent in state legislatures. The advancement of feminist ideals is dependent upon women entering public spheres of debate. The Practicum in Advocacy is a vital tool in preparing young women for civic participation.

As organizations like WILPF look to further their missions of peace and equality, we must ask, how do we bolster women's confidence and efficacy in arenas of civic debate? For this reason, it is important to understand the differences between masculine and feminine interaction patterns. Must women adopt masculine ideals of independence and "rational holders of rights" to effectively navigate masculine institutions? Alternatively, can women transform the ideology of masculine institutions? In my opinion, world peace depends not on a logic of rights, but on recognizing our interdependence. The strength women bring to civic debate is the knowledge that we are all connected.

*Christine M. Willingham is a WILPF member and adjunct faculty in the Department of Communication at Barry University.*

**KRISTIN ALDER**

### Local to National to Global: Re-engaging the State in Transnational Feminism

In the opening address of the United Nations' Fourth World Conference on Women, Gertrude Mongella, Secretary General of the conference, spoke of a "solidarity that binds us in our common experience, irrespective of race, color, and religion." Her sentiments echo those of many post-colonial feminists who theorize about "the myriad of ways that women who may never meet can draw strength from each other and organize across differences," united ultimately by a desire for social justice. In this sense, "solidarity across 'often conflictual locations and histories' derives from 'the political links we choose to make among and between struggles.'"

Within the context and rhetoric of global and transnational feminisms, the most contentious struggles are those that evolve from the cultural constructions of race, ethnicity, religion, class, gender, and/or sexuality. And, while femi-

nism has contributed to a vital re-conception of these points of difference, the cultural constructions of “nationalism, nations, states, empires, and imperialism are no less crucial” in the pursuit of solidarity and social justice in this century....

[S]tates and their implicit power are not declining in the twenty-first century. Instead, they are merely reconfiguring to fall in line with the flow of all forms of capital: monetary, material, and intellectual. This fact must be of particular interest to the global women's movement, as it not only attempts to construct sustaining strategies that “insert grass-roots interests in national, international, and global” contexts, but must also contend with the continued significance of national borders and the sovereignty of the nation-state within the United Nations system. The building of global to local coalitions cannot hope to bypass the political and cultural discourses of the nation-states. Critical feminist analysis must “attend to the flexible and intricate cultural practices of nation-states whose powers are re-enacted and re-imagined in line with global capitalism.”

In the United States, it is these re-imagined borders of the nation-state that justifies criminalizing sex trafficking across national borders, yet ignores the practice within them, that disputes one's constitutional rights as a natural-born citizen in the course of a contentious political discourse on immigration, or that places a woman's right to choose at the crux of the battle for healthcare. Women's empowerment cannot be achieved without strategic and purposeful interface with the nation-state. It must be acknowledged that feminism itself cannot be limited by a binary construction that places its discourse beyond the reach of the nation-state by positing it as global or local. Instead, it must be continually reconfigured and renegotiated at each specific context....

*Kristin Alder is a WILPF member and a graduate student in Women's Studies at the University of North Texas.*

## **DENEIL K. HILL**

### **Making the Experiences of Women Visible**

As Dr. Jean Quataert, a leading human rights historian wrote, “a crucial dilemma that has accompanied women's efforts to negotiate their role and place in movements for change and liberation [is that] full integration into the movement can lead to the submergence of women's specific interests and needs while a separate mobilization safeguarding these issues is easily marginalized.” Her statement clearly defines the complicated issue of gender mainstreaming that has troubled the feminist movement for decades and that continues to be an evident issue within both the United Nations and the academic field of Women's Studies. Gender mainstreaming is a strategy for promoting gender equality by both incorporating gender issues and a gender perspective into all agendas and increasing the participation of women in decision making processes.

Feminists have had to grapple with questions like: Is gender mainstreaming the best thing for pursuing women's

equality and human rights? And, if so, how do we best implement it? While I do not believe that there is one single right answer to these questions, I do believe that if women's groups monopolize the discourse on women's issues, intentionally or unintentionally, women's rights will never fully be recognized....

Some academics believe there are many benefits to discussing women's issues within the realm of Women's Studies courses or women's entities such as the CSW. I see it as self-marginalization. When education on women's issues remains confined to the arena of women's studies, other areas of higher education remain gender-blind. Felice Gaer believes “the greatest struggle [in women's equality] has been simply to make the human rights of women visible.”

This is precisely what Makerere University in Uganda found. While their Department of Women and Gender Studies acted as the gender focal point, many other areas of the University remained gender-blind as consequence. In 2002, Makerere created an entire department dedicated to gender mainstreaming with the goal of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment throughout the university. As the first university in the Commonwealth to try the gender mainstreaming approach, Makerere has been successful at implementing gender awareness and analysis in the university's courses, activities, research, and space. This has increased accessibility for women into higher education in Uganda and allowed the university to become more inclusive of its female students, faculty, and staff. Some schools have looked to Makerere as a framework for successful implementation of gender mainstreaming into university policy.

My interest in gender mainstreaming was further ignited at the CSW with a discussion about a new gender equality entity: the U.N. Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (U.N. Women). While gender mainstreaming inside the U.N. has been more successful than in academia, it still leaves much to be desired. Proponents of this new gender entity claimed that it will better advocate for women's rights worldwide. However, I believe it indicates a loss in diversification across the United Nations in the advancement in women's equality, and thus a loss of visibility.

One article published about this new entity stated, “In the past, there was no central body that consolidated the different efforts of the U.N. in a holistic and integrated plan. While this posed a challenge, it also created various opportunities. Now, U.N. Women consolidates all initiatives by the various U.N. bodies and interlinks all efforts both at the normative framework and operational levels. This is good for systematization and organization but it also means that we lose the diversity and variety of opportunities that were once accessible to a large range of women's organizations.” I am troubled by this loss in opportunities and am skeptical of whether or not the gains outweigh the losses....

*Deneil Hill is a WILPF member. She lives in Binghamton, NY where she attends graduate school.*



## Anna Aschenback (1922-2011)

While receiving the Dr. Alice Hamilton Peace and Freedom Award, given by New Haven County WILPF, Anna Aschenbach suffered a stroke, and died the next day; she was 88. An active WILPF member for decades, a war tax resister, a

peace activist, and a staunch advocate of civil rights and equality for people of color, Anna was born in Nanking, China, of American teaching missionaries. She joined a pacifist group during World War II, lived for two years in an intentional community devoted to simplicity, and attended yearly Hiroshima vigils on the village green in New Haven.

A committed war tax resister, Anna was recently involved in organizing for three important causes: the Bus Stop Removal Project; exposing the mass rapes and murders in the Democratic Republic of Congo; and a local SPEAK OUT protesting the violation of immigrant women in the U.S.

After seeing the 1972 photo of 9-year-old Kim Phuc, running down a road in Vietnam with her napalm-covered back in flames, Anna wrote the poem, "Children First," which she read in 2002 at the Yale Peabody Museum Celebration for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. When Kim Phuc came to the U.S. in 2010, Anna met her and they spoke at length about war, forgiveness, and the struggle for peace. Anna's poem is reprinted here. ❖

Reprinted from *The New Haven Independent*. Full obituary is available at [http://newhavenindependent.org/index.php/archives/entry/local\\_activist\\_anna\\_aschenbach\\_dies/id\\_33185](http://newhavenindependent.org/index.php/archives/entry/local_activist_anna_aschenbach_dies/id_33185)

## ► PRESIDENTS *Continued from page 3*

gathering, a young woman regretted that "we had never made any explicit spaces for self disclosure and discussion of individual's various social positions." Young WILPF (YWILPF), a commitment to young women made by the 2005-2008 Board, requested to be relieved of their Board positions, and with the by-law changes adopted in December 2010, the designated young WILPF seats have been replaced by two "board member at large" seats not restricted by age, race, ethnicity, or any other diversity marker. Unlike the designated YWILPF seats, these new "board member at large" positions require two years of continuous WILPF membership of those who would run for them. This requirement meant that some young women who would have wanted to run for the national board were unable to do so in this year's election cycle.

Still, as this issue of *Peace and Freedom* makes clear, young women want to affiliate with WILPF and are seeking ways to pursue their political activism through WILPF. Is it important that we hold a special place for them, and women of color, and lesbians, within our organization? Or, it is better to simply let them find their ways within the structures as they exist?

## CHILDREN FIRST

The flaming girl keeps running to my eyes.  
No tears of mine can slake her searing back.  
She runs from all the place names we don't know  
Until the war maps spread across the page.  
The napalm makers profit and get fat.  
The flaming girl keeps running to my eyes.

I almost long for bombings that will end  
When blasted buildings reach their thund'rous fall.  
Their dead are counted; new work can replace  
The dwellings. But unseen in rural paths  
The mines are hidden, waiting past the time  
When bureaucrats write ceasefires and shake hands.  
The pucks are planted for the playful child;  
For generations they withhold their blasts.  
Legs blow off near Leon, arms in Kabul.  
The landmine makers gather in the loot.  
Still screaming girls run flaming to my eyes.

Forked tongue is speaking and our children hear.  
Preach peace at Christmas. U.S. Number One.  
Get Saddam; he's the TV man to break.  
In Baghdad hospitals the children stare.  
Our values keep our children sound and safe.  
War rapist's child and mother are repulsed.  
The desert vets are giving birth to freaks.  
Irradiated parents' kids get ill.

Agent Orange companies get rich.  
Chiapas mountain children starve and freeze.  
Still flaming Viet girls run into our eyes.

Kids call in worldwide schoolyards: "It's not fair!"

They grasp the concept, and they know the harm.  
In Seoul, Soweto, Gaza streets are filled  
With pupils striking for their rightful share.  
The students know elites make war for gain,  
To keep resources under their control.  
We struggle hand in hand against the wars.  
We join our strengths to seek our common need  
To grow with justice, live in humane space,  
Where never amputees are shut from life,  
Where never girls run flaming to our eyes. ❖

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While the 2005-08 Board accepted the challenge of restructuring WILPF to better reflect our commitments to racial and economic justice and inclusion of young women, some of the avenues we struggled to put into place have already been closed by the 2008-11 Board, demonstrating just how fragile the project of inclusion is within WILPF. Succeeding a Board that itself got whiter, older, and straighter over its term, the 2011-14 Board will need to be committed and vigilant from the very beginning if the commitments to democracy, diversity, and open participation animating the recent past are to bear fruit sufficient to sustain and grow WILPF. ❖



➤ **PEACE WOMEN** *Continued from page 16*

**Madeline Duckles** (East Bay) at 94. **Val Mullen** (Montpelier) continued to cover nuclear issues in her *Eye on Congress* alerts. **Shirley Lin Kinoshita** (San Jose) led the Raging Grannies protests at Lockheed. **Joan Drake, Ellen Thomas, Jay Marx** (all Washington D.C.) and **Linda Richards** (Ashland) attended the annual Hiroshima-Nagasaki observances in Japan.

Life member **Jackie Cabasso** (USA at-large), Western States Legal Foundation Executive Director, works tirelessly as facilitator of the UFPJ nuclear weapons abolition group. Their most successful joint project in 2010 was organizing the International NGO Conference at Riverside Church the weekend before the NPT. U.S. WILPF members helped plan and sponsored a workshop on nuclear power. Thirty-one WILPFers (including new members in the WILPF NPT Practicum) attended the conference; 800 delegates from around the world discussed nuclear weapons issues and called for beginning negotiations now on an abolition treaty.

**Ellen Thomas** never gave up in the darkest times. She stayed with her husband **William Thomas** in a tent outside the gates of the White House for 18 years, reminding every President and thousands of passersby of the atrocity of Hiroshima-Nagasaki bombings.

In the 1980s, she left the tent to organize a successful Washington, D.C. initiative to call for nuclear weapons abolition. Ellen joined WILPF in 2007, and in 2010, with the help of D.C. Branch and a WILPF mini-grant, Ellen and member **Jay Marx** organized a walk from the U.S. Capitol building to the United Nations in New York in support of the NPT Review Conference.

**Margaret Harrington Tamulonis**, with her Branch launched a petition in 2009 asking Congress to declare August 6 “Nuclear Disarmament Day.” The Burlington Mayor was the first to proclaim the day in 2008. In 2009 the Vermont legislature followed suit. Ten WILPF Branches have also circulated the petition and it is past time for all of us to join the campaign! Margaret has also been an active campaigner against nuclear power in Vermont. The Vermont Legislature has now refused to authorize the expansion of the Vermont Yankee power plant and instead voted to shut it down.

**Jean Verthein** (New York Metro), one of two U.S. WILPF representatives at the U.N. in New York, has worked to create an overview of U.S. WILPF work to resist a taxpayer-funded “nuclear power renaissance.”

WILPF members **Bobbie Paul** (Georgia WAND Executive Director), **Judith Mohling** (Colorado Rocky Mountain Peace and Justice Center), and **Joni Arends** (New Mexico Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety Executive Director) all came to WILPF through Alliance for Nuclear Accountability Network (ANA). All seek nuclear weapons abolition and have much to teach us. Bobbie works to close Georgia nuclear power projects and to stop production of tritium at the Savannah River site and

at nuclear power plants across the nation. Tritium especially attacks women’s reproductive systems and their children. Judith helped shut down the lethal government Rocky Flats site and now works to prevent opening the “cleaned” site to the public. Deadly plutonium dust remains and can still kill those who breathe in a single particle. Joni’s organization works to end Los Alamos National Laboratory airborne and liquid radioactive and chemical waste entering the environment at levels as much as 38 times higher than is determined safe for human beings.

**Peg Gallagher**, WILPF’s only member in Omaha, Nebraska, is 92 years old. But age doesn’t stop Peg from participating in Catholic Worker “die ins” or from blocking entrances to Omaha’s Strategic Command (Strat Com) national conferences for top military officers and their contractors. Strat Com has long been the government center for nuclear warfare planning and now oversees space warfare plans as well. When given the Gandhi award by a local organization Peg said, with twinkling blue eyes, that she hopes police will give her a motorcycle ride next time they arrest her.

**MacGregor Eddy**, (Monterey), a nurse horrified by nuclear weapons and missile “defense” testing supervised by Strategic Command at Vandenberg AFB, has organized WILPF co-sponsored vigils – including direct action

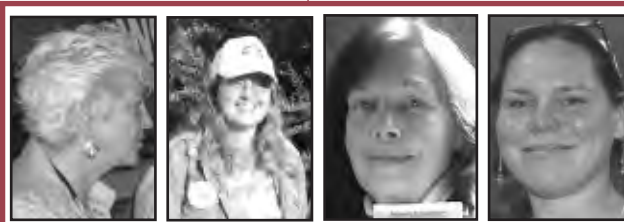
– at the base since 2004. Monterey Branch now has a mini-grant to help with transportation to the base to protest testing of (unarmed) Minute Man III nuclear ICBMs.

**Susi Snyder** (USA) began working on abolition as a teenager, assisting Nevada Shoshone in their struggle to remove uranium mining and the Nevada test site from their lands. In her early 20s, Susi joined RCW and at twenty-eight became Secretary General of WILPF, based in the Geneva office (2004-2010).

Eighty percent of nuclear industry sites are on indigenous lands. **Linda Richards** (Ashland) attended as an observer the international conference of indigenous peoples seeking to expel nuclear industries from their lands. It was called by the Dine’ (Navajo) whose ban on uranium mining is ignored by the U.S. government. Linda brought us this Dine’ creation myth:

*In the beginning Dine’ were given the choice of two yellow powders and chose the yellow dust of corn pollen. The Great Spirit noted their wisdom and instructed them to leave the other yellow powder in the soil, and never to dig it up; if it were taken from underground, a great evil would come. The Dine’ now recognize that powder as uranium.*

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*Carol Urner, WILPF Program Co chair, received an award from Alliance for Nuclear Accountability, in April. She accepted it on behalf of WILPF.*



**Just a few of WILPF’s many determined women: Left to right: Gillian Gilhool, Ellen Barfield, Margaret Harrington Tamulonis, and Suzi Snyder.**



## ► **DEMOCRACY** *Continued from page 13*

collapse of our manufacturing base and loss of jobs was a purposeful step to reduce the voice and power of labor. As secure, middle class jobs evaporated, corporate profits skyrocketed thanks to the glut of cheap labor and lack of regulations in developing nations like Mexico, China, and India. American workers found they had to “compete” for jobs with people working for as little \$3 a day. In this light, free-trade champions like the Koch brothers are indeed correct when they claim that labor unions are an impediment to competition. As Adele Stan, in “Wisconsin Is a Battleground Against the Billionaire Koch's Plan to Break Labor's Back,” emphasizes, “this is another planned assault on labor.”<sup>2</sup> If you deny collective bargaining rights, wages and benefits can be pushed down, setting the bar lower for the private sector, while insuring corporate profits will rise. This is exactly the “race to the bottom” free traders endorse.

### **THE BOLIVARIAN REVOLUTION: LESSONS FOR AMERICAN WORKERS TODAY?**

Since the 1970s, Latin America has been the laboratory for neo-liberal policies. To qualify for development loans from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, Latin American leaders had to agree to the draconian conditions of Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs). Governments were required to “structurally adjust” their core economic priorities by shifting spending on essential public services to the private sector. Inevitably these policies undermined local agriculture and food sovereignty, and led to rising costs of water, sanitation, transportation, energy, education, and healthcare. Subsidies and incentives went to the private sector to increase exports to First World markets to earn dollars to repay the loans, but also for agricultural and other imports from the First World.

Combined with centuries of poverty, the impact of SAPs gave rise to powerful social movements led by indigenous peoples and peasants that brought new governments to power in Venezuela, Ecuador, and Bolivia, and laid the foundation for the Bolivarian Alliance. For the first time, assemblies had been created by popular referenda to draft new constitutions passed by large majorities that were blueprints for fundamental political and economic reforms.

The stage was set in Venezuela when Hugo Chávez founded the Revolutionary Bolivarian Movement-200 in 1982, which after years of organizing propelled him to a landslide victory in 1998. A new constitution was passed by nearly 80 percent of the population in late 1999 that included renaming the country the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, celebrating Bolívar as folk hero and liberator of Venezuela from colonial rule. Rafael Correa was elected President of Ecuador in 2006, and its constitution, passed in 2008, was the first in the world to recognize legally enforceable Rights of Nature. In Bolivia, Evo Morales was leader of the Movement for Socialism (MAS), and MAS was involved in the successful protests in 2000 to expel the

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## **What threatens our democracy is its step-by-step replacement with what may be called a “corporatocracy.”**

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San Francisco-based Bechtel Corporation from Cochabamba and stop the water privatization that was depriving the people of a basic necessity for life.<sup>3</sup> After Morales, was elected President and a new Constitution approved in 2009, he declared his mission accomplished to “re-found” Bolivia.

To counter the neo-liberal Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA) of 2003, which would have integrated all countries of the Americas from northern Canada to Argentina, President Chávez initiated the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA), integrating Latin America and Caribbean countries on their own terms. Later, in September 2009, Chávez helped create the Bank of the South, and rather than agree to the IMF and WB loans and their essentially suicidal “conditions,” ALBA aims to introduce a new regional currency. Most recently, in late 2009, people from 26 Latin American nations launched the Bolivarian Continental Movement in Caracas, Venezuela to support continued reforms throughout the region.

### **BUILDING REAL DEMOCRACY IN THE UNITED STATES**

With greater economic and political integration of this region, U.S. political and corporate interests are deeply concerned about their diminishing influence. Furthermore, as these presidents carry out a range of social reforms and assert state control over natural resources and international energy corporations, critics label these policies “socialist” and assert they are threats to democracy and capitalism, even though these leaders were democratically elected and the new constitutions approved by significant majorities.

What threatens our democracy is its step-by-step replacement with what may be called a “corporatocracy.” The cumulative impacts of neo-liberal policies in this country – advanced by both the Democratic and Republican parties - have destroyed the hopes, dreams, health, and livelihood of many millions. Meanwhile, the wealthy and corporate elites prosper and gain greater influence over our democratic system and government regulations. The Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission Report makes clear that the Wall Street crisis was brought on by irresponsible deregulation of financial services – a fundamental principle of neo-liberal economics.

Now, the same private sector forces that caused the crisis argue that the private sector can more efficiently deliver public services, that public infrastructure, such as buildings, water and sanitation systems, highways and bridges, must

*Continued on next page* ►

## ► PORTLAND

*Continued from page 12*

The Portland production opened in late September, ran for 22 performances in six weeks, was seen by approximately 700 people, and frequently received full houses. The production was widely reviewed in the local press, including a thoughtful and positive column in the daily *Oregonian* before the opening.

There was also a negative opinion piece in a *Sunday Oregonian*, authored by a spokesman for the local Jewish Federation who argued that Rachel Corrie “chose to put her life in danger for a cause in which she believed” and lamented that plays do not commemorate the lives of Jewish women who “didn’t choose to have their lives cut short by Palestinian terrorists.”

Audience members stayed for post-show discussions after nearly every performance. A local Rabbi led a particularly lively and respectful one after a Sunday matinee. Many participants, including Jews, observed that it is a mistake to equate criticism of Israel’s actions with anti-Semitism, and that much Israeli treatment of Palestinians contradicts the most basic Jewish traditions and ideals.

Once Three Good Friends announced the production, no organized opposition ever materialized.

The cast and crew have now been invited to perform the play in Amman, Jordan during the summer of 2011. The four benefit performances will raise funds to build a rehabilitation ward for children of war at Al Ahli Arab hospital in Gaza. It will be named the Rachel Corrie Wing.

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**Rachel was a talented writer and an extraordinary young woman and for many she represents the best of humanity. Through her desire to transform others’ suffering, she is a role model for young people everywhere.**

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**Rachel Corrie**

*Photo: courtesy of the Corrie family*

Rachel was a talented writer and an extraordinary young woman and for many she represents the best of humanity. Through her desire to transform others’ suffering, she is a role model for young people everywhere.

Like Fitzgerald, McLaughlin and the Portland Branch, the director was inspired by Rachel’s story: “I hope that through this production people will see that we all need to be a ‘Rachel Corrie,’ someone who fights to improve the lives of those around us, no matter the cost; I want it to wake people up, inspire them to question what they know about the world and go seeking the answers for themselves.”

The cast, crew, and producers hope that the Amman trip does come about, and that their work will have a direct benefit for the children of Gaza.

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*Jean Fitzgerald and Anne McLaughlin are long time activists and Portland WILPF members.*

## ► DEMOCRACY *Continued from page 28*

be sold-off or leased long-term for 60 or 90 years to provide income to cash-strapped municipal and state governments, that vital environmental and public health regulations should be struck down to make U.S. business more “competitive,” and that the public workers should suffer “structural readjustment” of their wages, benefits, and bargaining rights to pay for the economic crisis they did not create and the debts they did not incur.

If, in the U.S., we want a true democracy with a representative government that serves the people and protects the ecosystems on which all life depends, we must build and sustain a movement to challenge the neo-liberal model that is the foundation of the corporatocracy and work for real systemic change. In Latin America, people took this bold step when they rewrote their constitutions.

In this country, we must take equally bold steps to end

corporate rule and restore sovereignty to the people. WILPF’s Corporations v Democracy Issue Committee is one among a handful of groups at the forefront of the movement to educate people about the history of corporate personhood and the insidious growth of corporate constitutional rights. The goal is to amend the U.S. Constitution and return rule to “We, the People” by revoking corporate personhood and removing all corporate constitutional rights.

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*Nancy Price is a member of the Save the Water Issue Committee.*

<sup>1</sup> Brenden Fischer, “Where’s the Budget Crisis?”, post at Center for Media and Democracy:

<http://www.prwatch.org/news/2011/02/9957/where-budget-crisis>

<sup>2</sup> Adele Stan, AlterNet, Feb. 18, 2011 at <http://www.alternet.org/story/149965>

<sup>3</sup> Nancy Price, “Water Justice and Democracy: From Dream to Reality,” *Peace & Freedom* (Fall 2007), 4.





# BranchAction News

*Edited by Georgia Pinkel*

## WILPF IS DOING BIG THINGS ALL AROUND THE COUNTRY.

We got a mention in *The Nation*, thanks to the work of the Corporations v Democracy Issue Committee/Move to Amend; the Advancing Human Rights Issue Committee is being revived and working with the International Violence Against Women Coalition; and, thanks to WILPF mini-grants, both Issue Committees and branches are spreading their wings. As we head toward Congress this June, more collaboration and cross-pollination is the rule rather than the exception. Conference calls at all hours are getting the work done.

## LOTS OF NEWS FROM ALL OVER

We have news from 31 different branches, published in many formats. Check out **San Jose's** website for their latest: [www.wilpfsanjose.org](http://www.wilpfsanjose.org); **Des Moines** has mastered the local E-Blast! Sign up or download these publications to spark your branch's events and planning. This is the largest crop of contributions yet!

## BEST PRACTICE

**Des Moines** staged "I Miss Democracy," a street action at the local farmers market, to educate around Citizens United and Move to Amend. Dressed as Beauty Queens — some in evening wear and long gloves — they handed out over 1,500 educational pieces. **Des Moines** reprints published "Letters to the Editor" written by its members. **Cape Cod** actually budgets for their upcoming programs! **L.A.** asks, "Do you know what the Millennium Goals are?" **Boston's** Raging Grannies participated in the Gender & Peace Studies series at Wellesley College and have an active Congo Action Network. **Bloomington, IN**, hosted the National WILPF Fall Board meeting—Thanks, Deb. **Mid-Missouri** is circulating an initiative petition to make Columbia, MO a "taser-free zone," and donated to the Women's Shelter. **Central Vermont** opens its meetings with song and dance! **Santa Cruz** offers a WILPF canvas tote bag (e-mail [dove@wilpf.got.net](mailto:dove@wilpf.got.net) to get one). View seven video productions at **San Jose's** Joan Bazar's website: [www.48south7th.org/contact.html](http://www.48south7th.org/contact.html). **CA** held a cluster meeting exploring connecting branches to international sections (sister units).



Jan Burns, Des Moines branch, dressed as "I Miss Democracy" at a July 4th concert held at the Iowa state capitol.

Photo: Robert Brammer, Des Moines

## FUN EVENTS

Want to prompt greater participation, higher profiles, and new members: garden parties, pot lucks, vigils, celebration dinners, video nights, study groups, parades, regional meetings, and book clubs. Advertise meetings on Craigslist, Facebook, newspapers, and public access TV. Send as many as possible to the WILPF Congress in June; use SMART or SWOT planning methods; organize JAPA Book Awards events; hold annual overnight/fun planning retreats; and reach out to youth.

## SPECIAL PEOPLE

At the Third Annual Strong Feisty Woman Award event, **Des Moines** honored State Senator Pam Jochum and their own past-president, Maggie Rawland, and heard David Cobb on ending corporate personhood. Jim and Tomi Allison of Bloomington, IN spent many dusty hours researching the origin of the corporate personhood case, unearthing proof of scandalous Supreme Court corruption. Request an email copy from Marybeth Gardam ([mbgardam@gmail.com](mailto:mbgardam@gmail.com)). **East Bay, CA** hosted Congressional Representative Barbara Lee and Aileen Hernandez to address various aspects of human rights and anti-war actions. **Minnesota Metro** was named *2010 Changemakers* by the Minnesota Women's Press for promoting greater equality, justice, and self-determination for their work with the Women and Water Rights exhibit. **Boston** helped launch Kristen E. Gwinn's book (*see below*). In **Indianapolis**, Cindy Sheehan spoke on public actions opposing the wars. **Central Vermont** remembered Carlene Bagnall (1924-2010), college professor and civil rights/peace activist. **Cape Cod** shared the poetry of Kenneth Patchen, *Poems of Humor and Protest, 1954: I Don't Want to Startle You, but they are going to kill most of us*. **St Louis's** Yvonne and Joe Logan host an annual "almost New Year's Eve party" (12/29) and share memories of the past year, photos, poems, and new year's hopes. Happy 100th B-day to **L.A.'s** Vivien Myerson. **Pittsburgh's** Edith Bell had her editorial "War Spending isn't helping our World" published in the *Pittsburgh Post Gazette*.

## CALENDAR EVENTS

**Portland** participated in the End Afghanistan War March/Rally/Teach-in on a rainy Saturday, October 9. **Cantonville, MD** WILPFers went for a freezing walk in the MLK parade in Baltimore ([www.catonville.patch.com](http://www.catonville.patch.com)). Move to Amend/ Corporations v Democracy is marking the Citizens United anniversary around the country: **PDX, Des Moines, Tucson, Los Angeles** (teach-in and demonstration at the Koch Bros. event at Ranch Mirage); **Cape Cod** (rally); and **East Bay** (two Oakland rallies). **Vermont** and **Monterey County** each led study groups on Corporate Power; Monterey's went on to form a local of Alliance for Democracy. **Ashland** marched in the local gay pride parade dressed in 1915 garb to honor our founders and their work for social justice. **Essex County, NJ** staged an early Day of Peace event, while **Detroit** hosted sneak previews of film

maker M.T. Silva's *Atomic Mom* documentary ([www.atomicmom.org](http://www.atomicmom.org)). **Tucson** held traditional holiday vigils in November and December to promote peaceful gift choices at Toys "R" Us and Wal-Mart. **Santa Barbara** still demonstrates on Tax Day against war budgets. **Monterey County** likes to march in parades – MLK, 4th of July, and also supported MacGregor Eddy's trips to continue demonstrations at Vandenberg AF Base. **St. Louis** participated locally in the National 12/16 "Stop The Wars" Action, following the November "Women Say No to NATO" purple T-shirt action in London by WILPF and Women in Black.



Dressed in 1915 garb to honor WILPF founders, Ashland, OR members marched in Ashland's first Gay Pride Parade on October 9. Participants wore banners to demonstrate WILPF has been working for social justice since it began. Photo: Keri Seidel

#### LOCAL ACTIONS ON NATIONAL, INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

**Portland** hosted the Advancing Women as Peacemakers both in Portland and Vancouver. **Catonsville, Des Moines, Tucson, Santa Barbara, Indianapolis, and Santa Cruz** all showed *Silent Scream*. Ten **Tucson** WILPFers rotate through six parts to present *Seven Jewish Children*, an eleven-minute play performing locally and collecting donations for Medical Aid for Palestinians. **Metro Minnesota** issued a statement "condemning the FBI raids on the homes of antiwar activists in Minneapolis and other U.S. cities." **L.A. and Pittsburgh** hosted performances of "Coming in Hot" with our own Jeanmarie Simpson – fourteen stories about women in the military. **Boston** sent members to Washington, D.C. for the One Nation Rally and met with International Co-Presidents Anne-Lise Ebbe and Amparo Guerrero. **Greeley, CO** is active in many aspects of their local ethnic communities – Latino, Native American, Burmese, East Indian, and East African – and low income women, and environmental action against the local uranium mine. They are starting a film series on immigration; they work to support the local food bank. **Triangle, NC** formed Triangle WILPF Youth Activists Scholarship Fund to provide leadership training opportunities to work for social change in the area. **St. Louis** co-sponsored a panel on "Taxes, the Deficit and Permanent War" and lobbied local Congressional Representatives. **Santa Cruz** heard a report on members' trip to Haiti. Read their report online at <http://www.haitisolidarity.net/article.php?id=188>.

#### LOCAL ISSUES/EDUCATION

**Metro Minnesota** continued work on "women and water" with a series about local water resources, Women as the Center of the Solution, and Sustainable Food Security. Besides co-sponsoring a local Single Payer Conference keyed by Rep. John Conyers, **Portland** will also lend its name to two events on the "Mental Health Epidemic: the long-term effect of psychiatric medications." **Tucson** is working against the attack on ethnic studies and critical literacy programs in Arizona schools, an agenda to substitute for-profit charter schools. **Peninsula/Palo Alto** co-sponsored a nine-day, three-city UNA Film Festival with the theme "Population-Migration-Globalization" from sixty countries and six continents. **Santa Cruz** participated in the Move your Money Campaign to counteract "too-big to fail" financial organizations' influence in local communities.

#### PEACE ACTIONS

**Tucson** held an Israel-Palestine Film Series with discussion (See [www.wilpftucson.org](http://www.wilpftucson.org)). **Monterey County** held a symposium on torture at the Monterey Institute of International Studies on 9/11. **Boston** showed the anti-nuclear weapons video, *Down to Zero*. **Central Vermont** joined opposition to the Defense Logistics Agency looking for local businesses to make parts for vehicles, guns, and ships. They carried signs asking for jobs in schools, housing, green energy – not war. **Santa Cruz** participated in the 3rd Annual Human Rights Fair commemorating Human Rights Day and actively supports the Pastors for Peace Cuba Caravan.

#### WHAT WE'RE READING

*Black and Blue* - Anna Quinlan  
*Conversations with Terrorists: Middle East Leaders on Politics, Violence and Empire* – Reese Erlich  
*Emily Greene Balch: The Long Road to Internationalism* – Kristen E. Gwinn  
*Jane Addams: Spirit in Action* – Louise W. Knight  
*No Ordinary Times* – Doris Kearns Goodwin  
*The Tipping Point; How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference* – Malcolm Gladwell  
*Washington Rules: America's Path to Permanent War* – Andrew J. Bacevich

#### Dear friends,

A super issue of *Peace & Freedom* (Fall, 2010). I'm reading every word and getting lots of ideas. 1.63 cubic feet of nuclear waste would fill what stadium!?! ("Nuclear Power and the Hidden World of Radioactive Waste" by Jean E. Verthein, page 19).

We Midwesterners think bigger than that—even when I was at U of Mich it held 90,000 people.

Love to all.

Yvonne Logan



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### IN SPIRIT, JANE ADDAMS IS EVERYWHERE

In Tucson, she tends a booth at a Jane Addams Peace Award Books stand (page 20). You can hear her story at AWP's website (page 6).

Catch the Jane Addams spirit!  
Renew your WILPF membership today.  
See page 17.



#### GOING? OR EVEN IF YOU AREN'T

Your financial support is important in helping WILPF Sections from the global south and developing nations get to Congress. WILPF can only make good decisions at the international level if the convening body is truly representative of our global reach. But women in some parts of the world have much more limited access to the money international travel requires. In 2009, WILPF US established an International Travel Fund to support the Secretariat in Geneva in meeting the funding requests of those Sections in need of support.

Please consider a donation to help meet this critical need. Give online at [www.wilpf.org](http://www.wilpf.org) (choose International Travel Fund from the pulldown menu on the Donate page) or use the envelope enclosed in this issue of *Peace and Freedom* to mail your gift. Your generosity will help equalize access to WILPF's Congress and strengthen the connections among us all, thereby strengthening WILPF's voice for justice and peace everywhere.

## AN INVITATION TO ATTEND WILPF'S 2011 INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

The Costa Rican Section of WILPF extends a warm invitation to you to be part of WILPF's International Congress in San José. The International Congress, WILPF's highest decision-making body, is open to all current members. The next International Congress will not occur until 2015, when we will meet back at The Hague, where it all began, to celebrate WILPF's 100th birthday.

The 2011 Congress will open with a Gertrude Baer seminar for new members (or members new to WILPF International Congress) on Saturday, July 30, and close with the seating of a new International Board and Executive Committee on Saturday, August 5. In between, you'll attend seminars on the core pillars shaping WILPF's work for the previous four years, and on topics that will galvanize our work going forward. You'll have opportunities to join international working groups and committees, which meet face-to-face at the Congress but online or via Skype in the intervening years. You will discuss WILPF's structure, governance, and witness the election of new officers. In between, there will be opportunities for sightseeing and more informal cultural (and political) exchange.

Register online at <http://wilpfcongress2011.wordpress.com/>. Direct questions to Congress coordinator Karin Friedrich at [congress@wilpf.ch](mailto:congress@wilpf.ch). ❖

Photo: John M. Myers