

Community Coalition for Social Justice
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www.geocities.com/ccsjwv/index.html

Update - 28 February 2003

I. CCSJ PROJECTS:

Next Steering Committee Meeting: Wednesday, March 5, 7 p.m. - please contact Tim Hairston at questz1z@netscape.net if you have issues for the steering committee to consider.

Coalition Discussion - Wednesday, April 9 - Place and time to be announced.

CCSJ, in cooperation with the Economic Justice Coalition, is planning a meeting on April 9 and invite all our members and representatives of member organizations to join us to talk about how we can work best together as a coalition. What are our common interests? How can we best communicate? How can we support each other? With so much activity in town, we wanted an opportunity to strategize the best ways to help each other.

If you are interested in attending, please contact Barb Howe at barbara.howe@mail.wvu.edu or 293-2339 ext. 1155.

Economic Justice Committee

This group is reviewing ordinances from cities similar in size to Morgantown. If you are interested in being involved in this project, please contact Dave Cormier at DRCormier@mail.wvu.edu or Paul Becker at Paul.Becker@mail.wvu.edu.

National Peace Foundation Speaker

CCSJ has also invited Landis Jones, executive director of the National Peace Foundation and director of its Middle East Programs, to come to Morgantown to talk about the work he has been doing directly with Palestinians from Gaza and Israelis and can give some perspectives on the issues there. The National Peace Foundation's mission is "to promulgate peacebuilding and conflict resolution at every level, from the community, to the regional, to the national and international."

We will announce the date, time, and place for this event soon and hope to work with the Morgantown Peace and Justice Coalition and others to sponsor this event.

Civil Rights Team Project

On February 5, the New York Times had a story entitled "Promoting Tolerance, Not Paying Heed," by Michael Winierip, that discussed the Civil Rights Team Project in West Virginia. The article quotes a variety of people involved in this project and notes that Attorney General Darrell McGraw "undid all his civil rights divisions' work and ended sponsorship of the program." The reporter concludes with "But he was wrong. The program was useful, and you know how figured it out? Mrs. Fish, the conservative board member."

The next step? See the West Virginia Department of Education's posting on its web site (dated February 19):

"CHARLESTON, W.Va. - The West Virginia Board of Education today accepted the recommendations of a fact-finding taskforce to lift a temporary suspension of the Civil Rights Team Project. In October, the Board directed the Department of Education to halt the program initiated by the West Virginia Attorney General's Office since no board member knew of or understood the Project's existence in the schools. A taskforce was also developed at that time. The taskforce composed of board members and department personnel conducted interviews with members of Civil Rights Teams in eight schools, met with the Attorney General's Office, and researched best practices for anti-bullying programs across the nation. There were concerns that: * controversial lifestyles were being promoted; * team or peer approach to solving bullying problems might produce adverse effects on certain children; and * parents of participants were not informed about the details of the Project and had not given permission for their children to participate in the program. It was found that: * 21 middle and high schools have been involved with aspects of the Civil Rights Team Project; * all activities were supervised by the teacher sponsors and approved by the principal; * most activities were instructional in nature and were meant to raise awareness of the need for respect; * all people interviewed remarked that no particular lifestyle was promoted; * only a few of the participating schools used resource materials listed by the Attorney General's Office; * most of the activities engaged in by the schools adapting some aspect of the Civil Rights Team Project have helped build safe environments for students; and * forms of the Project that worked best in schools gave high priority to character education and multicultural activities that engage the entire student body. The taskforce found so many things that were good. Many schools used parts of the Project and we want that to continue," said Board Member Barbara Fish. "It is important that the public knows the Board supports everyone's civil rights and programs that promote those rights. After a thoughtful analysis of the Civil Rights Team Project the taskforce also recommended that: * the temporary suspension of materials suggested for use by the Civil Rights Team Project be made permanent unless materials are approved for use by the county superintendent of schools or his/her designee. * local school districts provide parents/guardians of a student involved in leadership positions in character education and anti-bullying programs: * the opportunity to review resource materials used in such programs; and * the option of approving or denying their child's participation in such a program. * the West Virginia Board of Education encourages each county school system to review its current policies/procedures that address how to access schools for introducing speakers, programs, or materials into the public schools. The Civil Rights Team Project generated some very serious concerns about how initiatives enter our schools without the Board's knowledge and what these initiatives endorse," said Board President Howard Persinger. "Thanks to the investigation we now know that aspects of this Project go hand in hand with our Student Code of Conduct. The West Virginia Board of Education currently supports

Policy 4373: Student Code of Conduct. This policy ensures that every student in every public school in West Virginia is protected from bullying, intimidation and harassment. It demands that districts provide an orderly and safe environment that is conducive to learning and that schools respond immediately and consistently to incidents of harassment, intimidation, bullying, substance abuse and/or violence.”

However, to the best of our knowledge, the attorney general’s office has not changed its position on these teams.

Clarksburg residents are working with students at Liberty High School, and Clarksburg City Councilman Jim Hunt has supplied this information about that effort, via Spence Carver Lee, president of Rainbow Services in Clarksburg: “Pastor Kates and I have been working with the Liberty High School Civil Rights Team Project for about three years. We participate in activities with the school and have provided programs to the school. The members of the Civil Rights Team Project participate at events that the Unity Project presents at the City Building and other places. We have had a very good relation with the sponsor of the club, Ms. Donna Jo Young and the principal, Mr. David Book. Also, Pastor Kates and I, regularly present programs at schools throughout North Central West Virginia.” For further information, please contact Councilman Hunt at thehuntgroup@msn.com. Is this a model for Morgantown??
For more information on Rainbow Services, see www.geocities.com/ClarksburgRainbowServices/.

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 March 20. 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

Here is the latest from the Morgantown Peace and Justice Coalition, with thanks to Ann Payne for supplying this information:

Please show your support by participating whenever you can. In the event of war, meet at 5 at Coliseum & bring a candle.**WHAT: MONONGALIA PEACE AND JUSTICE COALITION**

PLANNING MEETINGWHERE: Monongalia Friends Meeting, Old Jerome Park School, Denver and PutnamStreetsWHEN: SUNDAY, MARCH 2, 2002 at 9:00 AMWHY: Important issues need immediate attention. Will plan presentation of anti-war resolution to M'town City Council, design press event plus campaign to collect signatures and call councilpersons, raise \$ for a Dominion Post ad, plus campaign to distribute informational leaflets.

LOCAL EVENTS

WHAT: Weekly Silent Vigil for World Peace**WHEN:** FRIDAYS, 12:15-12:45 (weekly)**WHERE:** Courthouse Square, High Street**WHO:** Morgantown Women Working for Peace and Justice**WHY:** We believe the real cost of war is human lives. We invite you to simply stand with us to witness this truth in a confused and misled world. The vigils are regularly attracting over 50 people. Press coverage has included KDKA-TV Pittsburgh, WV Public Radio, WAJR Radio, *the Dominion Post* (twice) and WVU's *Daily Athenaeum*. Signs are increasing and becoming more creative. The most effective tend to educate and clarify key issues.**PLEASE JOIN US****CONTACT:**

Paynestake@labs.net or sjgoodman@adelphia.net**PEACE MASS FOR SERVICE PERSONNEL & FAMILIES****WHAT:** Mass, followed by adoration time**WHEN :** Monday, March 3, 7:00**PM****WHERE:** St. Luke Church, Cheat Lake (exit #10 off I-68)**WHY:** For family & friends in the service and Peace in the world**CONTACT:** Pastor Peter Giannamore (594-2353)

ANTIWAR COMEDY PERFORMANCE**WHAT:** Aristophanes' comedy, *Lysistrata***WHEN:** Monday, March 3, 2003, 8PM**WHERE:** WVU's Eiesland Hall, Room G24.**WHY:** The play is part of the international, anti-war *Lysistrata* Project, which now has over 600 readings of the play scheduled in 35 countries (including every state in the US.) Check out the web site:<http://www.pecosdesign.com/lvs/>. Spread the word and join us for an anti-war, pro-woman comedy.

Free admission**CONTACT:** Katy Ryan**ANTIWAR RESOLUTION GOING TO COUNCIL****WHAT:** Antiwar Resolution Going to Morgantown City Council**WHEN:** Tuesday, March 18, 2003 (tentative)**HELP****GET PETITION SIGNATURES.**Contact :

Rehmannlaw@labs.net.**HELP****SPONSOR NEWSPAPER AD**Contact: schwabwv@earthlink.net**HELP****CALL YOUR COUNCILPERSON AND ASK FOR THEIR SUPPORT.**First Ward - Ron Bane, baner@rcbhsc.wvu.edu, 292-2097Second Ward - James Manilla, jmanilla@earthlink.net, 292-8907Third Ward - Frank Scafella, fas@wvnm.wvnet.edu, 296-3145Fourth Ward - Deputy-Mayor Teresa Miller, teresamiller@email.com, 598-2866Fifth Ward - Mayor Ron Justice, rjustice@wvu.edu, 296-0622Sixth Ward - William Byrne, bill@byrnehedges.com, 291-1328Seventh Ward - Florence Merow, cityclerk@morgantown.com (ATTN: Florence Merow), 599-1104

2. AND SOME MORE WAYS TO GET INVOLVED**FREE BUMPER STICKERS**Get a beautiful blue **War is Not the Answer** bumper sticker or yard sign, free.**WHERE:** Go to <http://www.fcnl.org/iraq-bumstker-info.php>**WHY:** Show the world where you stand. They're free**PUBLIC EDUCATION PROJECT****HELP****Educate others with attractive fact sheets.****WHY:** Many people are overwhelmed and uncertain what to believe. Rather than argue or even offend them, inform people with calmly presented facts. The truth is hard to resist.**WHERE:** Educational leaflets are available at the Blue Moose Cafe on Spruce and Walnut streets.**CONTACT:** Paynestake@labs.net**LOCAL ANTI-WAR SPEAKERS AVAILABLE**

HELP Invite a speaker to address your group or club **CONTACT** : schwabwv@earthlink.net

3. REGIONAL EVENTS OF INTEREST

BUS TRIP TO WASHINGTON CONVERGENCE
WHAT: INTERNATIONAL ANSWER'S Emergency Convergence on D.C.
WHEN: Saturday, March 15 – depart 6 a.m. & return midnight
WHERE: Meet at William Pitt Union, corner of Fifth and Bigelow, Pittsburgh
CONTACT: info@thomasmertoncenter.org for bus ride (\$30 round trip)
<http://www.internationalanswer.org/> for march info
PEACE PICNIC IN PITTSBURGH
WHAT: Mega-Peace Picnic & Kite Fly PLUS March & Rally
WHEN: Sunday, March 16, Picnic at 1:00 p.m. & March at 2 p.m.
WHERE: Flagstaff Hill, Schenley Park, Oakland area of Pittsburgh
WHO: Pittsburgh Organizing Group assisted by Thomas Merton Center
CONTACT: Peacepicnic@hotmail.com*** Any interest in busses from Morgantown? Reply, please.
4. PRAYER HOURS FOR PEACE partial and one time listing - Please save/print if you're interested
WHAT: Hour of prayer (prayer--quiet--spontaneous petitions)
WHEN: Wednesdays, 1-2 p.m.
WHERE: Immaculate Conception Church, Fairmont
WHY: Peace and Discernment
CONTACT: Sr. Stella Cronauer, CSJ (367-0485)
WHAT: Pray for World Peace
WHEN: Thursdays, 9-10 p.m. (weekly)
WHERE: St. John's University Parish, 1481 University Avenue
WHO: St. John's University Parish
WHY: Join others to pray for peace in the world.
CONTACT: Sister Rachel, 296-8231
WHAT: Hour of Prayer
WHEN: Fridays, 7:30 p.m.
WHERE: St. Luke Church, Cheat Lake (exit #10 off I-68)
WHY: Holy Hour, Benediction and Chaplet of Divine Mercy
CONTACT: Pastor Peter Giannamore (594-2353)
Over 200 unions and 550 union leaders from 53 countries representing 130 million workers have signed the International Labor Declaration circulated by USLAW . . .demanding that the US abandon its militaristic threats of illegal aggression against Iraq. They have said in unison, Give peace a chance
This is the first time in history that the world's labor movements have come together to speak with a single voice on an issue of urgent international concern.
www.uslaboragainstar

For further information, contact Ann Payne at paynestake@labyrinth.net or 292-7673.

For information about Morgantown Women Working for Peace and Justice, contact Sharon Goodman at 296-4610 or Ann Payne at 292-7673.

MARCH 1ST... THIS COMING SATURDAY: A DAY OF GLOBAL INTENTION AND PRAYER
Thanks to Ann Dacey for the following information:

"This is a pivotal week for determining the course of our future. So, we who are committed to the quality of life are called to favorably influence that course.

Therefore, on Saturday morning another global meditation is planned. Because of the significance of this time, our participation must be substantial ... as sensational as the recent global demonstrations for peace.

Great power is generated when a group synchronizes its focus. Of this, there is no longer any doubt. More and more studies affirm the positive effects on the Earth's energy field, the environment, emotional and physical healing, and even decreases of crime in the surrounding areas.

Our focus is joy... feeling joy and imagining a joyful world. Imagining peace is very positive, but the

energy of joy is a more active vibration. Joy emanates a very high, vibrant frequency, which offsets the prevalent low negative frequencies of rage, fear, anxiety, apathy, grief and despair.

The easiest way to immediately raise your frequency is to smile. As you smile, you can't experience low frequency states. Try it. Close your eyes and smile broadly so your teeth show. How do you feel? Imagine the power of millions of people smiling images of a joyful world.

The meditation focus is simple. Several minutes before the appointed time, sit in a comfortable position, close your eyes and breathe deeply and fully. Once you are relaxed, smile widely. Be bold, and delight in this pleasure.

Then recall locations experiencing conflict, including the US. Imagine people doing joyful things, like dancing together, playing with children, playing with pets, people in hospitals seeing patients miraculously healing, the elderly feeling younger, and so on. Visualize leaders meeting in peaceful accord with other leaders and with wise measures to resolve our global challenges.

Imagine Saddam Hussein, his sons and supporters putting away their weapons to collaborate with the UN, American and British leaders to rebuild a healthy Iraq. Imagine world leaders in North Korean to help them re-establish their economic base by manufacturing products that support life.

Continue for 30 minutes. Remember to breathe deeply and fully and march your smile right out there beaming, and use your imagination to influence humanity's right to happiness.

If you must be somewhere that inhibits you from sitting quietly for the meditation, you can still join us. Simply smile, remember the millions of caring people who are caring about our world, see the good in your environment, and care about the people around you, regardless of what they are doing.

We can all begin now by smiling and imagining the United Nations as a peacekeeping body that endorses and uses only methods that respect life. Based from 4:00PM Greenwich Mean Time, the meditation time for our time zone is 11:00 AM."

V. UPCOMING EVENTS OF OUR MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

PFLAG - Information supplied by David Whaley

PFLAG meets at Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship Hall (429 Warrick Street) at 1 p.m.

The March 16 program will be on same-sex couples. David Whaley has found an excellent professional male couple, but is still seeking a female couple, so please contact him if you are interested in participating in this discussion, which will focus on the "couples experience & feelings, problems & joys."

April 20 is the last scheduled meeting, at which the group will decide whether to continue. David is retiring and cannot be certain that he will be available. Therefore, it is very important that people

who are interested in keeping the group going attend this meeting as there are people who are interested in presenting programs. According to David, "We are looking for a critical mass of those who will divide the work, & maintain it reliably, so no one person burns out." The church will continue to be available for meetings.

Previous programs have included a presentation by the executive director of the West Virginia ACLU and a picnic in July 2002. PFLAG has a Yahoo group, cpflag_morgantown_wv, for people to join via their computer. They can be notified of upcoming meeting programs, leave messages to one another, & even a chat room. PFLAG also has quite a library of books donated to Morgantown PFLAG, available for loan, & lots of brochures from Pittsburgh PFLAG, of which this group is a satellite.

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

WVU Center for Women's Studies

The Center for Women's Studies, WVU Council for Women's Concerns, and West Virginia Women's Studies Network, and WVU students of FEM (Female Equality Movement) are co-sponsoring Mom's Turn to Learn Day on March 24 from 11 a.m.-7 p.m. at the Morgantown Mall. There will be representatives available throughout the day from West Virginia University (financial aid, admissions and records, etc.), Monongalia Technical Education Center, and West Virginia Business Institute.

This is designed as a one-stop opportunity to learn more about going to college for the first time, how to complete the education you've started, and how an education can help you get a better job.

The program is free and open to the public. No registration is required.

For further information, please contact Marlene Robinson at 293-2339 ext. 1153 or anna.robinson@mail.wvu.edu.

VI. OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

The West Virginia Hate Crimes bill (HB 2226) has been reintroduced in the legislature and has been referred to the House Judiciary committee. For details see www.hrc.org/stateaction/westvirginia/bill1.asp

Please let your elected officials know how important this legislation is to the advancement of civil rights issues in West Virginia, for this legislation would add sexual orientation and disability as protected classes under the hate crimes statutes. According to the Human Rights Campaign web site, "A person that is found guilty or convicted of a crime against any of the protected classes would be subject to enhanced penalties for that crime."

The Human Rights Campaign is opposing anti-gay judicial nominees. For information on this project see www.hrc.org/newsreleases/2003/030211nominees.asp. These are appointments made at the federal level, so you will need to contact our congressional delegation with your opinions on

these candidates. According to its web site, the Human Rights Campaign “is the largest national lesbian and gay political organization, with members throughout the country. It effectively lobbies Congress, provides campaign support and educates the public to ensure that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Americans can be open, honest and safe at home, at work and in the community.”

Again from the HRC web site, thanks to Spence Carver Lee, “Of immediate concern is an upcoming vote on the nomination of Jeffrey Sutton to the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. Sutton has been a leader in the effort to limit congressional authority to enact laws protecting civil and disability rights. Sutton has argued that disabled individuals employed by the state cannot sue their employer for discriminating against them because of their disability. The Supreme Court's decision in that case closed the door on people with disabilities. As a community that is affected by HIV and AIDS, we are gravely concerned about Sutton's activism against legal protections for people with disabilities, which has dealt a critical blow to disability rights in this nation. We are also very concerned about Sutton's views of Congress' authority to enact legislation aimed at curbing criminal violence, such as hate crimes legislation. “A hearing for Jeffrey Sutton was held in late January, and the Senate Judiciary Committee voted him out of Committee on February 13. Though timing is uncertain, the Senate could vote on Sutton's nomination as early as this week. Send a free fax to your senator IMMEDIATELY by going to www.hrc.org and click on **Take Action**. Ask your senator to oppose Sutton's nomination. “WHAT'S AT STAKE IN JUDICIAL NOMINATION” This issue is of vital importance to LGBT Americans. The federal courts have had a significant role both in providing and in denying LGBT Americans justice. There are currently no federal laws protecting LGBT Americans from employment discrimination or hate crime violence. The U.S. military, our nation's largest employer, under **Don't Ask, Don't Tell**, specifically prohibits gay, lesbian and bisexual people from openly serving their country. Another federal law denies lesbian and gay families the federal rights and benefits that other families receive. That same law also singles out lesbian and gay families by permitting states to choose to ignore such same-sex marriages entered into in other states. **Sodomy** laws are commonly used to label LGBT individuals as criminals. Gains at the state and local level on LGBT equality have been slow and hard-fought over the past few decades. “Federal courts have and will continue to decide cases involving access to fundamental freedoms taken for granted by other Americans, including the right to privacy in their own homes, the recognition and protection of their relationships and families, their ability to live and work free from discrimination and violence, and their rights to free expression and freedom from religious oppression. These issues and how they play out in the courts are fundamental to the daily lives and welfare of all LGBT Americans.”

From the American Civil Liberties Union:

“**Stop the New Patriot Act** Under the guise of terrorism, Attorney General Ashcroft has been secretly preparing new legislation that would significantly reduce privacy protections and essentially eliminate some of the most fundamental checks and balances on governmental power. The draft **Domestic Security Enhancement Act** contains a multitude of law enforcement and intelligence gathering powers -- many of which are not related to terrorism -- that would severely undermine basic constitutional rights. For example, the proposed legislation would allow the sampling and cataloguing of innocent Americans' DNA without court order and without consent. **Take Action now** We can stop this legislation and tell our elected officials that they must

exercise appropriate oversight over the Justice Department and FBI to prevent abuse of power. For more information and to send a free fax, go to:

www.aclu.org/SafeandFree/SafeandFree.cfm?ID=11904&c=206

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 Attfeld. Paul Becker. Judy Cohen. Lourdes Cottingham (Equality for All Americans). Kris Hash. Jacqueline Moseley. Michael Sharley.