

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

Portland Branch, 1034 SW 13th Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97205-1702

www.wilfpdx.org

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September 2013

COMMEMORATING THE 1963 MARCH FOR JOBS & FREEDOM

by Lucinda Tate

My memories of the 1963 March on Washington are from television news clips and historical documentaries. Although I was 17 years old at the time, I saw no news coverage about the March in my hometown, and mine was the only African American family living there.

On August 24th, 2013, I finally got to walk in a march for Jobs and Freedom—the Portland one marking the 50th anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington. I have been active for many years with community organizations working on Jobs and Freedom issues, so we all got involved in making the Anniversary event happen by getting the word out and raising money to support it. The pre-rally at Chapman Park was like going to a high school reunion! It brought out many supporters and friends that I see only during a rally or march. My expectation for the day was one of excitement and hopeful happenings.

Senator Merkley's opening welcome set the tone for the day—recognizing how significant the 1963 March was in achieving the advances of the past 50 years, and realizing how much still needs to be done for equality in jobs, education, housing, and healthcare. The March through the streets of Portland Oregon celebrated a symbolic turning point in the movement for Jobs and Freedom, now that—in reality—social safety nets and voting rights are being eroded. The March showed our appreciation for the steadfast determination of those hundreds, no, thousands of “drum majors for righteousness” throughout the South that gave their all, including their lives, for the changes in our civil society that we are still struggling to sustain and expand.

I found the program at Tom McCall Waterfront Park too long. Among the many speakers, though, were two black men, one middle-aged and one younger, who told the truth about what is happening at this time in the United States against people of color, especially young men of black or brown skin. I was very stirred and emotional during and after their passionate sharing of their own thoughts concerning the plight of men of color. I also thought about the work we have done and have still to do to bring women's equality to the forefront of minds and hearts in our civil society. We women have much to do; we must continue our vigilance so that we will not only survive but thrive.

I went away from this rally and march rededicated to continue my community activism. It was a good day!

The next business meeting of the Portland branch of WILPF will be on Saturday, September 14, from 10 to 12 a.m. at the First Unitarian Church, SW 12th Avenue and Salmon, room A-301. Deadlines for the October newsletter: articles, September 26; calendar items, September 28. Send them to wilfpdx@gmail.com.

THE WILPF INTERNATIONAL STATEMENT ON SYRIA

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom put its statement about the current situation in Syria online about noon Sunday, September 1. The text confirms WILPF's stated position that use of chemical weapons is a serious violation of international law, citing the relevant international agreements. It further points out that the rhetoric of governments pushing for intervention is more akin to retribution and punishment than to justice under international law. Finally, it rejects military action and discusses alternative options in detail. Read the full statement at <http://www.wilpfinternational.org/syria-chemical-weapons-and-avoiding-military-intervention/>.

REPORT FROM THE MADISON DEMOCRACY CONVENTION

by Carol Urner

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom was a major national sponsor of the Second Democracy Convention in Madison, Wisconsin, August 7 to 11. Nancy Price (Sacramento branch, chair of the national WILPF *Earth Democracy Committee*) was a key organizer of the Convention, and particularly of the Earth Democracy Conference. Her overview of the Convention is at <http://wilpfus.org/news/updates/wilpf-2013-democracy-convention>.

A major joy was the warm hospitality of the Madison Branch. Many members are participating in the non-violent campaign for human rights, peace and justice that has made national news for the past two and a half years. Madison is now a progressive island in an increasingly right-wing state with an aggressive ultra-"conservative" governor, Scott Walker, who wants to become President in 2016. Read about a newsman's arrest on August 13 for photographing Madison protesters singing peace and freedom songs in the capitol building at http://www.democracynow.org/2013/8/19/editor_of_the_progressive_arrested_covering.

Phone (503-320-9108) **or email** (carol.disarm@gmail.com) **me** for links to **youtube videos** of any of the following three WILPF workshops recorded at the convention:

A Call to Action for a Nuclear-Free Future by 2020 (Carol Urner & Ellen Thomas)

Nuclear abolition is an urgent necessity. Let's find ways to work together, each in our own ways.

- WILPFUS promotes US House Bill HR 1650 and US Conference of Mayors 2012 and 2013 Resolutions calling for abolition of nuclear weapons by 2020.
- WILPFUS acts to stop US nuclear missile testing and nuclear industry expansion.
- WILPFUS urges US participation in current creative international initiatives of 134 non-nuclear powers.
- WILPFUS believes the whole nuclear chain is killing us and our planet and therefore acts locally to close nuclear power plants and to end uranium mining, waste accumulation, depleted uranium use and nuclear weapons production.

Community Action Toolkit for Earth Democracy (Carolyn Raffensperger & Randa Solick)

Though our government pays only lip service to future generations, we can take action now to protect their interests. Guardianship of Future Generations and Precautionary Principle strategies can be adopted as community government policies to pass on a healthy, rather than degraded, environment to our children and protect the ecosystems needed to sustain life through time. An interactive discussion on how these strategies can be shaped to the needs of each community and lead to broader collaboration among diverse community groups.

WILPF Corporate Personhood Timeline (Marybeth Gardam)

The WILPF Corporate Personhood Timeline and Study Guide can be used as educational tools. Marybeth did a great job of telling how to use them. Comments and questions indicated that participants found it very helpful.

JOIN or RENEW YOUR NATIONAL WILPF MEMBERSHIP, SUPPORT PORTLAND BRANCH

Name: _____ New Member: Renewal:

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip+4: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Membership includes International, US Section, and Portland Branch (including emailed branch newsletter)

National membership annual dues, sliding scale, \$15 to \$150: \$ _____

Contribution to support Portland WILPF activities*, including emailed branch newsletter: \$ _____

Contribution for receiving hard copy newsletter: \$ _____

Other _____: \$ _____

TOTAL Enclosed: \$ _____

Mail form & check, payable to WILPF, to Portland WILPF, 1034 SW 13th Ave, Portland 97205-1702

*Each year, Portland WILPF sends you a special mailing to request your donations to support our local office and branch activities. In past years we've sent it in early spring. This year, look for it in your snail mail during summer. We hope you will respond generously as always. (FYI: When you send your membership renewal – see form above – the entire dues amount goes to WILPF National; they send us just \$1 per renewal. It is your non-dues donations to our branch that support all our local work.)

HELP CISPES DEFEND DEMOCRACY IN EL SALVADOR THIS WINTER

The Committee In Solidarity With the People of El Salvador (CISPES) is responding to the call for international observers to support a free and fair election next February. This is the first presidential election since the historic victory of FMLN presidential candidate Mauricio Funes in 2009. During that election a delegation of over 65 CISPES observers helped to document fraud on the ground and mobilized calls to U.S. government officials when members of Congress made flagrant attempts to influence the outcome.

The 2014 CISPES delegation will be in El Salvador from January 25 to February 5 for training, monitoring of pre-election events, observing at polling places from setup to closing on Election Day (February 2), and preparing an official observer report on the electoral process. Estimated cost is \$900 plus airfare. No Spanish language skill is required; translation will be provided. Application deadline is November 30, 2013; application form and delegation flyer can be downloaded from www.cispes.org/travel-to-el-salvador/2014-delegations/.

"EARTH OVERSHOOT DAY" CAME ON AUGUST 20 THIS YEAR

By August 20, 2013, humanity had used up all of the natural resources and waste absorption that the Earth can provide in a year. Human consumption for the remaining 4.5 months of 2013 is being borrowed from future generations.

"Earth Overshoot Day," also called "Ecological Debt Day," is arriving earlier each year since it was first calculated in 1987 by the New Economics Foundation. The Global Footprint Network says it has been arriving roughly three days earlier each year since 2011, and this trend is unequivocal since "Human consumption began outstripping what the planet could reproduce" in the mid-1970s.

"We are now operating in overdraft," reads a Global Footprints statement. "For the rest of the year, we will maintain our ecological deficit by drawing down local resource stocks and accumulating carbon dioxide in the atmosphere." <http://www.footprintnetwork.org/>

ABOUT THE LONGVIEW COAL TERMINAL SCOPING HEARING

"Scoping" is the term used to describe the thorough investigation of an industrial project, examining its safety, social, health, and environmental impacts. At this time, the most important effort for local environmental groups to participate in is the public hearing **September 17** at Longview, WA, on the Millennium Bulk Terminal Longview (MTBL) project.

Many of us were disappointed to find that the July 9 Oregon DEQ hearing on the proposed Morrow Pacific Project focused solely on what impact the building of a coal terminal at Boardman, OR, would have on the environment of that local area. The **Washington State Scoping Process** is very different in that ALL impacts of a terminal proposal are examined. These include coal extraction in the Powder River Basin, shipment through the state, and atmospheric effects from coal-fired electrical plants in Asia.

People anywhere, not just Washingtonians, are encouraged to submit comments on the MTBL by November 18 and to attend the October 9 public hearing at Ridgefield WA in Clark County. Because thousands of people showed their concern for the other Washington coal proposal (the Gateway Pacific Project, near Bellingham), that project has been delayed for two years while state agencies study the impacts described during the scoping process.

With enough participation, we can do the same thing for the MTBL, from which Ambre Energy and Arch Coal hope to export to Asia annually almost 50 million tons of coal that must arrive by rail or barge at the Port of Longview. For details on what is being locally referred to as 'Longview Coal Terminal,' see <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/geographic/millennium/>.

WHY THE PORT WESTWARD REZONING HEARING IS IMPORTANT, TOO

On **September 18**, the day following the Longview hearing, there will be a Rezoning Hearing at Clatskanie, across the Columbia River from Longview. Dan Serres of Columbia Riverkeeper encourages everyone to attend this hearing also. The Port has applied to the Columbia County Commission for expanded industrial zoning. This may mean that it wants to introduce a second coal export project or that it is courting yet another dirty energy plan.

The Planning Commission has recommended that the rezone request be denied. Columbia Riverkeeper supports keeping the area in agricultural use and zoning. We will be calling on the County Commission to deny the application and heed the good precedent set by the Planning Commission.

PROFESSOR ZAHER WAHAB TALKS ABOUT AFGHANISTAN

by Jill Severson

My role-model and education professor Zaher Wahab, who 'retired' last year after 40 years at Lewis & Clark, discussed the current social situation in his native Afghanistan with an invited group of Portlanders on August 14. He was in town only briefly before returning again to Afghanistan, where he will continue to teach educators and now also administrators.

Zaher left his position here in order to lead where he feels he is most needed. "If you've been to Afghanistan, it is very hard not to get involved with the people. I have felt very strongly that, if my life is to mean anything, I need to spend it, more and more, there." Participants talked about their understanding of the situation in Afghanistan and asked his opinion on what the U.S. should do there (if anything, after 12 years of occupation). Professor Wahab told us that while many Afghans have become dependent on foreign aid and money, most of them really want all foreigners to leave. Period. Future changes would best come from the Afghan people themselves.

Acknowledging the daily threat of violence, and aching with empathy for his fellow Afghan people, Zaher also noted that much change needs to happen here in the U.S.

The Populist Dialogue interview with Professor Wahab, broadcast September 1, is now online at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2-CNaKx4x-o> Also see Zaher Wahab's blog at <http://dispatchesfromafghanistan.tumblr.com/>.