

Community Coalition for Social Justice
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Update - 29 January 2003

I. CCSJ PROJECTS:

Civil Rights Team Project

The CCSJ Steering Committee sent a letter to Attorney General Darrell McGraw to express our support for the Civil Rights Team Project, with copies to Howard Persinger, Jr., president of the State Board of Education, State Superintendent of Schools David Stewart, Governor Bob Wise, and Assistant Attorney General Paul Sheridan.

According to President Persinger, in response to our letter, "The West Virginia Board of Education is currently taking an in-depth look at this initiative. Please understand that the Board is very concerned with protecting all of our students. The Board has made it a priority to have thorough knowledge about this initiative and how all initiatives enter our school system."

On January 18, the Martin Luther King, Jr., West Virginia Holiday Commission honored the Civil Rights Team Project on its Honor Roll of Service Organizations as part of the Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday celebration. Organizations honored must "demonstrate one or more of the principles Dr. King advocated: promote humanitarian and civil rights, assist under-represented communities and groups, promote tolerance and/or resolve conflict in a nonviolent way. In addition, these actions must be performed in an exemplary manner and not as part of the organization's routine duties," according to the *Dominion Post* (20 January). Other organizations honored this year were the WVU Academic Partnership for Minority Teaching Fellows, the Southern Appalachian Labor School, the Opportunities Industrialization Center of Charleston, and the Charleston Economic and Community Development Corp.

Then, a few days later, the *Dominion Post* reported that the West Virginia Attorney General's Office has decided to withdraw support for the Civil Rights Team Project. We will keep you posted as we know more about this project.

Social Justice Books/Videos

We will soon be distributing books to the Monongalia County schools who responded to our offer to buy books for their libraries from the collection we purchased for the Morgantown Public Library.

When you go to the Morgantown Public Library next time, check out the engraved plaques that are on the range of shelves on the 2nd floor that has books in the nonfiction area, with call numbers of 331-344. There are 2 plaques to recognize our contribution. One says "Community Coalition for Social Justice to promote tolerance and a commitment to justice in our community. 2002" The other says "Community

Coalition for Social Justice in honor of Emily A. Spieler. 2002” This wording reflects the wording in the book plates for our donation. Our plaques are next to one that recognizes the contributions from T.R.U.T.H. (a Muslim group) and the Islamic Center of Morgantown.

Steering Committee Update

Julie Greene has had to resign from the steering committee because of work conflicts. We appreciate her many contributions to our work.

II. PLEASE SEND YOUR DUES AND IDEAS!

If you have not yet done so, please send your dues so that we have the resources to continue our work. **Dues are \$5 for individuals and \$25 for organizations.** Youth under the age of 18 are free. Please send your checks, payable to CCSJ, to PO Box 160, Morgantown, WV 26507-0160.

Please send your web site suggestions to Mike Attfield at attfield@labyrinth.net.

Please contact any of the steering committee members to volunteer to help and to share your suggestions for our work or e-mail us at ccsjwv@hotmail.com.

Deadline for items to include in next Update will be February 15. Please send items to share with our membership to ccsjwv@hotmail.com.

If we can support your event or your issues in some way, please let us know, especially if you represent a member organization. We want to be a true coalition that unites groups and individuals interested in social justice, so please let us know how we can help and please send us information about your group to publicize to our membership.

III. PEACE ACTIVITIES IN MORGANTOWN

There is so much peace activity now in Morgantown, and the rest of the county and world, that we need a separate section for this!

Peace March in Washington, D.C. - January 18

Several Morgantown people went to D.C, for this march, which drew hundreds of thousands of people. According to Kathy Abate, “The news coverage was less than accurate. For some reason the AP as well as NPR reported that there were tens of thousands at the march. The DC police stated that there were more people Saturday than there were in October and they had estimated the October crowd at 100,000. There might not have been 500,000 but ...

“I was there and I know that the first people arrived at the end of the march before the last folks left the mall area (the beginning). The line of march was about two miles long. We were not at the front of the march, thousands were in front of us, we stopped four times during the march for a total of 1 1/2 hours (to watch, eat lunch etc.). We ended up near the end, but couldn't see the end of the march. It took 2-3 hours for the march to pass a given point. Approximately two miles of street (much wider than High street) was packed with people marching.

“There were lots of church people, there were delegations from high schools in New York and DC, there were old people and young people, there were veterans against the war, there were union people. The signs and banners were mostly home made and creative. " LOST: Amendments 2,3, 4,and 6. IF FOUND please call" "Mainstream White Guys For Peace" "WAR: A Bush Family Value" Pictures of Bush Cheney and Rumsfeld with various captions: "Empty Warheads" "Axis of Evil" I saw people who had come from Maine, all over New York (Ithaca: this isn't cold), Pa, NC , Iowa,(an eagle scout against the war) Ohio, Michigan,Wisconsin,(a sign reading 49 school teachers from a small town in Wisconsin) Minnesota (it's too warm in the "warming bus") and West Virginia. My guess is that there were other states represented, but those were the ones whose signs I saw, saw signs on parked charter busses, or talked to.

“There were more people who went to Washington than the media...even NPRwould like us to believe”.

Regional Convergence Against War

Over 120 people from Morgantown, including many CCSJ folks, braved the cold and snow on Sunday, January 26, to travel to Pittsburgh for lunch at the Quaker Meeting House and then to participate in the march and rally against war in Pittsburgh. Thanks to Ann Payne, Connie Devore, Mary Rehmann, and the many others who organized this event, including the members of the Quaker Meeting in Pittsburgh who were so generous in their hospitality. Thanks, also, to Tom Rodd, who brought the giant “puppet” of the earth, complete with eyelids that flapped up and down and arms that embraced the crowd as it stretched across several lanes of traffic. This was the most visible “sign” of the march. And, thanks to Sharon Goodman and the other members of the “mourning mothers” who wore masks, as in the WVU Homecoming Parade, and carried a “body” throughout the march to demonstrate the grief that war brings.

For photos of the event, go to www.post-gazette.com/journal/photos_bydate.asp?ODate=1%2F27%2F03.

Morgantown Community Peace Coalition

The next meeting of this new group will be Sunday, February 2, at 1 p.m. at the Quaker Meeting House. The goal will be discuss the Morgantown community’s role in local and world peace issues. For further information, contact Ann Payne at paynestake@labyrinth.net or 292-7673.

The Quaker Meeting House is the former Jerome Park School. From downtown, take Walnut Street Bridge toward Sabraton (Rt. 7). The rail/trail will be on your right. Before you get to the *Dominion Post* building, take a left on Mineral up the hill. It somehow quickly becomes Darst. Take the second right and go a block to the school, which is at the corner of Putnam and Denvers. There’s a parking lot across the street. Or, take Richwood Avenue toward Sabraton and take a right at the light onto Darst, then take the second left.

Morgantown Women Working for Peace and Justice Starts Weekly Vigils January 31

Morgantown Women Working for Peace and Justice (MWWPJ) will begin a weekly 30-minute silent vigil for world peace. The first vigil will be held this Friday, January 31, from 12:15 p.m. until 12:45 p.m. on the Courthouse Square, High Street. The MWWFP will wear black, remain silent, and hand out leaflets reminding the public of the real cost of war - human lives.

If YOU are concerned about the impending war with Iraq, PLEASE join this weekly vigil. The more who

stand witness to the folly of war, the stronger the message. (Please feel free to bring a sign that expresses your concerns.)

For information about MWWPJ, contact Sharon Goodman at 296-4610 or Ann Payne at 292-7673.

Rice for Iraq - Feed Thine Enemy

A Boulder, Colorado, Mennonite Church is reviving an idea that goes back to the 1950s, when the Fellowship of Reconciliation organized tens of thousands of people to send bags of rice to President Eisenhower, with the request that we feed the Chinese during a famine instead of using nuclear weapons against them during a dispute over the islands of Quemoy and Matsu. According to David Albert's *People Power: Applying Nonviolence Theory*, the campaign organizers thought this was a failure until ten years later, when they learned that, during the crisis, Eisenhower told the Joint Chiefs of Staff that he could not bomb the Chinese as long as so many Americans wanted him to feed them.

To participate in the 2003 version of this campaign, put half a cup of rice in a sandwich bag. Squeeze out the air as you seal it. Put it in a standard business envelope with a note that says "If your enemies are hungry, feed them" (Romans 12:20). Please send this rice to the people of Iraq. Do not attack them."

Mail the envelope to President George Bush, White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20500. Be sure to use 3 37-cent stamps for this.

Thanks to the person who helped organize the Pittsburgh march who shared this idea with us!

IV. NEW MEMBER ORGANIZATION

We welcome the **WVU Center for Black Culture and Research (CBC&R)** as a new member organization to our coalition. The CBC&R's web site is www.wvu.edu/~cbcr. The center's motto is "Leadership, Scholarship and Empowerment." To accomplish those goals, the center sponsors a wide variety of programs, including the Martin Luther King, Jr., Achievement Award and Martin Luther King, Jr., Scholarship. During February (Black History Month), CBC&R will have a full calendar of events. The PASSKEY program supports African American students in a wide variety of ways, particularly during their first year at WVU. The Heritage Academy began in 1991 to introduce children ages 7-12 about academics and cultural diversity. The Paul Robeson/Mahalia Jackson Choir is one of the highlights of the center's programs. The center is located at 590 Spruce Street. Its mailing address is PO Box 6417, WVU, Morgantown 26506-6417, and the phone number is 293-7029.

V. UPCOMING EVENTS OF OUR MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

PFLAG

On Sunday, February 16, PFLAG will have a program on the WVU Safe Zone Program. On March 16, the tentative program will feature a few female and male couples to speak about their experience with long-term relationships. PFLAG meets at Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship Hall (429 Warrick Street) at 1 p.m.

For more information, please contact Dave Whaley at David.Whaley@mail.wvu.edu.

The **WVU Center for Women's Studies** is sponsoring the following informal research presentations. All are open to the public at no charge. For further information about any of these events, please contact Marlene Robinson at anna.robinson@mail.wvu.edu or 293-2339 ext. 1153.

- **February 4: Fireside Chat: "Age, Ability, Disability"** - presentations by Suzan Ayers, assistant

professor of physical education teacher education, on “Women, Aging and Physical Activity: How to Stay Healthy Gently”; Kim Cordingly, research instructor for the Job Accommodation Network, on “The Emerging Geographies of Work and Identity: Exploring Self-Employment Strategies and Work Subjectivities of Women with Chronic Illness”; and Kathleen McNerney, professor of foreign languages and adjunct professor of women’s studies, on “Older Women in Literature: Depictions by Carme Riera”. WVU Mountainlair Rhododendron Room. 4 p.m.

- **February 6: Fireside Chat: “Bylines as Lifelines: Love, Loss and Sisterhood on the Ho Chi Minh Trail,”** with presentations by Christine Martin, dean and associates professor of the WVU Perley Isaac Reed School of Journalism, and Maryanne Reed, associate professor and director of the broadcast news sequence in the Perley Isaac Reed School of Journalism. WVU E. Moore Hall Betty Boyd Lounge. 4 p.m.
- **February 12: Fireside Chat: “The Sunrise Dance and Its Multiple Meanings for Pubescent Girls and the Apache People,”** with presentations by Carol Markstrom, professor of child development and family studies, and Elizabeth Compton, graduate research assistant in child development and family studies. WVU Percival Hall Forestry Lounge. 7:30 p.m.
- **February 20: Fireside Chat: “Effects of Sleep Deprivation on Mothers of Young Infants”** by Katherine Karraker, associate professor and director of graduate training in WVU Department of Psychology, and **“Exploring Novel Cancer Therapies for the Breast,”** by Linda Vona-Davis, visiting assistant professor in WVU Department of Biology and adjunct associate professor in the Department of Surgery. WVU E. Moore Hall Betty Boyd Lounge. 4 p.m.
- **February 24: Fireside Chat: “Building Bridges: Teaching and Pedagogical Focus From a Women’s Studies Perspective,”** by Ann Oberhauser, associate professor of geography, and Jill Kriesky, director fo WVU service learning programs. WVU Mountainlair Rhododendron Room. 4 p.m.
- **February 26: “Crimes Against Nature”** - one-man play performed by Chris Kilmartin about pressure of growing-up male in America; co-sponsored by Community Medicine Alcohol and Drug Education Project, University Health Service, and President’s Office for Social Justice. WVU Mountainlair Blue Ballroom. 9 p.m.

VI. OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ukimwe Oshendwe! AIDS be destroyed!

Outreach Kenya Development Volunteers (OKDV) is a new movement at West Virginia University to promote educational initiatives and HIV/AIDS education in the Western Province of Kenya. This is a rare opportunity for the West Virginian community to truly make a tangible dent in the AIDS epidemic on the African continent. Here are some of the upcoming activities:

February 20th- A panel on HIV and AIDs in Africa

March, 2003- A 5k run to raise funds and awareness

Our chapter of OKDV is devoted to collecting books and raising funds to ship those books as well as building a permanent structure for a library that will house those books. For more information on these activities or to make a donation contact Seema Aggarwal at (304)685-2819 or saggarwa@mix.wvu.edu or Moira Shaw at (304) 685-1679 or parvanih@yahoo.com, 460 Madison Ave., Morgantown, WV 26501.

Make checks payable to Outreach Kenya Development Volunteers.

Interfaith Global Climate Change Campaign. West Virginia is one of 18 states that has an active Interfaith Global Climate Change Campaign. The group believes that global climate change “IS A JUSTICE ISSUE, A MORAL ISSUE, AN INTERGENERATIONAL ISSUE AND A RELIGIOUS ISSUE!” The local group is assessing the impact of the proposed new power plant near Point Marion.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, February 19, at 10:30 a.m at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Morgantown. If you are interested in becoming a liaison to your congregation or parish, or if you have questions about the group, contact Sister Mary Rehmann at 296-3748 (rehmannlaw@aol.com), Fr. Christopher Bender at 292-8670 (chbender@adelphia.net), or Dennis Groce (724-725-9113 (d_mgroce@labs.net).

The West Virginia Women’s Center is reorganizing but will retain its original purpose of providing a community center for women; the group also wants to act as a clearinghouse for information and services for women in the state. For further information, see the group’s website at members.aol.com/womenscenterwv or email womenscenterwv@aol.com. The first event will be a potluck at Daniels, 405 Capitol Street, Charleston, on Saturday February 8 at 6 p.m.

Lesbian listserv - for information on this listserv, which is “to update women about events important to the lesbian community,” email charlestonlsn@aol.com.

Women’s Day at the Legislature will be held February 12 in Charleston. For further information, contact the West Virginia Women’s Commission at 558-0070. The registration deadline is February 8.

CCSJ Steering Committee 2002-2003

Tim Hairston (Monongalia-Preston Labor Council AFL-CIO), Interim President. President. Al Anderson, Vice President. Barbara Howe (WVU Center for Women’s Studies), Secretary. Gregory Wagner, Treasurer. Mike Attfield. Paul Becker. Judy Cohen. Lourdes Cottingham (Equality for All Americans). Kris Hash. Jacqueline Moseley. Michael Sharley.