

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

Triangle, NC
Chapter



Newsletter Summer/Fall 2016



UPS Workers Rally for Justice

On Monday, August 22, Triangle WILPF joined local and state NAACP leaders and members at a news conference and solidarity rally to support UPS workers across NC, near the Chapel Hill UPS headquarters on Eubanks Road. NAACP leaders Rev. Curtis Gatewood, Minister Robert Campbell and Keith Cook were joined by fired UPS workers and faith and social justice partners in demanding UPS end its discriminatory employment practices and create a more fair, just, and safe work environment. The press conference included the stories of workers who have faced discrimination and retaliation, and are seeking a fair and just resolution of their grievances. Stay tuned as the struggle continues!

Triangle WILPF Launches Mini-Grants

This year the WILPF Triangle Branch is launching a pilot program of mini-grants to members of the Triangle community to support their efforts for peace and freedom. Priority consideration will be given to initiatives by young people in our community and/or those that promote youth leadership and empowerment.

- Grants will range from \$100-300
- Applications can be from individuals or groups
- Funds can supplement existing programs and projects or create new initiatives
- Funds can be used for one-time activities, including trainings or conference attendance

This program is being launched with an initial \$1,000. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis from September 2016 through August 2017, or until funds run out. They can be downloaded from www.trianglewilpf.org and should be submitted via email to mthompson@gmail.com with a subject line of Triangle WILPF Grant Application. Questions? Contact Miriam Thompson 919-370-4114.

Hiroshima/Nagasaki Remembrance

Dick Paddock spoke on behalf of Triangle WILPF at the August 7 Hiroshima Remembrance organized by Veterans for Peace at Peace and Justice Plaza in Chapel Hill:

We have come here in memory of those who died - incinerated - 71 years ago; and those whose slow deaths were begun on that date. In truth, there are some few who are still dying from the effects of that blast, and the one that obliterated Nagasaki three days later. In the current campaign season, there has been scant mention about the future of these weapons:

- there are still far too many of them;
- the US is committing \$1T to modernizing and making them more usable, not disarming.
- the largest nuclear weapons power, the US, is surrounding the second-largest power, Russia, in a manner to threaten the latter's political and economic strangulation;
- the atomic scientists' Doomsday Clock is at three minutes to midnight for the second year running, the most dire warning since the 1980's;
- in the US, the major parties' sole political talking point about nuclear weapons is that the other side's leader is too dangerous to have access to the "launch codes."

Maybe they're both right. Why does no one challenge the existence of such unreality? Why do we tolerate people, especially "leaders," who find this world situation acceptable?

Let's turn this view on its head by adopting Angela Y. Davis's version of the Serenity Declaration:

"We will no longer accept the things we cannot change; instead we pledge to change the things we cannot accept."

Forward Together in peace.

The People's Summit

WILPF member Mary Dooley attended and reported on the People's Summit in Chicago in June:

It has been a month now since more than 3,000 people came together in Chicago for the People's Summit (June, 17-20, 2016). The event brought progressives from all around the country to discuss the future of "the movement", that phenomenal wave that has been building nationally, ridden by Bernie Sanders right to the door of the DNC in Philadelphia this July. The main sponsor was the National Nurses Union (NNU), with their impressive ranks of Bernie-supporting nurses. Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) and YDS (DSA's youth organization) were co-sponsors. At least 50 organizations participated; including Progressive Democrats (PDA), 350.org, Socialist Alternative, People's Action; Democracy Spring; People for Bernie; Food and Water Action; Brand New Congress; USAS; Reclaim Chicago; Working Families Party; Healthcare NOW and Iraq Veterans Against the War. Sanders supporting democratic personalities spoke, including the former state senator from Ohio, Nina Turner; (a strong Sanders supporter, considered a potential VP for Bernie); Chicago's Chuy Garcia (who challenged Rahm Emmanuel to the mayor's seat); and Tulsi Gabbard, member

of Congress from Hawaii. Overall, the atmosphere of the conference was earnest, enthusiastic and upbeat.

Friday evening's opening session was entitled "*Justice Visionaries and Visions of Justice*". Juan Gonzalez, co-host of Democracy NOW, moderated the session that included RoseAnn DeMoro, Executive Director of the National Nurses Union (NNU); writer and activist Naomi Klein. DeMoro came straight to the point in her opening address. "*There is massive corruption in the machinery of the Democratic Party... The only way that we can overcome that corruption and manipulation is for all of us not to work in isolation.*"

Recognizing the generous effort of the NNU in organizing this summit, author Naomi Klein offered these comments, "*We were also coming off of this really bloody week of political violence, with Orlando, with the murder of Jo Cox... It was absolutely fitting that we have been convened by nurses, by caregivers, because we were bruised. And it became this space of healing*". Juan Gonzales warned us not commit the same mistakes of his 1968 generation of activists stating "*We in SDS refused to vote. ... Our slogan was "Vote with your feet, vote in the street." I'm here to tell you that the slogan was right, the tactic was wrong... there would have been a positive change, if Nixon had not been elected"... it began the huge Republican Southern strategy that prevailed for years to come*".

The Saturday morning session called *Justice, Solidarity, Action*, was opened by North Carolina's peripatetic Rev. Wm. Barber II. This was followed by '*Stories from the Field*', in which activists recounted their grassroots organizing work. Dante Barry, director of '*Million Hoodies for Justice*', addressed racial justice. A young member of VOCAL NY, discussed their work on housing and homelessness. Tara Houska of '*Honor the Earth*', spoke about environmental justice from the Native American perspective. Andrea Flores told of her work with '*United Students Against Sweatshops*', a group with impressive representation of the Summit. Hearing from these young social activists was the most moving part of the conference for me. Their energy, dedication and sincerity were inspiring and gave me hope for the future.

The venerable social theorist and activist, Frances Fox Piven gave an overview of the current movement, reminding us that regardless of the election outcome, it is the movement that is most important. She was followed by the most direct and powerful of the conference speakers, Rev. Tobita Chow of the People's Lobby and organizer of Chicago's Moral Mondays. He stated the need to nationalize the big banks and utilities. No other speaker was so clear about how to deal with economic inequality and the corruption of our current political processes. Student Dominique Scott, a member of United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS) described her work as an activist and expressed frustration that as a

millennial, voting for the first time, she could not bring herself to accept either of the 2 mainstream candidates.

Donna Smith of PDA moderated an afternoon session called "*A People's Agenda*". Former Ohio State Senator, Nina Turner, delivered her messages of economic justice, workers rights and reproductive freedom, in her rousing preacher style, walking off the stage and through the crowd. Tulsi Gabbard (D-Hawaii) pleaded with us to end attacks on Assad's Syrian forces, consistent with her pro-Israel views. She is a military officer who opposes US presence in Afghanistan presenting an odd mix of views.

Saturday afternoon was spent in break out groups on a wide variety of topics. These included workshops and trainings on Media and the movement; Climate change, the Digital revolution; Ending voter suppression, mass incarceration, deportations; Gender inequality; Democratic Socialism; Grassroots food production, Healthcare not warfare; the Down ballot strategy for reclaiming elections; and Getting big money out of politics. Making a decision as to which ones to attend was the hardest part of the day. The evening's entertainment was a musical presentation of selected readings and testimonials of notable Americans who led the fight against slavery, racism, war, and exploitation. There was a late night Dance Party for those young enough to stay up.

The final morning of the conference was devoted to the Juneteenth Celebration with speeches from several addressing racial justice. Heather McGhee, president of Demos, wrapped up the session by exploring the inter-relationship of racism and economic inequality. She began her talk by thanking the NNU and the unionized staff of the McCormack Center. I can attest that the staff was hard working, attentive and seemingly happy in their work, supporting the belief that unions make for better workplaces.

Our final hours together were spent on break out groups based on regions. It was a pleasure to meet people from North Carolina that are doing important political and social justice work and whom I might never have met but for this session. One mainstream newspaper described the People's Summit as a '*commiseration of disappointed Berners*'. I found this completely missed the mark. No one was crying over Bernie. They were fired up and ready to carry on the grassroots work needed to create our revolution. As one Student Action organizer, Gianna Chacon, tweeted "*This was about building grassroots community power... so much love and power in this room..., really feeling the political revolution right now...*". Long may you run, Gianna.

Can We Remember Refugees on Memorial Day?

Manzoor Cheema, founder of Muslims for Social Justice, was keynote speaker at the annual Memorial Day event organized by the Orange County Peace Coalition, of which Triangle WILPF is a member. This article by Cheema originally appeared in the Huffington Post.

Chapel Hill, North Carolina, has been recognized as a progressive town in North Carolina and the U.S. South. Home to one of the oldest public universities in the nation, this town has played an important role in the civil rights movement, the anti-war movement and other social justice movements.

The town of Chapel Hill [welcomed](#) Syrian refugees, in response to Gov. Patrick McCrory's call to [halt](#) the future resettlement of Syrian refugees in North Carolina. Chapel Hill's progressive character was on display during Memorial Day commemoration on May 30, 2016. Titled "Hearing the Voiceless: Refugees at Home and Abroad," this event commemorated the sacrifices of the veterans, as well as, the suffering of the victims of wars, including the refugees.

Monday's event brought together members from many peace and social justice organizations gathered under the umbrella of Orange County Peace Coalition (OCPC). Jan Broughton is co-chair of the OCPC and the president of the [American Ethical Union](#), a national organization that pursues secular humanism. She has connected issues of the death and destruction in the wars to "bread-and-butter" issues at home, including housing needs, livelihood for people and re-settlement of refugees. Jan has participated in informational events exploring the costs of war. North Carolina legislator, Rep. David Price, has attended one of those events. Jan is currently dedicated to the cause of raising the minimum wage in the Triangle area of North Carolina.

Wes Hare co-chairs the OCPC. He was active in the campaign against poverty in the 60s and the 70s. He became acutely aware of the toxic mixture of poverty, racism and war that reinforce each other. Martin Luther King, Jr., famously referred to racism, economic exploitation and militarism as "triple evils" that need to be defeated, during his famous [Beyond Vietnam](#) speech at Riverside Church in New York in 1967. Wes became active in the peace movement after the 2002 Iraq war and the impeachment movement against President George W. Bush. Wes is also inspired by the Palestine freedom work by his fellow congregants at the [Church of Reconciliation](#) in Chapel Hill and by the Chapel Hill-based Organization called [AIME](#) (Abrahamic Initiative on the Middle East).

The event on Monday displayed hard work by Jan, Wes and dozens of organizers ranging from organizations like [Women's International League for Peace and Freedom - Triangle](#), [Veterans for Peace - NC Triangle Area](#),

[Charles M. Jones Peace and Justice Committee of the Community Church of Chapel Hill Unitarian Universalist](#), Balance and Accuracy in Journalism, [Coalition for Peace with Justice](#), Peace and Social Concerns of Chapel Hill Friends Meeting, and Elders for Peace. The event featured proclamations by the towns of Chapel Hill and Carrboro that honored the lives of men and women of the armed forces who sacrificed their lives. These proclamations also called for building a peaceful society and helping the victims of war, including the refugees fleeing from violence and the aftermath of war. Speeches were interspersed by cultural performances and eulogies for the victims of war. Triangle chapter of the Raging Grannies offered powerful performances to highlight the sufferings caused by wars and occupations.

The highlight of the event was the focus on refugees and a rise in Islamophobia. A relatively peaceful and progressive town of Chapel Hill became a global headline when three Muslim students were murdered there last year. Institutional forms of oppression against Muslims and other marginalized communities, including the LGBTQ community, have increased in North Carolina in the recent years. North Carolina General Assembly passed transphobic law, House Bill 2, earlier this year that also robs such municipal powers as increasing the minimum wage. North Carolina General Assembly passed anti-Sharia law in 2013. A version of that bill was tied to legislation on women's reproductive health. These developments have emphasized the need to build an intersectional movement that connects campaigns against Islamophobia, homophobia, racism, sexism, anti-immigrant attacks, anti-worker attacks and other oppressions. Participants rallied to the idea of connecting local social justice movements to the global movement for ending militarism and wars. In the words of MLK, Jr.:

"Those who love peace must learn to organize as effectively as those who love war!"

Listen to **WILPF's WAKE-UP CALL** at **WCOM 103.5 FM**, our weekly radio show. Featuring local social justice newsmakers, it airs **Wednesdays 5-6PM**; you can also stream live at www.wcom.org. The program is also broadcast on **The Peoples Channel Thursdays at 10pm** – TWC Channel 8 in Chapel Hill, TWC Channel 4 in Carrboro and TWC 18 in Durham. Call Lori Hoyt @ 984-999-4069 to suggest guests and issues.

Please make sure all friends & family know these dates:
REGISTRATION DEADLINE//OCTOBER 14
EARLY VOTE//OCTOBER 20-NOVEMBER 5
SAME DAY REGISTRATION & VOTING – OCT 20-NOV 5 ELECTION DAY// NOVEMBER 8

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Linking Liberation Struggles: Pursuing global awareness and civil engagement - Monday, October 24, 6-8:30pm, NC Central University, Miller Morgan Health Building, 528 Nelson Street, Durham, parking nearby. Sponsored by the Abrahamic Initiative on the Middle East (AIME) and its co-sponsors and partners (including WILPF)

Monthly - Triangle WILPF meets the 2nd Saturday of every month, 10am-12 noon, Friends Meeting House, 531 Raleigh Road, Chapel Hill (except July) – hope you can join us!



WILPF c/o Ann Powers
6 Carolina Meadows, Apt. 102
Chapel Hill, NC 27517-8528

It's always a good time to become a member, so join now!

TRIANGLE BRANCH: Sliding Scale: \$12-\$30
Students: \$5

NATIONAL WILPF: Individual: \$35
Limited Income: \$15
Student: \$5

Make checks payable to *WILPF-Triangle*
(specify National or Local dues on check)
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