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In This Issue

	Raising the Unstated Election Issues 1	1
	Water on the Frontlines for Peace: Agency, Advocacy, Action 2	2
	Register Now for the WILPF US Congress 4	4
	The Lloyd Family Legacy Campaign Launches at WILPF US! 5	5
	Wolves in Sheep's Clothing 6	6
	Women Investing for Change 8	8
	Letters to the President 9	9
	Poverty = Death: Join the PPC March on June 29 10	10
	What's Money Got to Do with It? 12	12
	Care Jobs Are Green Jobs..... 14	14
	Worker Co-ops Build a Solidarity Economy 16	16
	Bringing Feminist Peacemaking to Immigration Debates 18	18
	Now's the Time for a Major Woman-led Peace Movement 20	20
	COP 28 Report: Rising Resistance and Demands for a Change of Course 21	21
	Reflections on War and Peace at COP 28 24	24
	MacGregor Eddy: Tireless Witness against War 26	26
	Summer Reading List 27	27
	Treasurer's Report to Members 28	28
	Branches Show Solidarity Locally and Globally 30	30
	Life Happens: Be a Sustainer.....back cover	back cover

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.

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Raising the Unstated Election Issues

By Darien De Lu

WILPF US President

Why do the main media outlets so rarely focus on the issues that most affect the lives of the mass of people in the United States? We have many answers, yet WILPF can help influence 2024 election issues. In this *Peace and Freedom* we explore some in more depth, believing that these elections are too important for us to let heartbreak, anger, or despair lead us to “sit this one out.”

With many issues scarcely mentioned, I urge you – our members, branches, and allies – to connect and organize with local movements, building on [WILPF’s issue committees’ work](#). Let’s help challenge the focus on powerful *fear* narratives: job insecurity, violence, claims of increasing crime, foreign enemies.

We can emphasize often ignored local community realities – both positive initiatives and unstated burdens. Too many lives are being wasted and the economy dragged down by mass incarceration and punitive responses. Instead of “gun rights” let’s examine the human and economic costs of *every day violence* in the U.S. – on freeways, in schools, in workplaces, and in homes. [Domestic violence takes a high yet concealed toll](#) on current and future generations.

Our activism can expand the public discourse on the unacceptable rates of poverty and [the death sentences that so often accompany being poor](#) (including [toxic exposures](#)). We can call for more and better jobs: satisfying and reasonably paid, restoring a sense of purpose and meaning to so many unengaged and unfulfilled souls. Those are Green Jobs – and *yes!* – *our country has the money!*

We can’t let the military-corporate-industrial monster block serious discussion of *Moving the Money*. By shifting Pentagon cash – and the nuclear arms billions of the “Department of Energy” – we can fund human needs!

This issue of *Peace & Freedom* highlights how much more secure our communities will be with better jobs and education, more care (and caring), and actions addressing carbon reduction!

This election year, how is it that the needs of [primary and secondary public education](#) are so often sidestepped? Democracy depends on an educated electorate, to see through big-money campaigns. Yet the needed education measures, to address the complications of poverty and racism, are often ignored.



The WILPF Boston Branch recently heard several [insiders’ perspectives from Brockton High School](#), where we see many of these issues coming together. In a city where funds appear to have been [used questionably or very poorly](#) – if not illegally – and

despite supplemental federal allocations, public education is still underfunded and struggling years after “virtual learning” during the pandemic.

No surprise, this school has mostly Black and Latinx students – many the children of immigrants. Brockton High is the largest high school in New England, and enrolls [over 4,300 students!](#)

It was only last year that the school finally achieved full staffing. Yet, with years of underfunded programs, many parents moved their children out of Brockton High. Large drops in enrollment led to funding losses, and subsequent [school budget deficits led to cuts](#) of hundreds of teachers. (As of October, almost 200 positions were still unfilled.)

Sadly, it gets worse. The school is located near Boston, in a state with a reputation for good quality public education. But that did not protect large numbers of students from [sitting in the multiple cafeterias for one or more “classes”](#), idle and disengaged, due to teacher shortages. At the same time, the school is implementing commercialized and impersonal computer-based learning. The district says it can save a lot of money, using fewer teachers.

It’s not only that these low-income students appear to be considered *disposable*. Under current conditions, student unrest increases and, given inadequate supervision, “out-of-control behavior” flares, including fights. In response, four of the School Committee members have requested that the National Guard come to their school: a militarized response to students acting out because classrooms are understaffed.

In this election year, Brockton’s situation gained [international media attention](#), becoming the plaything of right-wing responses and media. You can guess the angles: violent immigrants, “woke” teachers, blame on BIPOC families.

It is crucial that other voices be heard! The actions of WILPF members and allies can publicize the *fullness* of issues, raising unstated ones and revealing interconnections. Voters need better information; we WILPFers can help provide that.

Water on the Frontlines for Peace

Agency, Advocacy, Action

By Nancy Price

Hydropolitics: The Future of Water: Who Has It? Who Doesn't? Who Controls It? How Do We Use It?

“Who Has It? Who Doesn't? Who Controls It? How Do We Use It?” was the theme of the [Fall 2003 issue of Peace & Freedom](#). Twenty years later, people are asking the same questions and demanding answers that can guide investigations from the local community to the global level on how the human right to water is recognized and implemented.

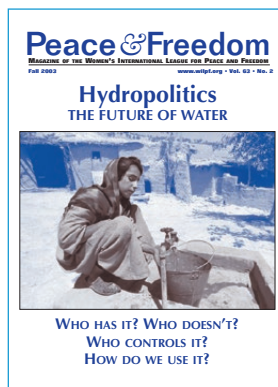
Only 3% of the earth's water is fresh water, while about 71% of water covers the earth's surface and that 97% of the earth's water is in the oceans and too salty for drinking, growing crops and for industrial use. Currently [desalination of ocean or brackish water](#) is used in a number of countries including the US to produce fresh water for nearby communities and urban centers. Still there are questions about how practical and cost effective it is, the environmental impacts and carbon footprint of this technology.

United Nations reports make clear the challenge to provide drinking water. Between 2002 and 2021, droughts affected more than 1.4 billion people, and in 2021 one in four people – 2 billion people around the world – lacked safely managed drinking water. As of 2022, roughly half of the world's population experienced severe water scarcity for at least part of the year, while one quarter faced extremely high levels of water stress, using over 80% of their annual renewable fresh water supply. Climate change is projected to increase risks for social

instability and migration leading to conflicts and war.

This 2003 issue of Peace & Freedom is an excellent primer to read for our 35th Congress. The authors draw our attention to the confluence of events that took place during the 1990s to 2003: wars, new free-trade agreements, and the human right to water. Regina Birchem's comprehensive lead article and pieces by Vandana Shiva, Sarah Anderson, Pat Birnie, and WILPF's Challenge

Corporate Power Campaign discuss the global water crisis, the privatization of water, and the impact on women's lives. Already in 2003, the authors of “Who Governs Water?” observed: “Corporations are aggressively changing local and



international law to redefine water as a scarce commodity that should be controlled for the economic benefit of corporate management and elite investors.”

Here's a Brief List of Significant, Impactful Events:

- Beginning of the “forever wars”: Gulf War, 1990-91; breakup of Yugoslavia 1991-2001, a series of separate but related ethnic conflicts, wars of independence, and insurgencies. NATO used depleted Uranium rounds of armor-piercing shells fired from cannons fitted on to A-10 aircraft to bomb tanks and bunkers and probably used them in Cruise missiles. At the end of the Gulf War, [Saddam Hussein drained the southern Iraq marshes](#) along the Tigris River to punish the Marsh Arabs who participated in uprisings against him. The United Nations judged this was an ecocide and genocide as the large population of Marsh Arabs died or fled to Iran.
- More conflicts in Afghanistan, 1999-2021, Iraq 2003-2011, Syria, Libya, and now the Israeli genocide against the Palestinians with water used as a weapon of war.
- The new neo-liberal free trade corporate-friendly trade agreements: North American Free Trade Agreement between Canada, the U.S. and Mexico and the World Trade Organization (WTO) with 164 country members, were signed in 1994 and 1995 respectively.
- More than 40,000 people converged at the Third WTO Ministerial Meeting, November 30-December 3, 1999, in Seattle, WA, to protest the new WTO free-trade

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policies and human rights failures, oppose privatization of water and public services, focus on workers' rights, sustainable economy, the environment, and rights of women, children, minority groups, indigenous peoples and migrant workers.

- In September 2000, the UN Millennium Declaration adopted by the General Assembly stated: "at the dawn of a new millennium...to reaffirm our faith in the Organization and its Charter as indispensable foundations of a more peaceful, prosperous and just world." The target of 2015 was adopted for halving the proportion of people who are unable to reach or afford safe drinking water.
- November 2002, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights adopted its general comment No. 15 on the right to water, defined as the right of everyone to sufficient, safe, acceptable and physically accessible and affordable water for personal and domestic uses.
- August–September, 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development was held. "In the area of water, the Plan of Implementation encouraged partnerships between the public and private sectors based on regulatory frameworks established by governments," problematic language as public/private partnerships facilitate privatization of water and sanitation services. In 2002, the cost of upgrading water supply and sanitation to meet basic human needs in developing countries was estimated to be \$20 billion a year, but current spending totals about \$10 billion each year.
- 2003: United Nations declares International Year of Freshwater
- The 3rd World Water Forum was held in Kyoto, Japan, March 16-23, 2004. I attended with 90 civil society delegates. On March 19, everyone watched live-streaming on a wall-sized TV the "shock and awe" bombing of central Baghdad and the beginning of the Iraq war.

Water Should Not Be a Weapon of War

It is not surprising that the human right to water has been central to United Nations deliberations, recommendations, reports, and policy statements, many of which highlight that girls and women in many cultures are the primary managers for water-related domestic and community responsibilities.

Girls and women are the first to suffer from the lack of sufficient water when there is a deterioration of living conditions (due to conflict, climate crises, and natural disasters). They experience increased food insecurity, health risks, and the inability to continue their educations or have jobs.

In keeping with our Congress theme, let me conclude with these words from Pedro Arrojo Agudo, a Spanish economist who is currently the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Water and Sanitation. He was interviewed during Geneva Peace Week, on October 31, 2023, and he said: "From Syria to Ukraine and now Gaza, water has been long used to harm and even punish the civilian population...water should not be used as a weapon of war, but rather [as] a catalyst for peace, cooperation and unity among peoples."

"Water is the blue soul of existence, and what enables the cohesion of societies and human life in dignity," he added. Water is a nexus of all the issues WILPF cares about, and all we stand for. Please attend the [WILPF US 35th Congress](#) from May 29-June 2.

35th Congress Presenter Highlights

A conversation with **Osprey Orielle Lake**, Executive Director of Women's Earth and Climate Action Network (WECAN).

Tamara Lorincz, WILPF International's Environment Working Group

Navigating Toward Peace: Overcoming the Militarization and Climate Crisis of Our Oceans

Rickey Gard Diamond, feminist economist

Women's Waterways vs. Financialization

Timmon Wallis & Vicki Elson of NuclearBan.US

Taking Action to Address Both Climate and Nuclear Weapons

Eileen Kurkoski, WILPF Boston

Water, War and Peace

Mazim Qumziyeh, Palestinian scientist-activist & **Rabbi Arik**

Ascherman, Executive Director of the Israeli human rights organization Torat Tzedek-Torah of Justice.

Water Is Life! Especially in Wartime

Other speakers: Moses West, military veteran whose

Atmospheric Water Generator pulls moisture out of the air to produce drinking water; Mary Grant, who directs Food & Water Watch's Public Water for All Campaign; and Chris Jones, author of *The Swine Republic*

Water on the Frontlines for Peace

WILPF US 35th Triennial Congress

May 29-June 2, 2024

Register Now for the WILPF US Congress Special \$55 early rate for members!

Why do so many of us assume water will always be available? Advocacy and action are essential to protect Earth's water for lives, livelihoods, and the planet!

We welcome everyone to attend our Congress plenaries, workshops, and much more:

Wednesday, May 29 – Friday, May 31
(evenings, with daytime breakout rooms)
Saturday, June 1 – Sunday, June 2
(days and evenings, breakout rooms & plenaries)

Please look through our Congress webpages at wilpfus.org/35thCongress to see the program schedule, descriptions of day and evening plenaries, biographies of the presenters, and information on the different breakout rooms – including one featuring informational posters.

For new and non-members the Congress costs \$75 for the full five-day Congress. We also have rates by the day. Go to the Congress webpages to find [registration details](#).

Limited-time member-only rate for the whole Congress – increasing to \$75 after May 15

WILPF offers members the full Congress for only \$55. This reduced registration price is available only via a special link, which qualifying members have received in a separate eAlert email. The same registration link will also arrive via a postcard.

Join Sessions Using a New Virtual Tool to Report Your Local Water and Climate Issues

We are excited to offer several real-time, participatory sessions in Wednesday through Friday breakout rooms. You can report your issues in writing on a whiteboard and

see areas of shared concerns and regional overlaps on water and climate issues. We can also use the whiteboard to share current water and climate campaigns, actions, and recent successes. These breakout room sessions will be open repeatedly to compile this information.

In separate breakout rooms by region we'll discuss the information posted to develop broader plans of action. We'll facilitate follow-up with each other afterwards, so individuals and branches can plan advocacy, actions, and collaboration with other groups. For more information, email nancyprice@gmail.com

There's Still Time to Volunteer to Support Our 35th Triennial Virtual Congress

We're looking for two different kinds of volunteers: Tech and "cultural" However, we need to hear from you as soon as possible to be able to integrate your contributions into the Congress schedule.

Technical Assistance

Are you a Zoomer? Or do you need training? Nearly all of us attend Zoom meetings. Now you can share, or expand, your Zoom skills by volunteering to support our virtual Congress and help other Congress participants work together towards sustaining a safer and better world and protecting our water. Whether or not you're familiar with Zoom operations, we have a range of easy roles we can train you to succeed in! To volunteer, please email dace.wilpf@wilpfus.org.

Cultural Contributions

Poets, singers, dancers – this is your chance to share your gifts! During brief breaks between plenary sessions and in breakout rooms, we're looking to feature you with your original creations. (Due to copyright restrictions, we can't accept performances of others' work.) To get more information and to volunteer, please email CongressCoordinator@wilpfus.org.



The Lloyd Family Legacy Campaign Launches at WILPF US!

By Laura Dewey

Detroit Branch

These are exciting times for WILPF! Thanks to the generosity of Robin Lloyd, “platinum donor” and long-time loyal WILPF member, WILPF has a tremendous opportunity to gain more strategic leadership, increased momentum, and greater identity visibility.

The Lloyd Family Legacy Campaign (LFLC), launched in Robin’s honor, will bring much-needed funds to help move our organization forward — just in time for our 110th anniversary. The main goals of the campaign are to make WILPF more sustainable, and to bring us higher visibility with greater impact in the peace movement.

Robin’s gift will be used to anchor a campaign to solicit additional funds from current and new major donors over the next several years. As Robin explains, “Now, at the end of my life, I wish to create a legacy that will invigorate WILPF for the next generation. That’s why I am making this gift now to WILPF.”

Investing in WILPF

In October 2023, the LFLC Committee* laid out a sustainability plan and presented it to the Board, which approved it in December. Most of Robin’s funds will be used to hire an **Executive Director**, a position that has remained unfilled since 2008. Volunteer leadership at WILPF remains critical, but in a more competitive nonprofit environment, we need an accomplished professional leader with fundraising experience, gravitas, and solid nonprofit financial expertise, who can inspire cohesive program planning and outreach strategies while helping carry out Board policy, supervising staff, and relieving the Board of some of their day-to-day administrative work. An Executive Director will also guarantee institutional memory and consistency throughout changes in Board terms.

The search for an Executive Director has begun. The goal is to have a talented, organized, and energetic person on board by fall 2024, in plenty of time before our current President’s term ends, for a smooth transition.

In addition to funding this new position, The Lloyd Family Legacy Campaign will enable WILPF to undertake a re-envisioning process, with the goal of appealing to younger generations through a strong activist identity. The membership will be encouraged to participate in this process at several points, with input and advice about how best to invigorate our image,



reframe our programming, and retool our communications, including social media.

A third component of the LFLC is the hiring of professional staff to help develop programs, improve communications, and develop fundraising strategies. To grow our capacity, if we can raise additional dollars to enhance Robin’s gift, field organizers will be hired to build new branches and strengthen existing ones. This third phase will be dependent on the success of garnering additional large donations in the name of the LFLC.

The Courage to Act

Robin’s connection to WILPF runs deep. Her grandmother, Lola Maverick Lloyd, was among the more than one thousand suffragists who attended the 1915 peace meeting at The Hague, going on to co-found WILPF. A very short list of Robin’s activism reads like a history of the peace and justice movement: She co-founded the Burlington, Vermont, Peace and Justice Center in 1979, campaigned for a nuclear weapons freeze in the 1980s, traveled on the peace train from Helsinki, Finland, to Beijing, China, to attend the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, was arrested in 2005 at Fort Benning for protesting the School of the Americas, participated in the World Social Forums in the 2000s, and more.

A devoted WILPF member, Robin has served as a board member, chair of the Development Committee, and co-chair of the Disarm Committee, and she continues to lead the Burlington Branch. Of her trip to Beijing, Robin says, “During that journey, I realized that we were crossing borders, for peace, just as our foremothers had done in 1915 to try to bring peace to a warring world. And that WILPF women have been taking such courageous actions time and time again.”

Robin’s courage, and that of so many WILPF activists, has made WILPF a powerful voice for 109 years. What the future brings is unknown, but Robin’s legacy will help keep WILPF strong, sustainable, and effective into the future.

* Marybeth Gardam, Martha Collins, Laura Dewey, and Jane Sloane constituted the initial planning team, which was later expanded to include Chris Morin, Betty Burkes, Nancy Price, and Cindy Domingo.

Wolves in Sheep's Clothing

By Rickey Gard Diamond

WILPF US President

This year, the feminist alliance [An Economy of Our Own](#) will continue to grow with the generous help of WILPF-US. We're widening our circle of collaborative women, insisting on diversity and the leadership of those most affected by systemic injustices. Together, we believe our economy, now waged as war, needs transformation, not tweaks.

Our woman-centered coalition in this pivotal year, 2024 post-Dobbs, must focus on our bodies—by this I mean on all living cellular bodies that find it harder and harder to meet basic needs. Dow Jones faithfully reports Wall Street numbers as if they were a sunshine weather report. But looking out our own windows, we can see the sun's captured heat brings us floods, wildfires, winds, and destruction. The Dow's shorthand numbers surely fail to note drastically changed and captured economy.

Financialization Is a Result of Public Policy

In 1946, George Orwell wrote a great essay, "Politics and the English Language." In it he warned, "Political language – and with variations this is true of all political parties, from Conservatives to Anarchists – is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind."

You might not have thought of recent news about the "financialization" of our economy as political—but that separation of the economic and the political, pretending economics is physics and not manmade, is much like the separation of so-called "women's work" from "real work" for paid money. Created by men of a particular race and a particular money culture, this economy's inventions work to produce and maintain kings we call billionaires.

Financialization sounds like a good thing. It's money, right? But in the 80s and 90s the financial sector's deregulation by policies of both political parties in the United States, enabled the size, incomes, and profitability of the financial sector to

hugely increase. The emphasis is on short-term profits, not production, with financial trade, tools, and tax evasion increasingly squeezing, not enabling, other sectors. Construction, health and education, agriculture, retail/wholesale trade, and natural resources—all are necessary parts of a productive economy, needed for living bodies and livelihoods, but instead of enabling production, more financiers seek short-term profits whatever the cost to the rest of us

This image from [Visual Capitalist](#) shows Finance and Insurance in 2023 represented \$2 trillion, while Real Estate trade was \$3.3 trillion. Compare that with say, construction, at

just \$1.1 trillion. There's a reason why we're short on housing and decent infrastructure and why basic needs cost more. It's a matter of public policy.

Financial services are a bedrock for many industries depending on credit and loans to do business. But over the past 40 years, finance has changed – it has grown global and enormous. Freed from government regulation, its share of GDP grows bigger and less transparent. Unregulated "shadow banking" of hedge funds and private equity has redi-

rected US funds to arcane and complex currency and interest-rate trading, away from the productive economy our lives and livelihoods depend on.

The 2023 GDP reflected a total \$23.5 trillion dollars income from privately owned corporations. Wage earners pay federal income taxes at rates ranging from 10 percent to 24 percent; some pay state and sales taxes too. Yet the amount of local or state GDP revenues here shows us an overall tax rate of 7.5 percent. This shortfall again is a matter of public policy.

In 2020, reports the Institute for Taxation and Economic Policy (ITEP), 55 corporations that reportedly generated \$122 billion in profits paid zero in taxes. Meanwhile, the tax rate for capital gains of billionaires is much lower than that of wage earners, the reason billionaire Warren Buffet told us his secretary pays a higher tax rate than he does. It's a welfare program for the wealthy.



Click image to view larger.

AEEO Zooms of Our Own and Other Events

This year, AEEO will examine how exactly a captured economy and billionaires freed of government oversight use old and new financial tools that serve up a larger and larger portion for the 1%, and less and less for the majority working people and the planet's viability. As always, AEEO will invite you to join us in Zooms of Our Own, in a quest to learn from women, working on solutions and sharing actions you might use in your own state or community. We won't shy away from calling out and naming the problems.

On February 26, our speakers explained private equity, another sheep's-clothing term that hides a ravenous wolf of a business plan. Private equity firms gobble assets of companies and load them with crippling debt, often leaving them bankrupt. You'll learn how people and organizations are working for change from our recording here.

As I write this article, we are working on a March event to explain the practices that brought the economy down in 2008 and are now bigger and more widespread than ever—namely derivatives and the latest tricks for futures, options, and swats. What fun. We also plan to examine bank-debt-created currency and international trading which treat our paper dollars (or dinars, pounds, franks) as if they are assets and not bank-created-debts whose values can take down nations—as if lies are truth and murder is respectable.

On April 22, Earth Day, we'll be looking at the financialization of water, land, and newly invented "nature's assets." How do we defend Mother Earth? May 17-18, AEEO will take part in the [Alliance for Just Money's Chicago events](#) focused on important monetary reform, and then on May 30-31, we'll present at WILPF's Congress, focused on water, now threatened by financialization and its tricky tools.

On July 29, we'll look at why and how illness is far more profitable than our staying healthy, and question why profitability should even be part of healthcare's agenda. On August 26, we'll consider why global food and distribution is more profitable and less sustainable than more healthy, local food. Think Farm Bill, and yes, a derivatives' casino plays farms too.

September 30, we'll look at housing and shelter, and why more Americans are renting and finding it unaffordable. Why is it "American" for the top 10% to own multiple houses as a tax write-off, while growing numbers must sleep under bypasses or in tents? How does private equity and financialization enable this?

Finally, in October, AEEO advisory board member Shanda Williams will be leading the organizing of a third Money Matters Conference for women. We'll help host it in Vermont.

We're seeking the resources to livestream conference events this year, so that everyone interested in the radical love our money and future demand can join us.

I hope some of this, at least, will pique WILPF women's curiosity about issues that touch your lives. The economic, like the political, is personal. [WILPF's Women, Money & Democracy Committee](#) is already a big part of our efforts. Do sign up for [AEEO's Insider Update](#) sent out monthly to learn about future details, as well as hopeful news from our alliance of loving economists, most of whom are amateurs and activists like me.

My column at *Ms. Magazine*, [Women Unscrewing Economics](#), will also be focused this year on the wolves in sheep's clothing using overly elaborate economic language, as Orwell said, "to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind."

Abstract Violence and Authoritarianism

I'm reading a very dense book this month, *Financial Derivatives and the Globalization of Risk*, by Edward LiPuma and Benjamin Lee. It has 58 references to violence in its text. If anything, this changed and financialized economy seems to be waging a more ruthless war.

The authors call it "abstract" violence, meaning it's distant, removed, theoretical, and unemotional, indifferent to any social effects. They write that many people around the world, including Americans, are indulging in a nostalgia for old political authoritarianism. Why? They suggest that people are yearning for an old regime of everyday life because it offered "a foundational logic that once seemed to bind work to wealth, virtue to value, and production to place."

It didn't always work that way, just often enough we could hope. But now we're ruled by a digital regime whose only logic is power. Its favorite intelligence is artificial. How do we humans confront or even know about countless faceless offshore corporations without accountability, operating in an unregulated electronic space, "using a secret proprietary trading strategy to buy and sell arcane financial instruments?"

Arcane means "secret," or what is known by an exclusive few. The women of WILPF and AEEO and other feminist organizations know all about secrecy and its companion: cruelty. So do the women who grew a movement against domestic and sexual violence; its famous Power and Control Wheel includes economic abuse.

This year demands we work together harder than ever for what serves and respects and unites people. That's what peace and freedom looks like. That's what democracy can look like, when we include and value the economy of staying alive and remaining fully human—which is actually a pretty wonderful state!

Women Investing for Change

Taking control of our money to uplift women and girls

On December 4, 2023, [An Economy of Our Own](#) held a Zoom panel discussion on “Women Investing for Change: Feminist-ing Finance for People and Planet” with three women experts. Below are brief excerpts from the conversation, but the transcript of the entire conversation can be [found here](#), or you can view the [recording on YouTube](#).

Janine Firpo, Founder of [Invest for Better](#)

[Women] are going to control the majority of money in this country by 2030! Let that sink in for a minute. The problem is that we don't take control of our money, but if we did, and if enough of us started investing our money the way we want – in our local communities, not in sin companies, in uplifting women and girls, in creating a sustainable planet, in racial justice – if we started investing that way, we can literally change the economy with our money. So even if you think you're infinitesimal and you're small and you don't matter, it's not true. You're part of a bigger whole of women who together can change the world. That is why I do what I do....

And you do not have to do this alone, right? Learning this stuff,...it takes time and it's something that you get better at over time. I've been an investor for 35 years. I started out not very smart, I've gotten smarter over time, and I really think of this more like a marathon than a sprint. There is not a quick, easy solution. Everybody has different goals for their money, different timeframes for their money, different incomes, different amounts that they can put to this.... but it really does help to talk to other women....

I really think the reason that we have the kind of winner-takes-all, it's all about the stakeholder, the shareholder, it's all about maximizing return, nothing else matters when you're investing, comes from Milton Freedman 70 years ago.... I think he was dead wrong. It was a very white male attitude.... [and] we are in a situation today where we can see the ramifications of that.... The whole point of the kind of investing we're talking about is to *change that story*.

Vanessa Lowe, Financial Educator

These days...there's so much information. It can be like sipping from a fire hose, right? So that can be part of the challenge, which leads to analysis paralysis, “I don't know who to listen to.” But [there are resources like] [the Budgetnista](#) [Tiffany Aliche], look her up. She's absolutely fantastic, just started posting things on Facebook, now she's helped to pass legislation in New Jersey to have financial education in the school. Wouldn't that be a great idea?

So have conversations with your friends, those that are willing to talk about [money, and find] out each job that you



get, even your very first job, even if it's just a summer job, *understand those benefits!* Understand what are you gonna get in the 401(k)? What are the options in the 401(k)? What are the rules of the 401(k) at this particular job? In the interviews for new jobs, yes the salary's important, but it's about the health care, the 401(k), the matching, there's so many other things. And so ask, ask, ask a lot of questions. That's the best thing you can do. And find a favorite blog or speaker and try to follow a couple of them. That's the thing, we're in our cars a lot still. So for those long trips, listen to a good podcast.

Gwen Pokalo Hart, Women's Enterprise Center

The longer I've been in my career, I somehow fell into gender economic empowerment. I started working in women's economic empowerment and programming, and what I saw was these women, literally hundreds of women entrepreneurs per year who were starting these life-enhancing and life-sustaining businesses, and yet they're not the ones that were referenced in the sexy conversations around community development. And they so often cannot find capital that makes sense for them morally, financially, socially. That didn't add up with my experience, which is that these women are actually producing communities that I want to live in.

So I started on a mission to see how businesses...can operate differently. Here in Vermont, we're in a luxurious position of being a small rural state that allows us to be progressive and try things out and [be] experimental.... The conversations I was entering were really ethereal and cerebral, and I'm a practitioner, I need to see what's actually possible. And so I stumbled upon CV Harquail's work. She wrote the textbook *Feminism* and founded the Feminist Business Model Canvas and Feminists at Work. And it was through finding CV that it unlocked this amazing community of feminists whose values really were similar to mine.

I love that the key word here is flourishing, developing an economy that allows all people to flourish. Like, who can't get on board with that?

Letters to the President

Which Legacy Do You Want?

By H Patricia Hynes

WILPF Member-at-Large

In 2022 and 2024, I published two letters to President Joe Biden in *The Greenfield Recorder* and in national e-publications. We had been classmates and friends in our youth, and I was compelled to remind him of good qualities that I saw in him then that need to be called forth in his leadership today. WILPF US is nonpartisan and does not endorse or oppose any political candidate or party. By making these letters public, I hope to raise the kinds of questions we should ask of any US politician in our quest for peace and justice.

November 29, 2022 (Excerpt)

Dear Joe,

Remember the mid-March snowball fight with some boys in our 8th-grade class at St Helena's School in Wilmington, Delaware? The snow was wet and made for hard, icy snowballs, so I hid my young sister Monica behind a parked car. You joined me against the other boys who had started pitching snowballs; but none of us on both sides, all classmates, really wanted lasting enmity. When over, no resentments, no grudges.

You ran on "diplomacy first" (US people having wearied of "forever wars"), "no more support for the Yemen war" and negotiating a U.S. return to the [multi-sided accord](#) governing Iran's nuclear programs. These pledges were swept under the Oval Office rug, as was the [letter](#) of the Democrats' Progressive Caucus suggesting direct talks with Russia toward a ceasefire and negotiated settlement while continuing U.S. military support for Ukraine. [To your credit, Joe, you have tried on the domestic front with your ambitious Build Back Better bill and have succeeded with the lesser Inflation Reduction Act.](#)

Which legacy do you want – ever-expanding militarism or a livable world, peace and diplomacy, and the U.S. as a member of the family of nations, not its self-deemed patriarch? The boy I remember would choose the latter.

January 2024 Letter (Edited)

Dear Joe,

I would wish you a Happy New Year; but it seems trite, given all the challenges and troubles you and our country face in 2024.

Americans are [10 times](#) more likely to be shot to death



Moscow, Russia - February 26, 2022: Putin, Biden and Xi Jinping in the form of Russian nesting dolls in a gift shop in Moscow. Credit: UladzimirZuyeu/Shutterstock.

than people in other wealthy countries; with homicides, suicides, and mass shootings here on the increase. During your administration, mass murders skyrocketed into the [600s](#) per year, breaking all past records. Since 2020, more children and teens are killed by firearms than any other cause.

Don't these sound like war statistics?

Yes, you have established the first White House Office of Gun Violence Prevention. But it is rare to find anyone in your administration making the connection between our country's record-breaking gun violence at home and our country's record-breaking military weapons sales across the world, having grown dramatically [over the past 5 years](#), to democracies and [autocracies](#) alike. Isn't it possible that the US global culture of weapons and militarism with nearly 100 military bases ringing the world; and our persistent history of war ([nearly 40](#) in your and my lifetime), rebounds back to infect our violent culture here at home?

The US recently pledged [millions](#) of dollars to a loss and damage fund for poor countries vulnerable to extreme climate damage while doling out tens of billions in weapons and military aid to feed and fuel wars in Gaza and Ukraine, wars that destroy and contaminate, likely irreparably, the homeland and ecosystems of those peoples who manage to survive these wars. Crumbs for climate crisis and ruined ecosystems fall from the master's table, while feasts of weapons abound.

You, like presidents before you, often state proudly that we are the strongest military in history, as if it is a crown of excellence, when in fact it is a crown of thorns on our country, which hangs on a "cross of iron," as Eisenhower memorably warned in 1953. "[Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed.](#)" What felonious theft our military budget is from the 140 million or [40% of US citizens](#) who are poor and low-income, for whom the crucial Poor People's

Continued on page 13.

Poverty = Death

Join the PPC March on June 29



By Rev. Rowan Fairgrove, EPs

WILPF4PPC Liaison and WILPF San Jose

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and other civil rights leaders launched a Poor People's Campaign (PPC) in 1968 to tackle what he called the "Triplets of Evil — racism, poverty, and militarism." Fifty years later, activists revived this multiracial fusion movement to carry on the fight against these injustices, as well as the growing scourge of ecological devastation and the false narrative of religious nationalism. We call upon our society to see the predicaments of the most vulnerable among us and to halt the destruction of America's moral vision. People should not be dying from poverty in the richest nation on earth.

One of the hallmarks of the modern [Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival](#) is an appreciation of data. Bishop William J. Barber II frequently reminds us, "It's bad to be loud and wrong." Over the years, the Poor People's Campaign has partnered with the Economic Policy Institute, the Institute for Policy Studies, and with other organizations and scholars to help us be loud and right.¹

'A Major Risk Factor for Death'

In 2023, at the Moral Poverty Action Congress held in Washington, DC, a panel of economists and public health policy practitioners was held speaking on poverty and hunger in America. They discussed a variety of issues, including the

causes of poverty, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on low-income and minority populations, economic drivers of inflation, and how best to mitigate poverty in the country.²

One of the most electrifying findings came from the work of Professor [David Brady](#) of the School of Public Policy at UC—Riverside (UCR), et al.³ Poverty can be considered the fourth leading cause of death in the United States after heart disease, cancer, and smoking. The UCR researchers found that poor people had roughly the same survival rates as wealthier people until they hit the age of 40, after which they died at a significantly higher rate than people with better incomes and resources. Dr. Brady noted, "As a risk factor, poverty kills more people than Alzheimer's, strokes, and diabetes." The report proposes that poverty should be considered "a major risk factor" for death. "No autopsy says poverty, but maybe it should," Brady said.

These findings prompted Bishop Barber to suggest that low-wage jobs should come with a health warning, just like cigarettes and other things that can cause death.

In conjunction with the Moral Poverty Action Congress, the Poor People's Campaign and the Institute for Policy Studies updated the [PPC Fact Sheets for the States](#) and various topics.

The Cost of Poverty Fact Sheet notes that raising the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$15 per hour would put \$328 billion into the hands of families and households, who will spend most of that back into the economy. Raising the minimum wage by just \$2 could have prevented more than 57,000 suicides from 1990 to 2015.

The [Fair Labor Standards Act \(FLSA\)](#) sets the federal min-

imum hourly wage at \$7.25/hr. which for full time (40 hr./week) yields \$15,078.84 annually. Some states have a higher minimum wage, two (Georgia and Wyoming) have a lower minimum. Employees under 20 years old have a minimum wage of \$4.25/hr. Tipped workers minimum is \$2.13/hr. and was last updated in 1992! There are various categories — agricultural workers, domestic servants, people working for commission, workers with disabilities, and some small business employees — that can be paid below minimum wage (subminimum wage). Congress has not increased the minimum since 2009. According to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics inflation calculator](#) it takes \$181.73 December 2023 dollars to buy what \$100 bought in 2009. So you need almost twice as much today to survive economically and yet wages have not risen.

We Need Accurate Poverty Measures

How we define and measure poverty has real consequences in people's lives. In the early 1960s the US Government established the first Federal Poverty Line, a threshold used to establish who was considered poor. It was based on the Department of Agriculture's assessment of the least amount of money needed to feed a family in 1955 multiplied by three. People whose income falls under their threshold are considered poor under this Official Poverty Measure (OPM). It is updated only by being tied to the consumer price index but it doesn't vary by city or region, since it is a measure of how many dollars are supporting a particular size household.

Under OPM in 2021 the Federal Poverty Line was \$12,880 for a single person under age 65 and \$26,500 for a household of four. So that person making \$7.25 an hour is thought not to be in poverty with their \$15,078.84 annually! In 2011 the Census Bureau created the Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM). Even the Census Bureau they doesn't think \$15,078.84 is an adequate income.⁴

So, despite the substantial increases in our basic living expenses (housing, transportation, food, utilities, and child care), the way we calculate the federal poverty line has not been adjusted, causing millions of Americans experiencing poverty to fall through the ever-growing holes in our social net safety programs, most of which are "means tested." This includes food security programs like WIC, SNAP, and school breakfast and lunch programs; rural housing assistance, public housing, and emergency shelters; community services and social services block grants; Medicare, Medicaid, and the Children's Health Insurance Program; energy programs for low-income families and weatherization; educational programs like Head Start and support for elementary, secondary and Indian and tribal schools; tax payer clinics; youth jobs programs, and more.

Without accurate measures of who is poor, social safety programs are underfunded and unavailable to many who need them. A measure that is too low results in eligibility standards that leave out significant numbers of people who are in need of such programs and it also means these programs are not funded to meet that need.

The Cost of Poverty Fact Sheet notes that "\$1 billion in SNAP benefits creates \$1.70 billion in economic growth. In rural areas, SNAP benefits created jobs in counties where benefits were received and in neighboring counties, creating more jobs per dollar than an investment in the military."

We need a cost-of-living poverty measure that accurately assesses what it takes for all people to have a dignified life wherever they happen to live. "All people" emphatically includes people living alone, single parents, elders, two-parent households with few or lots of children, and other household types. An accurate poverty measure would not only be good for the people but for the nation as well.⁵

To bring equity, we need to lift wages and improve living conditions to make a better life for everyone in our country. The Poor People's Campaign is leaning into being "a movement that votes." On June 29, 2024, we will be back in the US Capitol for another Mass Poor Peoples and Low-Wage Workers' Assembly and Moral March on Washington and to the Polls. It is time to put our congressmembers and senators on notice that we are watching them and we vote. We need a [Third Reconstruction Agenda](#) to end poverty and low wages from the bottom up!

WILPF is a national partner of the Poor People's Campaign. I hope that our members were in their state capitols on March 2, and that you will join us in DC for the June 29 March. Even if you can't come, please educate yourself about poverty and how we measure it, and advocate for change where you can. We have up to 800 people a day dying from poverty in this country and that just isn't right.

Notes

- (1) A link to studies and fact sheets can be found on the PPC website at: www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/learn/.
- (2) Poverty Kills: The Moral Mandate for Ending Poverty in America Panel on C-SPAN <https://www.c-span.org/video/?528835-1/bishop-william-barber-launch-poor-peoples-campaign-poverty-congress>
- (3) Dr. Brady spoke from the *JAMA* article, but the subsequent *Science Advance* article has the figures he showed us. Both articles can be found at: <https://bradydave.wordpress.com/publications/>
- (4) See the Census Bureau's [Measuring America info page](#).
- (5) To get an idea of what a living wage is in your area, both Economic Policy Institute and MIT have living wage/budget calculators: [EPI Family Budget Calculator](#) [MIT Living Wage Calculator](#)

What's Money Got to Do with It?

By WILPF's Women, Money & Democracy Committee

The way our money is created influences how it is distributed and spent. Our money's origin is tied inextricably to the intended purpose of lifting up the wealthiest Americans on the backs of the most vulnerable among us.

Where does the majority of our 'money' come from? The vast majority of our currency is created by debt (loan interest and credit card interest) through which our monetary system prioritizes the oppression of people through debt burden to enrich the already wealthy. Debt is designed to keep people encumbered. A single keystroke at a bank or with a credit card charge creates new dollars when debt is incurred.

Only a minuscule amount of currency is actually printed and circulated by the Federal Reserve. Also, the name 'Federal Reserve' is a misnomer. Far from being a governmental institution, the Fed is controlled entirely by private commercial bankers who sit on its board and call the shots in our economy, continually enriching themselves.

The W\$D Committee frames the idea of an economy built on debt oppression as inherently unjust and one that limits human potential for us all.

It turns out that changing the monetary system could give us the world we want. The WILPF W\$D Committee is looking at solutions that could assist with a transition to a more just economy. Public banking, feminist economic literacy, anti-corruption legislation, and monetary reform are all projects our committee advances.

Together with our ally [Alliance For Just Money](#), W\$D co-sponsored a February 2023 webinar that explained monetary reform's promise, and the ways to get there. [The Future In Our Pockets](#) is recommended viewing for anyone who wants to understand how changing our money could make our economy more caring. The webinar is posted on the [WILPF US YouTube channel](#).

New Measures for a Caring Economy

People and governments value what they measure. Counting what matters can create a more caring economy. Looking at the full potential of human beings is not something our current economic system enables. When we choose to measure only a nation's production (the gross domestic product or GDP) we



Image used with permission from AFJM

strategically deny a long list of values that matter most to people. The GDP prioritizes what the wealthy elite tell us should matter but it fails to measure the values for an improved quality of life or the ability to thrive instead of just survive.

WILPF US's ally [An Economy of Our Own](#) partners with the [Center for Partnership Studies](#), guided by feminist icon Rianne Eisler (author of *The Chalice and The Blade* and *The Real Wealth of Nations*). Eisler's center has been promoting a more people-centered, value-centered measurement of national quality of life, rather than simply GDP. They are building the [Social Wealth Index \(SWI\)](#), a comprehensive metric of the economic value of the work of caring for people and nature. This index, essential in our time, shows what investments are needed for a better quality of life and a strong economy.

Women, Money & Democracy (W\$D) Committee unites the issues of economic justice, feminist economic literacy, and corporate control of our democracy. They meet every third Tuesday of the month at 8 pm ET. This year's theme for their activities is **"Making Money Work for People and Planet."** The 2024 priority for W\$D is increased outreach and collaboration. Analyzing the role of our money system in oppressing 99% of us is a big part of this committee's mission. Contact mbgardam@gmail.com for more information.

Banking on War

In earlier times, banking and bond issuance supported the costs of raising armies. The same is essentially true today. Big commercial banks and financiers fund weapons and military bases all over the world. As long as war and conflict are so profitable, we'll see more and more of them.

But weapons and war are just the public face of conflict. Wherever there is war there will also be scarce resources, black market crime, illegal weapons trade, insecure passage sold to refugees and human trafficking. Read more about the long-

standing links between financial institutions and war profits in [this Alliance for Just Money article](#). The article proposes, “this equation “may best describe the reality: Dollars = Debt + Destruction + Defense.”

What Can Be Done?

The W&D Committee has many suggestions and resources about what WILPFers can do to stand up for economic justice. Here we share actions in two areas, education and activism:

Education

- Watch and share [The Future In Our Pockets](#) webinar recording. Discuss it in your branch and community.
- For more information about the role that central banks played globally in the funding of World War I, read [The Lords of Finance: The Bankers Who Broke the World](#), by Liaquat Ahamed. This Pulitzer Prize-winning book and the article above would be a great discussion topic in your community. Have your branch invite the public to read together and discuss.
- Watch these AFJM videos: <https://www.monetaryalliance.org/educational-and-promotional-videos/>
- Watch the recorded conversations at [An Economy of Our Own](#) to learn more about economic solutions towards a

caring economy.

- Invite your community to discuss the book [SCREWN-OMICS: How Our Economy Works Against Women And Real Ways To Make Lasting Change](#), by Rickey Gard Diamond. This book explains what every woman should know about how the economy really works.

Activism

- Come to Chicago for the MAY DAY FOR MONEY teach-in and demonstration on the steps of the Chicago Federal Reserve Bank on May 17-19, 2024. Find out more at the Alliance for Just Money website: <https://www.monetaryalliance.org/uniting-all-voices-for-social-and-economic-justice-join-mayday-for-money/>
- A toolkit for those who can't come to Chicago but want to support the action is available at the website and could be used to create activist opportunities in your local communities.
- Normalize these conversations about monetary reform, public banking, and unrigging our economy.
- Join the Women, Money & Democracy Committee to get the inside scoop, help lead on economic justice issues, and learn how to have comfortable conversations within your community.

Letters to the President

Continued from page 9.

Campaign advocates. 44 million Americans “[struggled with hunger](#)” in 2022, according to USDA. Diseases of [despair](#) are rampant. Our life expectancy – a critical marker of people’s overall health – is lower than all [comparable](#) wealthy countries, and many other countries, including China and Cuba. Recall Dr. Martin Luther King’s warning: “*If America does not use her vast resources of wealth to end poverty and make it possible for all of God’s children to have the basic necessities of life, she too will go to hell.*”

I do wish that that you had read the other Catholic president [John F Kennedy’s 1963 peace speech](#) before you met recently in San Francisco with Xi Jinping. At the height of the Cold War with the Soviet Union and the Cuban Missile crisis, Kennedy and Khrushchev opened a line of communication and held many secret talks, despite monumental political differences, for the sake of moving away from imminent nuclear war. In Kennedy’s 1963 address at American University...he foregrounded the two countries shared humanity. “If we cannot end now our differences, *at least we can help make the world safe for diversity.* For, in the final analysis, our most

basic common link is that we all inhabit this small planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children’s future. And we are all mortal.” In many diplomatic private talks and communications, also involving Pope John XXIII, Kennedy and Khrushchev laid the groundwork for ending above ground nuclear weapons testing with the goal of eliminating nuclear weapons.

Xi’s remarks to a gathering of US business leaders, following your private meeting with him last November, manifests a kinship with JFK’s speech. He displayed respect for our country’s accomplishments (even if for self-serving reasons) and advocated the two countries accept political diversity in a multipolar world. Joe, if you had listened more openly, you may have given a wiser response to a reporter’s question than your dismissive *Yes, I think Xi is a dictator* – an off-the-cuff remark that conveys little will for working together to rescue the world from war and climate crisis and to live in a multipolar world. *You are generous with weapons; but miserly with dialogue* where it is most needed.

My wish for you in 2024 is to imbibe this wisdom and act on it: *What is hateful to yourself, do not do to your fellow man.* Make it your own, end the US addiction to war, and help save our country’s soul.

Care Jobs Are Green Jobs

Climate Action and Investing in the Care Economy



Women on average spend

4.1 hours/day

on unpaid care and domestic work, compared to

1.7 hours/day

for men



Women's unpaid contributions to healthcare equate to

2.35%

of global GDP, or the equivalent of

US\$ 1.5 trillion



When women's contribution to all types of care (not just healthcare) is considered, this figure rises to

US\$ 11 trillion

to climate, workforce, and infrastructure policies, and that care jobs are green jobs.

Accepting that green jobs should refer to all jobs related to the well-being of people and the planet, including care work, means advocating for care work to be recognized and funded accordingly.

New WECAN Report on Care and Climate

This is exactly the message a new report took to the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly and the UN Climate Ambition Summit in September 2023, highlighting the need to ensure that women are included in the transition to a green economy, by considering the essential role of the female-dominated care sectors.

The new report on care and climate by [Women's Earth & Climate Action Network, International](#) (WECAN) makes an urgent call to consider how investments in care can help to recognize and redistribute care work, set economies up for the future, reduce the burden of women and ultimately help in emissions reductions.

By reducing the care burden on women — and ensuring that the economy is set up to offer quality care infrastructure, AND well paid jobs within these care sectors, WECAN argues that we can reduce the burden of unpaid care work on women, boost women's participation in paid employment and ultimately have more people contributing to the efforts required to support a green transition.

Increasing women's workforce participation is critical to achieving a green transition, particularly when it comes to the fast-growing labor needs of the renewable energy sector. Currently, women account for around a third of roles in renewable energy worldwide, with demand for workers in this sector set to increase dramatically over the coming decade. For example, in Australia, engineering is already experiencing a critical worker shortage, with just 13.1 per cent of the sector female.

But through shifts to renewable energy, every country must continue to service the care infrastructure, and address growing worker shortages. In the United States, these shortages



UN Secretary-General's policy brief: The impact of COVID-19 on women

By Angela Priestley

Women's Agenda

Every day, an estimated 16.4 billion hours are spent on unpaid care work internationally, with the overwhelmingly majority of these hours undertaken by women. This is the equivalent to the mother of all workforces: two billion people working eight hours a day, for zero pay. Meanwhile, across the globe, the care infrastructure that underpins societies continues to rely on overwhelmingly feminized sectors, like nursing, early childhood education, teaching, and aged care.

So what does both paid and unpaid care work have to do with climate change?

First, the burden of unpaid care work that women already carry increases during times of crisis, as we saw during the pandemic and have seen following extreme weather events. Women take on increased domestic and care work as resources disappear. According to a [UN Women Explainer](#), climate shocks also increase health care work for women. Women and girls bear the brunt of water scarcity, standing in long queues and walking long distances to collect water for their families, and they face greater food insecurity than men when there is food scarcity.

Second, paid care jobs are key to the future of work, and while they may not immediately come to mind as being "green jobs," care work is key to supporting a green transition and the shift to a decarbonized economy. The Feminist Green New Deal Coalition and Data for Progress released polling and a report in September 2021 which found that a strong majority of respondents believe care should be central

are already at a crisis level and are projected to get worse. A 2022 [Boston Consulting Group \(BCG\) report](#) stresses that “understanding the magnitude of the care economy and its current dysfunction is critical to grappling with labor shortages.” Care jobs “need to be more appealing and valued, starting with higher wages,” the report’s authors assert.

Equally important are necessary cultural and policy changes. In a February 2024 episode of WBUR’s On Point, “[Finding Creative Solutions to America’s Care Crisis](#),” economics professor and care work expert Nancy Folbre explains, “we inhabit a culture that for centuries basically has treated care as women’s moral responsibility.... And I think what’s happening now is that level of emotional connection and moral obligation is just reaching a burnout point. It’s no longer sustainable.”

This is why the BCG report calls for “interlocking solutions” that include “destigmatizing care jobs as ‘women’s work’,” providing workplace flexibility, and advocating for governmental/policy solutions at the state and federal level, including subsidized or universal childcare and paid maternity leave. Without such solutions, experts agree, the US faces dire social and economic problems in the immediate future.

Meanwhile, discussions on delivering a just, green transition are typically focused on addressing male-dominated industries, while women are far from being fairly represented in key decision-making bodies regarding how these significant shifts will play out, both at the international and individual country level. This means such decision-making misses the critical feminist analysis of climate decision-making, and can also fail to miss the impact of unpaid work on women and the essential and critical role of care work.

Too often the care sector is also forgotten when considering the jobs that will be key in the “future of work,” with the care piece missing from discussions on the best approaches and strategies for decarbonizing the economy and failing to get significant airtime in domestic and international negotiations.

Drawing on four case studies of women leading on care work internationally, the report by Women’s Earth and Climate Action Network (WECAN) outlines how investing in care supports in building equitable and resilient societies.

It also highlights how pressure on the care sector will only grow with climate change, with the need for care increasing alongside things like heat stress, hunger, as well as the destruction caused by extreme weather events.

Among WECAN’s recommendations in their report are calls for funding to provide high-quality “green care jobs” — that is, care jobs that are secure and well paid. WECAN wants to see economies reoriented to be focused on well-being and care over economic growth, and recommends boosting investments into public infrastructure to acknowledge the needs of women and care workers directly.

Importantly, WECAN also calls for women “in all of their diversity” to be fully represented in decision-making processes and policy-making related to climate action, renewable energy and a just transition.

Key Stats from the WECAN Report:

- Unpaid care and domestic work are estimated to be equivalent to between 10 and 39% of GDP, depending on the country
- 16.4 billion hours are spent on unpaid care work every day, according to a survey by the International Labour Organization on time use across 64 countries. At a global average of minimum hourly wage, this would amount to 9 per cent of global GDP, or USD 10.8 trillion dollars a year — three times the global tech industry
- Unpaid care contributes more to the economy in some countries than manufacturing, commerce, and transport
- Paid care demand is expected to increase from 8.7% of global GDP in 2015, to 14.9% in 2030
- Male employment is often given higher priority than female employment during policymaking
- 38 million jobs are estimated to be needed in renewable energy worldwide by 2030, according to the ILO, a threefold increase from the current sector
- Renewable energy jobs generally pay better. The report shares a US example, where the workers earn an average USD\$25 an hour in renewable energy, almost double the US\$13 an hour for care jobs.
- Less than one third of those employed in the renewable sector worldwide are women — but this is still higher than the energy sector overall, at 22 per cent
- Women comprised just 35 per cent of delegates and 20 percent of heads of delegations at COP27 in 2022
- Less than one third of 192 national energy frameworks across 137 countries include gender considerations.

You can download the full report from WECAN [here](#).

Angela Priestley is the co-founder of [Women’s Agenda](#) and now heads up the publication’s parent company, [Agenda Media](#). She also sits on the board of the [Women’s And Girls’ Emergency Centre](#), and is an advisor for [Action Aid’s Arise Fund](#), supporting women’s leadership in climate resilience and disaster response. This is an edited version of an article she wrote for [Women’s Agenda](#), with information about the US context added by the P&F editor.

Worker Co-ops Build a Solidarity Economy

By Wendy S. McDowell

Peace & Freedom Editor



Workers at the Evergreen Cooperative Laundry in Cleveland, Ohio, photographed for an International Labour Organization article. Credit: ILO Photos/John Isaac.

Increasing numbers of activists, including WILPFers, are recognizing the failures of capitalism and are committed to constructing a “solidarity economy” (SE), defined by the [New Economy Coalition](#) as “a global movement to build a just and sustainable economy where we prioritize people and the planet over endless profit and growth.” One powerful strategy in building SE is worker co-ops. According to the [U.S. Federation of Worker Cooperatives](#), these are “values-driven businesses that put worker and community benefit at the core of their purpose... “[W]orker members at...cooperatives participate in the profits, oversight, and often management of the enterprise using democratic principles.”

I will introduce you here to three co-ops doing ground-breaking work to realize a solidarity economy, but I encourage all WILPF branches and members to investigate if co-ops exist where you live. If they do, please support them; if they do not, please consider joining in coalition with others to get a local co-op off the ground.

Evergreen Cooperative Initiative Keeps Growing

To respond to the ravages of deindustrialization in the rust belt city of Cleveland, Ohio, Evergreen was launched in 2007 by a working group convened by the Cleveland Foundation. According to an [article on shelterforce.org](#) written by Brandon Duong, “Evergreen uses an innovative structure...called a holding company,” in which the cooperative businesses are owned by a larger nonprofit umbrella organization which provides back-office services, and creates new cooperatives. This structure allows Evergreen “to not only benefit its workers but the broader community as well by creating new jobs that pay a living wage.”

The co-op faced both expected and unexpected challenges in the early years, but learned from its mistakes, adjusted strategies, and weathered the struggles. Initially, “only two cooperatives—a commercial laundry business and a solar panel installation company—had opened,” Duong writes, but in the years since then, Evergreen Cooperatives has grown “from two companies with a total of 18 workers in 2010 to five companies with approximately 320 workers” in 2021. At that point, Evergreen Cooperative Laundry, Evergreen Energy Cooperative, and Green City Growers (and industrial urban greenhouse) were its biggest.

More recently, “the organization is transitioning away from building new cooperatives from the ground up and toward an acquire-convert-support strategy. That means Evergreen will acquire successful, existing businesses from retiring owners, convert them into worker-owned cooperatives, provide existing employees a stake in the profits, and integrate the businesses into the Evergreen network.” The Evergreen website now lists four additional businesses that were brought into the network this way: Phoenix Coffee (Ohio PC Cooperative); Berry Insulation (BI Cooperative); Intellitronix (INTX Cooperative), and LEFCO Worthington (LW Cooperative).

Cooperation Jackson Learns Importance of Autonomy

Steve Dubb recently interviewed Kali Akuno, co-founder and co-director of Cooperation Jackson, for *Nonprofit Quarterly*, “[Cooperation Jackson at 10: Lessons for Building a Solidarity Economy](#).” This co-op was formed in 2014, and started with a loan fund to support cooperatives from then Jackson (MS) Mayor Chokwe Lumumba’s office. But Lumumba tragically died in February 2014, which completely changed the level of support and political alignments in the city. Rather than being “able to work at the scale of the entire municipality,” Akuno and his coworker had to scale back their vision.



Cooperation Jackson is working to realize a solidarity economy in Jackson, Mississippi.

The beginning years were tough, Akuno says. “By the time we figured out how to actually make [the co-op] sustainable, with a little café and some catering for events, the landlord started upping our rent every six months.... The lesson drawn from that was never rent anything again. We really wanted to concentrate on acquiring...land, decommodifying it, taking it off the speculative market.” Cooperation Jackson did just that, and now owns “over 40 properties in the city itself,... well over 20 acres of land.” They also have access to over 100 acres of land in nearby Canton “for larger farming projects.”

Akuno says “the base of our work in many respects is the community land trust (CLT)...land we could use for urban farming, for training, for community education, but also for... some of the initial business enterprises.” He adds, “If the CLT is the anchor, then cooperative development is...the second tier. Then the third tier of our work is trying to create supporting institutions and practices that enable greater mutual aid and support.”

Cooperation Jackson’s several businesses include “The Green Team” (lawn care business), Freedom Farms (organic vegetables), and a print shop. In 2024, they hope to complete the Ida B. Wells Plaza, which will include Eversville Design and Print Shop, Chief Farms (medical cannabis), and the People’s Grocery.

Helping a ‘Hurting City’ with a ‘Bottom Up Approach’

In a podcast [interview with Emily Kawano](#), co-director of Wellspring Cooperative in Springfield, Massachusetts, and Coordinator of the US Solidarity Economy Network, she says Springfield “is definitely a hurting city,” with “high unemployment, high poverty, facing all those kind of problems.” To address these needs, “Wellspring Cooperatives...has three strategies for cooperative development.”

“We began by leveraging the joint purchasing power of the big institutions like colleges and hospitals,” she explains.

“We have also utilized a more bottom up approach by developing an educational co-op certificate program called Co-op Boot Camp that is open to people who have an idea and are interested in starting up their own co-op. Our third... strategy is conversions – transitioning a conventional firm into a worker-owned cooperative. This is a huge opportunity, as the ‘silver tsunami’ of baby-boomer, small-business owners approach retirement without a succession plan.”

Wellspring currently has five co-op businesses in their network: Wellspring Upholstery, Old Wooden Windows (a women-owned window restoration cooperative), Jumping Jack Hoops (which makes and sells hula hoops and offers workshops), Wellspring Harvest (a quarter-acre hydroponic greenhouse), and Greenlove Eco-cleaning. “There are other co-ops in the pipeline, including plans to build a national childcare co-op in partnership with...Co-op Cincy, Cooperation Jackson and Cooperation Santa Ana,” Kawano reports. “Our hope is to have a network of a hundred businesses, employing thousands of people to really shift the economic base in Springfield.”

“The question is: can we do better by constructing a more just and sustainable economy grounded in our better angels – our impulses of love, solidarity, cooperation, mutualism, and compassion?” Kawano asks. She underscores, “Cooperatives are a major backbone of SE, whether we’re talking about worker, producer, or consumer cooperatives. Many cities are investing millions of dollars supporting worker cooperatives as a strategy for inclusive economic development.”

Zoom of Our Own on Co-ops

What makes co-op businesses different? Why are women and people of color drawn to them? How do you start one? Where can you get help? WILPF partner [An Economy of Our Own](#) held a conversation addressing these questions on March 28, 2022. In “Sharing Ownership: A Zoom of Our Own Conversation on Co-Op Businesses,” three women shared their expertise: Jamila Medley, an independent co-op consultant working with black women’s co-ops; Georgia Kelly, who coordinates trainings with Mondragon Cooperatives in Spain, the largest co-op corporation in the world; and Rickey Gard Diamond, the founder of AEEO. If you are interested in learning about the growing number of worker-owned businesses, or possibly starting a co-op where you live, [view the “Sharing Ownership” recording here.](#)

Bringing Feminist Peacemaking to Immigration Debates

By Tina D. Shelton and Adrian Bernal

Border and Migration Justice Working Group

Like many issues, immigration and borders go through cycles of being in the public awareness and not. We are in one of those periods in which “the border” and “immigration” are talked about quite often, but not in a way that is productive, problem-solving, or even respectful of basic human rights.

WILPF members generally know that the right to move to another place, seeking refuge from persecution, is one of the rights declared in Article 14 of the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) (proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948). Just as nation states have a right to maintain borders, individuals can seek a better life for themselves. The freedom to move is also enumerated in Article 13, and Article 25 enshrines the rights to a standard of living adequate for the health and wellbeing of (one)self and (one’s) family. As members of an organization that advocates for justice, we are continually faced with a disconnect between reality and what is desired for all peoples everywhere.

WILPF members are also aware that migration affects women in a particular way because they are committed to the maintenance of life around them (human lives and the natural world). So it is often women, out of desperation, who are forced to emigrate to seek a better life for their children. A variety of fates await them, many of which are difficult and unfavorable. At the same time, women are leaders within the movements that are defending land and human rights. This is why we support investing in a culture of integrative dialogue, a climate of tolerance and welcome, and guaranteed human rights standards to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of all members of society.

Land Rights Abuses and US Policy

From historical memory and from our continued advocacy, WILPF members know that many of the stressors that lead to migration in large numbers are exacerbated by military intervention in the home country. All too often, this militarism is impacted by United States policy. Receiving refugees from Afghanistan in recent years was a stark reminder of how our policy impacts the need for asylum, as those who were in most need of escape from their home were those who cooperated with our military forces. Clearly, our governmental policies



At an “Abrazos, not walls” event on May 6, 2023 in Juarez, Mexico, families separated by immigration policies embrace for three minutes at the Mexico-U.S. border. Credit: David Peinado Romero/ Shutterstock.

have supported political and corporate entities that maintain the status quo of inequity, corruption, and land rights abuses that contribute to migration in Central and Latin America, putting great pressure on a system in our nation that has been in need of reform for decades. The policies of Democratic and Republican administrations, both historically and recently, back business and extractive industries that do not support Indigenous peoples or their right to land and a standard of living that is sustainable and humane.

For example, large dams are built in the name of energy production, but they are built on the private land of large landowners, and the bulk of the electricity is sold outside of the country. While providing electricity to the home of the wealthy landowner, they do not provide it to the workers who live on the land. In many cases, these same workers are not even allowed to improve their own simple homes.¹ A relatively small amount is paid to the municipality, thereby increasing the wealth gap. Land ownership is also increasing inequity as small farmers who are landowners sometimes use their land as equity for banks when they purchase the chance to work with coyotes (human smugglers) to help them migrate.² If they are not successful, the land is no longer in their or their family’s hands and is then bought by wealthy landowners. This is contributing to gross inflation that puts even more pressure on low-income residents.

All the while, corrupt political systems dominate, even under revisionist initiatives such as the Alliance for Prosperity. The stated goal of the Alliance for Prosperity system is to rely on three pillars of security, good governance, and international investment in order to slow migration, but the result has been quite different. While not decreasing migration, it has led to an increase in militarization and human rights abuses.

Human rights defenders and land defenders such as Bernardo Call Xol are targeted.³ Some, such as Berta Cáceres, are even murdered,⁴ yet the US continues to support the armed forces that engage in these atrocities.

We seem to have no appetite for true anti-corruption initiatives in Central America. Bernardo Arevalo's election in Guatemala and Xiomara Castro's in Honduras have been bottom-up movements by citizens who are tired of the corruption that each new administration brings with it. However, these new administrations face an uphill battle fighting the unscrupulous who do not want to let go of power, either because they like the economic rewards or they fear being prosecuted.

Elections and Myths about Migration

We are in an election year. The Republican candidate for president, Donald Trump, promises that in his second term, he would create the "largest domestic deportation operation in American history."⁵ Trump uses dehumanizing language about migrants and encourages the Texas governor to challenge federal authority. His proposed "plan" is to deport those he calls "invaders" after using National Guard troops to find and move migrants to internment camps prior to deportation. While immigrant rights organizations express horror about these proposals, in public debates we rarely hear about these concerns for human rights, or for the vast disruption in our economic systems that would occur if these measures were to come into play. It would be impossible to enact such a plan without disrupting families.

Meanwhile, fears over rising anti-immigrant sentiments are pushing Democratic candidates to prove they are equally "tough on immigration." A new "Democrats for Border Security" task force has formed among House Democrats, and it has been widely acknowledged that President Biden has made a "rightward shift" on the issue.

Heather Cox Richardson, the history professor whose "Letters from an American" have become a routine part of the day for many since she began writing in 2019, explains that when President Ford repealed Executive Order 9066 which created internment camps for people of Japanese descent during WWII, he claimed that as Americans we have learned from the "tragedy" of that time. He declared that such internment camps "should never again be repeated." Instead of learning our lessons from the past, we are increasing the military presence at our border, and even preventing Customs and Border Patrol from saving drowning refugees.

At a recent webinar sponsored by the WILPF Chicago Restart team, Dr. Felice Batlin put it this way: "the old tropes are the same tropes."⁶ As this webinar so clearly documented, we continue to perpetuate myths with no basis in reality, such

as the myth of the migrant as a criminal, when people who are here without documentation are actually less likely to end up in our carceral system.⁷ Movement of people into a place actually leads to an increase in economic growth rather than to the competition for scarce jobs that is feared.⁸ The work of researchers in the area of anti-immigrant prejudice includes finding concrete ways to combat our inclinations to prejudice each other in our daily interactions. A lack of trust for outsiders can lead to a fear of migrants in our communities, yet the likelihood that we will encounter migrants is only going to grow as we add climate migration to those who are fleeing conflict. Scientists are also studying how to combat this innate distrust, including forming connections and friendships across cultural groups, which has proven to decrease the perception of threat that lies beneath the surface of distrust.⁹ Many WILPF members are supporters of open border policies that increase the kinds of cross-cultural exchanges that help to counter myths and tame fears.

Advocacy and Activism

Citizens are working to increase trust, and to build bridges and connections with migrants, thereby honoring the *other* perception that exists alongside the unhelpful myths that are a part of our national mystique, the one that says "We are a nation of immigrants." There has been an increasing recognition that our sense of ourselves as a nation should not erase the experience of Indigenous peoples. At the same time, acknowledging that most of our cities and communities have been formed by our history of multiple waves of immigration can help us to create shared experiences that lead to acceptance across groups.

Many states, such as Pennsylvania, are building a network to change laws that prevent residents from obtaining driver's licenses. Laws were passed in the wake of 9/11 when fear of immigrants was rising and Islamophobia was on broad display, but many states have begun to recognize that preventing residents from obtaining a legal way to drive actually makes our roads less safe and leads to other compounding problems such as higher insurance rates. Coalitions are being built between businesses, immigration advocacy agencies, and other interested groups to support laws that benefit those who want to drive legally, while protecting the privacy of all license holders. (More info at www.drivingpafoward.org.)

WILPF members and others who see through the myths and recognize that the struggles of migration fall on female caregivers in a particular way, can view these human rights issues through the lens of feminist peacemaking.¹⁰ Creating the momentum for change is what we do, not only through legislation but also through building coalitions and trans-

forming our worldview. While we are experiencing another rise in anti-immigration sentiment, rising at the same time are movements that are creating more tolerant and inclusive worldviews. Research immigrant rights and refugee welcoming organizations in your area; these are the kinds of networks that WILPF members can support and be a part of. Strengthening our ties across borders, and continuing our work to demilitarize borders, is a vital part of that work.

Immigration policy that focuses on removing or detaining people and creates obstacles rather than a humane system for processing claims will continue to sow discord, distrust, myths, and oppression. All of our policies, including US foreign policy, need to recognize Indigenous land rights and the need for safety among all people, especially the most vulnerable. Supporting militarization within countries and on the border does not meet the needs of people in their home countries, where most people would prefer to remain.

If you would like to join our Border and Migration Justice Working Group, you can reach out to Adrian Bernal (adrian_bernal_2001@yahoo.com) or Tina Shelton (tinades@verizon.net) to be put on our list.

Notes

- 1 Giovanni Batz, "U.S. policy Toward Central America Continues Legacy of Displacement." [nacla.org](https://www.nacla.org), April 29, 2021.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Guatemala: Bernardo Caal Xol should never have spent a day in prison - Amnesty International, March 25, 2022.
- 4 See [Remembering Berta Caceres: Seven years on, the fight for justice continues](https://www.globalwitness.org), [globalwitness.org](https://www.globalwitness.org), March 2, 2023.
- 5 Isaac Arnsdorf, [Trump brags about efforts to stymie border talks: 'Please blame it on me'](https://www.washingtonpost.com), *The Washington Post*, January 27, 2024.
- 6 Chicago WILPF, ["Immigrant Advocacy Then and Now"](https://www.youtube.com), YouTube.com.
- 7 Alex Nowrasteh, ["Illegal Immigrants Have a Low Homicide Conviction Rate: Setting the Record Straight on Illegal Immigrant Crime"](https://www.cago.org), [cago.org](https://www.cago.org)/blog, February 28, 2024.
- 8 See ["The Case for Open Borders"](https://www.theintercept.com), *The Intercept*, February 2, 2024; and ["Immigrants Contribute Greatly to U.S. Economy, Despite Administration's 'Public Charge' Rule Rationale"](https://www.cbpp.org), Center on Budget and Policy Priorities ([cbpp.org](https://www.cbpp.org)), August 15, 2019.
- 9 Sophie Bushwick, ["What Causes Prejudice against Immigrants, and How Can It Be Tamed?"](https://www.scientificamerican.com), *Scientific American*, July 29, 2011.
- 10 See <https://www.wilpf.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Omnibus-Resolution-on-Migration.pdf>

Now's the Time for a Major Woman-led Peace Movement

By Dianne Blais

Jane Addams Branch Convener

Judith Hand, Andre Sheldon and Laura George feel that NOW is the time to strive for world peace, and they share the conviction that women should lead. These three WILPF US members have each started their own peace campaign.

Dr. Judith Hand (San Diego) was the first guest speaker at the "open to all" Jane Addams (JA) virtual branch meeting on January 17, 2024. She has studied war for over 20 years via science. The results of her years of study and reflection can be found on the website [A Future Without War](https://www.afuturewithoutwar.org), and another site hosts the end result of her research, [Project Enduring Peace](https://www.projectenduringpeace.org) (PEP). PEP is an incipient women's movement to secure a binding global peace treaty to end international wars.

Andre Sheldon (Boston) was our guest speaker in February. He founded and directs [Global Strategy of Nonviolence](https://www.globalstrategyofnonviolence.org) which includes the Emergency Peace Plan for Women to reverse the direction of the current male driven wars that are destroying the fabric of our civilization. He can be contacted at: Andre@GlobalStrategyofNonviolence.org



Laura George (Virginia) is a new WILPF member, an attorney, interfaith minister, and author. Learn about her efforts at www.PeacePentagon.net. She presented her two-year strategic plan called the "Founding Mothers Movement" at the March 20th JA branch meeting.

Judith, Andre, and Laura believe NOW is the time for peace efforts. Do you want to help with their efforts? Please contact them or me at JABrCon@wilpfus.org for more info.

NOTE: All JA branch meetings are on the third Wednesday of the month at 5 pm PT. You can listen to past JA meetings on the [WILPFUstoday YouTube station](https://www.wilpfus.org).

COP 28 Report

Rising Resistance and Demands for a Change of Course

By **Cindy Piester**

WILPF Environmental Working Group and COP 28
Virtual Participant

"This COP has failed us... We have come to the conclusion that the course correction that is needed has not been secured. We have made incremental advancement over business as usual when what we really needed was an exponential change in our action."

— [Samoa speaking](#) on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)

Samoa's words resonated powerfully across the auditorium at COP 28, and their speakers received a prolonged and vigorous standing ovation.

The scientific community has long indicated that to protect our climate system we must end our reliance on fossil fuels. With [more than 2,400 industry-affiliated lobbyists](#), including the [American Petroleum Institute](#), not everyone is on the same page.

We are failing to move quickly enough. Emissions reductions in the current [Nationally Determined Contributions \(NDCs\)](#), including those of the [United States](#), are only a fraction of what is needed. The same is true of [existing financial contributions](#) to climate funds. Economic disparities and divides between developed and developing nations are leaving developing nations unable to implement adaptation plans because they cannot afford them, while more affluent nations are not doing enough to address fossil fuel consumption or climate-exacerbated disparities.

Delays, Broken Promises, and Melting Ice Sheets

For three decades, the international community's best efforts to unite in the face of this common threat have been embodied in the COP meetings. Unfortunately, a phaseout of fossil fuels has not been achieved in time to avoid the potentially catastrophic risks now upon us. The Greenland and West Antarctic ice sheets, as well as, the North Atlantic Subpolar Gyre circulation are already at risk of crossing major [tipping points](#). 2023 was the hottest year on record and likely the hottest in the last 100,000 years.

Calling for cooperation over conflict and for the United States and China to address climate, the former director of NASA's Goddard Space Institute, James Hansen, informed COP



participants that the 1.5° C goal is "deader than a doornail" and that 2° C is dying. Escalating droughts, storms, floods, and melting glaciers are already leading to rising human, environmental, and economic costs. The economic costs are now estimated to be [\\$16 million a hour](#). We are in a state of emergency, yet fossil fuel interests are still attempting to dominate and minimize COP outcomes.

Potential remedies were discussed, including the "Summit of the Future" that the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) will host in September 2024. UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres is hoping the summit will bring fresh perspectives and new possibilities and solutions. Much more needs to be asked, especially of the wealthier nations, because much is needed.

Part of the COP dilemma has to do with the continuing inequalities between nations and regions. The crimson past of exploitation, colonialist approaches, deprivation, and fossil fuel related wars is still with us. The disproportionate genocide in Gaza that followed the Hamas-led attack, kidnappings, and killing of hundreds of civilians in Israel on October 7, 2023 – in which the US is complicit – hung like a shadow over the summit. Does it come as a surprise that in June of 2023, the [Israeli government gave approval to develop the gas fields 22 miles off the coast of Gaza](#) that were under the jurisdiction of the [Palestinian National Authority \(PA\)](#)?

Outraged Global Community Stands Its Ground

The global community was disturbed not only because the United Arab Emirates (UAE) handed the COP Presidency to Dr. Sultan Al Jaber who was also the CEO of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC), but by the shocking revelations that followed from leaked documents originating from ADNOC. These documents revealed both that Al Jaber planned to manage business deals for ADNOC while presiding

over COP, and that the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) was warning their members to “proactively reject any text or formula that targets energy i.e. fossil fuels rather than emissions.” In a public interaction, Dr. Al Jaber claimed that “there is no science out there that says that the phase-out of fossil fuel is what’s going to achieve 1.5° C”. In the past, much of the media has tended to ignore COP, but this time the global community was well informed of these breaches.

As pressure rose, so did the fierce determination of parties to stand their ground. In the end, all nations, including the OPEC nations, signed the final document agreeing to *transition away* from fossil fuels. This was the first time in thirty years that the words “fossil fuels” had even been used in such a context. While the agreement contained no timeline, and failed to meet the urgency required by island nations, it was touted as a significant “first” and the beginning of the end of fossil fuels.

Bolivia Charges Climate Neo-Colonialism

The Paris Agreement obligated developed nations to provide \$100 billion annually to support the efforts of developing nations to address climate change related challenges, but this has not been met and will expire in 2025. [Without funding](#), some nations won’t be able to reach their NDCs. As world leaders took the podium, many spoke openly about their nation’s critical economic needs.

Developed and developing nations are set apart by egregious economic disparities, as well as disparities in the amount of GHG emissions they each have put into the atmosphere. While developing nations are not a monolithic whole and circumstances vary, they must be part of the solution as they are expected to contribute about [50% of global emissions by 2030](#).

Bolivia delivered charges of climate neo-colonialism and recalled that the Paris Agreement recognized differentiated responsibilities and circumstances of the developed and developing nations. “It has been eight years since the Paris Agreement was adopted, these eight years saw developed countries trying to erode and erase these principles [of decarbonization] and try to transfer these binding [obligations](#) onto developing countries.” Going on to say that developed nations are to take the lead on meeting reduction targets but, instead they “have plans to expand their [fossil fuels](#) going up to 2050.” One of those nations was the US, which [set records](#) with our 2023 fossil fuel production – the largest of any nation in history.

One of Samoa’s many objections was to “endorse tech-

nology that could be taking action that would undermine our efforts” [to decarbonize]. The section they were referencing called for increasing reliance on, among other options, the thoroughly disproven [carbon capture and storage technology](#) (CCST). We are past the point of looking to false solutions or hoping for miracle technological cures; we must end our addiction to climate altering fossil fuels!

Loss and Damages Fund Operationalized



One key achievement at COP 28 was the operationalization of Loss and Damage Funds. Earmarked for vulnerable developing nations dealing with the ravages of climate, these funds will be distributed as grants rather than loans to assist in rebuilding after climate disasters. This success followed from a three-decades-long struggle initiated and led by The Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) but with strong support from NGO’s such as WILPF. Support for this effort figured prominently in WILPF US actions at COP 27 in Egypt, as our handouts were distributed to delegates and climate leaders.

\$700 million was pledged during the conference, largely by the UAE, Germany, Italy and France, but this [is less than 0.2% of what is needed](#). The US contribution of \$17.5 billion was embarrassingly minute in comparison with either the 2023 [US Military Budget of \\$858 billion](#) or the 2022 fossil fuel subsidies of [\\$757 billion](#). The US culpability for causing the climate catastrophe is also an embarrassment. The entire population of the continent of Africa makes up 18-19% of the global human population but is responsible for only 4% of global emissions. 20 million Africans are facing acute food insecurity as a result of unrelenting drought. In contrast the US, which includes about 5% of the global population, is responsible for about [13.5% of global emissions](#) and is the [largest cumulative greenhouse-gas \(GHG\) emitter](#) in the world (about 25%).

Outdated Financial Institutions in a Multipolar World

The IMF and World Bank are international institutions created at the close of WW II and are dominated by the US and EU with minimal input from the Global South. After WW II, developing world governments facing heavy challenges were offered high interest loans by the IMF and World Bank, but they came with harsh conditionalities that caused hardships and austerity; measures now seen as outdated, unfair, and a cynical postcolonial means of repression. These issues were faced anew when these institutions greatly benefitted wealthier nations over poorer ones following the COVID-19 pandemic, in alignment with their own rules.

Barbados, a debt-ridden nation that was hard hit by COVID, rising food prices resulting from the war on Ukraine, and major climate-caused flooding, demanded major banking reforms. Their widely-supported *“Bridgetown Initiative”* demanded, and got, improved funding architectures that allowed for special drawing rights and concessionary lending. An enraged Al Gore supported them further with his scolding of the World Bank for its predatory lending practices in Africa and successfully called for its president and climate-denier to step down.

Both the World Bank and the IMF have made many reforms including broadening the scope of its Climate Resilient Debt Clauses and offered pauses on the existing loans of the most vulnerable nations. The World Bank is producing and ensuring high integrity carbon markets, and the IMF is pushing for carbon pricing that would better calculate the true costs of high carbon activities, reduce its use, and raise climate funds. Additionally, they are requesting governments discontinue fossil fuel subsidies, now at \$7 trillion annually, and instead direct them to climate finance.

BRICS nations have been working to provide a counter-point to better meet their own interests. For its first fifteen years, BRICS was made up of Brazil, Russian, India, China and South Africa, but expanded in January to include Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, and Iran. Together they represent about 45% of the global population and about 28% of the global economy. With the emergence of BRICS, the unipolar world under US domination has been replaced by a multipolar world. Their nations are also calling

for reform of the UN Security Council which currently includes no African representation.

Developing nations are expected to require \$2.4 trillion, annually, between now and 2030. Costs are calculated to reach \$7 trillion a year in 2030. BRICS has created their own financial institutions challenging the IMF and World Bank, pointing out that US debt, now at more than \$34 trillion, has undermined the value of the dollar and, therefore, has a detrimental impact on international trade.

Global Solidarity and the Summit of the Future

Potential remedies are in the works. Rising resistance led by WILPF and masses of like-minded others around the world, as well as the forward-looking Summit of the Futures are expanding global solidarity. Guterres is hoping that the Summit can provide some direction in how to reform the IMF, the World Bank, and even the UN Security Council.

The Summit of the Future is certain to suggest a comprehensive and fair means of altering the structure of these institutions in alignment with greater inclusiveness of the Global South. In light of climate change, dwindling natural resources, and global ecological degradation, the current reliance of GDP and “growth” must be replaced with considered environmental and circular economic models and a clear mandate to stop fossil fuel subsidies altogether.

Also, it is past time for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to take into account that military emissions are 5.5% of the global whole without including war-related emissions. These emissions need to be transparently, fully, and mandatorily reported.

Escalating climate costs now requires \$2.4 trillion – almost identical to current global military budgets. Will we use the last bit of our carbon budget and the economic budget for the destruction rather than towards life on this planet?

WILPF and our many allies are addressing these and related issues and making amazing progress. Our COP 28 Side Event: *“Win-win for climate and gender justice & peace: Acting on military spending and military emissions”* is just one example of the fine work this organization is doing to address today’s challenges in a multipolar world.

Reflections on War and Peace at COP 28



By **Tamara Lorincz**

Member of WILPF-Canada and COP 28 Delegate

Tragedically, the 28th Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) started when the four-day ceasefire between Israel and Hamas ended and the war resumed. Though war and peace were not on the official agenda of COP 28, these issues were top concerns for climate activists and WILPF delegates at the conference.

COP 28 took place from November 30 to December 12, 2023, at Expo City in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Gaza is located less than 2,500 kilometres to the west of Dubai. Thousands of delegates came from across the Middle East and many workers at the venue were Palestinian, so they were proximally and personally affected by the war.

By the end of November, Israel had killed over 20,000 Palestinians and wounded 40,000 people from its indiscriminate mass bombing of Gaza. In two months, Israel destroyed most of the Palestinian enclave's energy systems, water treatment plants, schools, and hospitals and forced over a million people to be displaced from their homes.

In his opening remarks at COP 28, the UN Secretary General António Guterres described the situation for the people in Gaza as "immense suffering." During the conference, Guterres also sent a letter to the Security Council invoking Article 99 of the UN Charter and called for a humanitarian ceasefire for Gaza.

During the world leaders plenary, several leaders raised

concerns about the climate impacts of armed conflict. The President of Brazil, Lula da Silva, lamented, "We are facing what is perhaps the greatest challenge ever faced by humanity. Instead of joining forces, the world is fighting wars, fueling divisions and deepening poverty and inequality." He also criticized developed countries for their rising military spending by stating, "It is unacceptable that the promise of 100 billion dollars a year made by the developed countries will not come to fruition while, in 2021 alone, military spending reached 2 trillion and 200 billion dollars." WILPF activists called for military spending to be cut for climate finance.

Throughout the conference, activists held actions and passed out hundreds of ECO leaflets with the messages "Ceasefire Now!" and "No Climate Justice Without Human Rights!" On December 10, the [Climate Action Network International](#) gave Israel its "Fossil of the Day" dishonour for its "intent of genocide against Palestinians" and gave the United States a "Dishonourable Mention" for blocking the UN Security Council's resolution calling for a ceasefire. Activists in Dubai followed closely what was taking place at the UN in New York. The UAE, which had a temporary seat on the Security Council, brought forward the resolution for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire, but it was vetoed by the United States.

It was not until the last day of COP 28, December 12, that the UN General Assembly passed a resolution with a huge majority for an immediate ceasefire between Hamas and Israel and the urgent provision of humanitarian aid and access to Gaza. Shamefully, the U.S. and Israel voted against this UNGA resolution as well and Israel's brutal bombardment continued.

Relief, Recovery and Peace Day

For the first time at a UNFCCC conference, peace was on [the thematic program](#). The UAE designated December 3 as the “Relief, Recovery and Peace” day at COP 28. At a high-level plenary with top diplomats, the COP Presidency released its [Declaration on Climate, Relief, Recovery and Peace](#). On the panel, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia Álvaro Leyva affirmed, “We need peace with nature and we need global peace for climate action.”

However, this new declaration is a nonbinding, voluntary initiative for conflict-affected countries that are most at risk from climate change to help them become more resilient with targeted programs and financing. Three months before COP 28, a few WILPF members participated in the civil society consultations with the COP Presidency on the draft declaration. We pushed for it to deal with the adverse climate impacts of war and weapons systems and offered solutions such as disarmament for decarbonization, cutting military spending for climate finance, and environmental peacebuilding.

Unfortunately, the final [Climate, Relief, Recovery and Peace Declaration](#) did not include our proposed text and its sixteen voluntary recommendations are very weak. This is evident by the fact that the declaration was signed by over 80 countries including the United States, France, Germany and United Kingdom, which are the top military spenders and arms exporters and are escalating the wars in Gaza and Ukraine. Nevertheless, the new declaration reflects the growing recognition that scaled-up climate action is not possible with armed conflict.

COP 28’s Climate, Relief, Recovery and Peace Declaration evolved from COP 27’s [Climate Responses for Sustaining Peace \(CRSP\)](#) initiative that was launched the previous year by the Egyptian Presidency in Sharm el Sheikh. CRSP is a program to address the climate-peace-development nexus on the African continent. This year in Dubai, the Cairo International Center for Conflict Resolution, Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding held a special session to review the one-year anniversary of CRSP.

For the Thematic Day on Peace at COP 28, many civil society groups including WILPF took the opportunity to host side events and hold actions related to “Peace for Climate Justice,” “Stop the Wars, Stop the Warming,” “Demilitarization for Decarbonization,” and “Cutting military spending for climate finance.” The international [Community of Practice on Environment, Climate, Conflict, and Peace \(ECCP\)](#) also released its own policy document with bolder recommendations for relief, recovery and peace. The ECCP is led by the [Geneva Peacebuilding Platform](#) and is a network in which WILPF is involved.



Hope for Cooperation and Peace for Climate Justice

Though the outcome document of COP 28 does not mention peace or emissions from war, it does emphasize international cooperation. The UNFCCC has increasingly recognized the importance and urgency of cooperation as a crucial enabler of ambitious climate mitigation and adaptation.

The 21-page agreed document, which is the [First Global Stocktake](#) under the Paris Agreement, is divided into four sections. The first section explains that countries are to “transition away from fossil fuels,” which is a commitment that received considerable attention. But the third section, International Cooperation, is equally significant. It recognizes “that international cooperation is critical for addressing climate change, in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication.” Countries cannot cooperate on climate if they are fighting each other. Thus, it is here in language of cooperation and sustainable development that activists can advance peace for climate justice.

It is hoped that peace will have a more prominent presence at COP 29 as it will be held in Baku, Azerbaijan. Last fall, Azerbaijan and Armenia agreed to a prisoner exchange and began negotiations to settle their protracted conflict over the Nagorno-Karabakh region. As a sign of goodwill, Armenia withdrew its bid and supported Azerbaijan to host the international climate conference from November 11-22 this year. It will be up to civil society to continue to push for countries to address the climate impacts of war and militarism and to put peace on the official agenda. Without peace and cooperation, there is no climate justice.

Member Profile

MacGregor Eddy: Tireless Witness against War

By Gloria McMillan

My introduction to lifetime WILPF member and Salinas, California, resident MacGregor Eddy came through her rush of emails to our national WILPF US Disarm committee. I started reading about the exploits of this 70-something activist going out to—as it sounded—singlehandedly witness and publicize at frequent intervals to the continued insanity of ICBM tests at the Vandenberg, California, Air Force Base.

I found MacGregor's stream of reports from "the front row bleachers of death" both stirring and difficult to take in. I grew to wonder, "Who is MacGregor Eddy and why is she out there protesting, often on her own?" Yes, there were occasional reports of individuals and groups joining her, but she is very consistent. She never stops sending us reports from each and every launch of guided missiles at Vandenberg.

While I have participated at demonstrations in Tucson at the gates of Davis Monthan AFB and at the main gate of our local Raytheon plant, I couldn't imagine staring into the sky at that kind of naked horror repeatedly, year after year. I reached out to MacGregor recently to ask how she keeps up her activist regimen. I learned that her determination comes from a life well-spent making change where she knows change is needed.

Opposing War, from Vietnam to Iraq

MacGregor made her first activist stand when she was in high school, joining in a protest against the Vietnam War when Lyndon B. Johnson was speaking in Indianapolis in 1966. She got married and moved to Lansing, Michigan, where she attended nursing school. Busy as her nursing studies kept her, MacGregor did not neglect her social conscience and continued opposing the Vietnam War.

In 1974, MacGregor and her family moved to Salinas, California, where she worked as a volunteer nurse at the United Farm Workers clinic. In the 1980s, she had more anti-war work to do as new military adventures took our war machines abroad, MacGregor protested the 1983 US invasion of Grenada, the 1989 invasion of Panama, and the 1990-91 Gulf War.

When the US began bombing Afghanistan in 2002, she threw herself into founding the Salinas Action League (SAL) that opposed the Iraq War. "A new chapter opened in my



activist life when in 2002, at Vandenberg Air Force Base in opposition to the impending invasion of Iraq, I was arrested for nonviolent civil disobedience," MacGregor says. "And I was arrested several additional times at Vandenberg as part of opposing the Iraq war and the testing of ICBMs."

Throughout the years, she has engaged in a myriad of Disarm/End Wars committee actions, working with Carol Urner (former Disarm Committee Chair) and Sandy Silver (former Acting President of The Jane Addams Peace Association) to promote nuclear weapons disarmament. MacGregor explains,

I oppose nuclear weapons, but I support nuclear power. Like Richard Rhodes I believe we need nuclear power to be able to stop climate change. A civilian source of power is not a weapon, and should not be confused with nuclear weapons.

I discovered a more detailed account of one of MacGregor's Vandenberg campaigns in a [Monterey County Weekly article by Phil McKenna](#) from March 27, 2003:

Eddy, a mother of three, is a founding member of the Salinas Action League, a group that has held weekly anti-war vigils in downtown Salinas for the past year and a half. She is a nurse and also hosts a bilingual peace and justice talk show in Salinas. As a member of the Vandenberg Action Coalition, Eddy first trespassed on Vandenberg property in May of 2002. She was fined \$100 and put [on] probation, a term she is still serving.

As to why she persists, Eddy says in the article, "In the presence of this terrible wrong we must take a stand and bear witness.... I'm not asking people to think like me, but by my actions I am making people think about what is going on."

Over that weekend in March 2003, the article states "about 40 activists joined Eddy in silent vigils in front of Vandenberg, and an additional 20 activists entered the backcountry of the 99,000-acre military facility. Divided into small groups, the infiltrators hung signs of protest on fences and water towers inside the base."

One of them was a grad student at UCSC, Maia Ramnath, "who spent 32 hours inside base boundaries and was one of the last to leave." This shows how MacGregor is leaping that generation barrier and inspiring the young to act. What an example for us all!

Summer Reading List

Recommended by WILPF leaders and staff

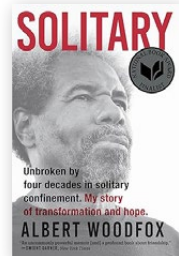


Tura Campanella Cook

Middle East Peace & Justice Action Committee

Solitary: Unbroken by Four Decades in Solitary Confinement. My Story of Transformation and Hope

By Albert Woodfox (Grove Press, 2019)



A finalist for the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize, this is the unforgettable life story of a man who served more than four decades in solitary confinement in Angola prison in Louisiana for a crime he did not commit. It is a testament to the friendship between “the Angola 3,” who sustained one another and whose mutual care enabled them to turn their anger into activism and resistance. Most of all, it’s a clarion call to reform this inhumane practice, and all of the systemic

evils of the carceral state.

Wendy McDowell

Editor, Peace & Freedom

Care: The Highest Stage of Capitalism

By Premilla Nadasen (Haymarket Books, 2023)

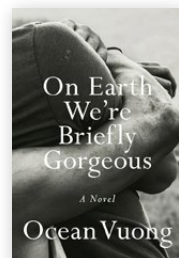


An eye-opening reckoning with the care economy, exploring its roots in slavery and its exponential growth into a site of profit and extraction. The author reveals that today’s care economy is an institutionalized, hierarchical system in which some people’s pain translates into other people’s profit. At the same time she tells a story of resistance among low-wage workers, immigrants, and women of color who help us all to envision a radical future in which we work together to

create a more caring world.

On Earth We’re Briefly Gorgeous

By Ocean Vuong (Penguin Books, 2019)

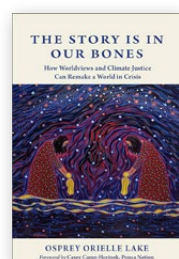


Poet Ocean Vuong’s debut novel is written as a letter from a son (Little Dog) to his mother. All the appreciations of this book agree it is beautifully written, and that it honestly explores race, class, and masculinity, but few mention its inherent critique of militarism. It effectively shows the intergenerational trauma from war and the unique ways war alters the life trajectories of women. Little Dog’s mother left school at the age of five when her schoolhouse collapsed during an

American napalm raid, and she suffers from PTSD. His grandmother became a prostitute after fleeing an abusive arranged marriage, and ended up marrying a white US serviceman.

Nancy Price

Earth Democracy Committee



The Story Is in Our Bones: How Worldviews and Climate Justice Can Remake a World in Crisis

By Osprey Orielle Lake (New Society Publishers, 2024)

Osprey Orielle Lake is the Founder and Executive Director of WECAN. In this new book, she weaves together ecological, mythical, political, and cultural understand-

ings and shares her experiences working with global leaders, climate justice activists, Indigenous peoples, and systems-thinkers. She seeks to summon a new way of being and thinking, which includes transforming the interlocking crises of colonialism, racism, patriarchy, capitalism, and ecocide. It is a hopeful, engaging, and lyrical work that reminds us another world is possible.

Leni Villagomez Reeves

Co-chair, Cuba and the Bolivarian Alliance Committee

The Cuban Drumbeat

By Piero Gleijeses (Seagull Books, 2009)

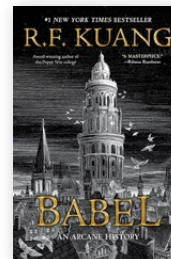


Piero Gleijeses has written some excellent books about Cuba’s role in African independence struggles including *Conflicting Missions and Visions of Freedom* (both with reprint editions from University of North Carolina Press), but *The Cuban Drumbeat*, which explores the meaning and legacy of Cuba’s foreign policy, is short and accessible to the casual reader. (Don’t be put off by what in my opinion is the single dumbest dust-jacket in the history of publishing, showing a motorcycle, a graphic of Fidel Castro with a cigar, and a sort of

Carmen Miranda figure with maracas!) Highly recommended.

Babel: Or the Necessity of Violence: An Arcane History of the Oxford Translators’ Revolution

By R.F. Kuang (Harper Voyager, 2023)



I recommend this fantasy novel exploration of the role of language in imperialism. I mean – anti-colonial fantasy? Most fantasy authors seem to be stuck somewhere between the eleventh and the seventeenth centuries in their thoughts about government, with kings and warriors and other nonsense. As S.A. Chakrabarty puts it, this is a “brilliant, razor-sharp book...that isn’t just an alternative fantastical history, but an interrogative one; one that grabs colonial history and the Industrial Revolution, turns it over, and shakes it out.”

Assorted books by Helen Yafe

Everything by Helen Yaffe is excellent, including *We Are Cuba!: How a Revolutionary People Have Survived in a Post-Soviet World* (Yale University Press, 2020) and *Che Guevara: The Economics of Revolution* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009). Also, anyone who has not yet read *Assata: An Autobiography* by Assata Shakur, consider reading it this summer.

Ellen Thomas

Co-chair, Disarm/End Wars Committee

Warheads to Windmills: Preventing Climate Catastrophe and Nuclear War

By Timmon Wallis (Indispensable Press, 2023)



As most of you know, the author is National Coordinator of the Warheads to Windmills Coalition which is campaigning to abolish nuclear weapons and use the resources to address the climate crisis. Timmon’s wife, Vicki Elson, is a member of WILPF Disarm. This is a really important book for a crucial time. It’s full of facts and figures, tools and strategies, and personal and political inspiration to help all of us to keep advocating for the swift, decisive action that is needed.

Treasurer's Report to Members

We Are All Stakeholders and Owners of WILPF-US!

By **Barbara L. Nielsen**

WILPF US Treasurer

Welcome to each and every member-owner-stakeholder of our WILPF-US Section who is reading this issue! Those of us who volunteer our time are grateful to the larger number of our cohort whose financial contributions largely make all of our work possible! Many thanks for your support!

Our organizational structure in WILPF-US differs from some of the other activist organizations around in a few ways, not the least of which is that each of us is an owner of our non-profit, tax-exempt, membership corporation! I know many of us tend to think of corporations as suspicious business entities at times, and that characterization is certainly warranted for some for-profit corporations, but in the case of WILPF-US, this structure is necessary. It allows our members to volunteer for election by our general membership to our governing board and to serve our membership in supporting the activist work in which we engage. When we do engage in that volunteer Board service, it allows us to have legal protections.

My main point here is that **every one of us is a stakeholder in owning our WILPF-US section!** As such, we are all responsible for realizing our national Board's mandate to make sure that we are a financially healthy organization so we can accomplish our mission and vision and broadcast the message we have had as our (perhaps unofficial but worth repeating these days a lot!) mantra since our inception in 1915: "War Has Never Been the Answer, War is Not the Answer Now, War Will Never Be the Answer!" This is also why we, the members, must be asked to vote to approve any changes in our WILPF-US Section Bylaws, to approve any increase or change in membership dues, and to approve any change in our 1985 Statement of Principles and Policies. We must also be asked to elect candidates who run to serve as volunteer members of our national Board.

Why am I bringing this up? Because this level of ownership is not all that common in activism circles and it gives us (we, the general members) vested interests in being concerned and active about making sure that WILPF-US, continues to receive funds from us through the many ways we raise **new money**. By this I mean our annual membership dues that each of us pays (or for those of us who are "Life Members," the contributions we still give beyond that original "lump sum" amount). Some of us renew our memberships monthly through the system of pledging a minimum of \$10 per month.

All of this establishes or renews our memberships and provides ongoing support for our basic administrative infrastructure and our numerous activist programs throughout the section. Members participate in WILPF-US programs by engaging with one or more of our national issues committees, through ad hoc projects, and working with other members in local branches, sometimes with assistance from small grants offered when we have funds to support them, either through "the Minigrant Program" or on an *ad hoc* basis.

Deficit Budgets and a Sustainable Future

For more years than not, the annual "budget-balancing act" has been performed through exercises in "taking funds from our various savings accounts to fund regular operating expenses to keep our doors open" instead of being able to look to infusions of cash flow (new money coming in from outside sources) to fund not only our operating expenses, but also giving more life to our program-based expenses.

We have been running a deficit budget for several years, with a "blip" two years ago with some large gifts of tax-deductible funds that came to us from the estates of people who left us bequests through our Fiscal Sponsor, the Peace Development Fund. (The federal tax laws allow a nonprofit tax-exempt corporation like us to be able to accept tax-exempt charitable donations but only through what is called a Fiscal Sponsor). However, a bequest from someone's will/estate means it is a one-time event – something that we cannot count on or budget for and the funds are not designed

WILPF US Depends on Your Continuing Support!

Please continue to support WILPF US financially. Donations are a vital funding source, helping to keep us financially nimble and able to respond quickly and directly to our members' needs.

Your donations can be tax deductible when you make them through our official Fiscal Sponsor, Peace Development Fund. (Check them out at www.peacedevelopmentfund.org.) We are thrilled to accept cash donations, gifts from donor-advised funds, and employer match gifts. Please consider making a planned gift to WILPF US. This will not only help you create a legacy that benefits our work nationally through our vibrant issues committees and national collaborations, and locally through our branches working in community, it may also simplify your estate plans. Visit [this link](#) to learn more.

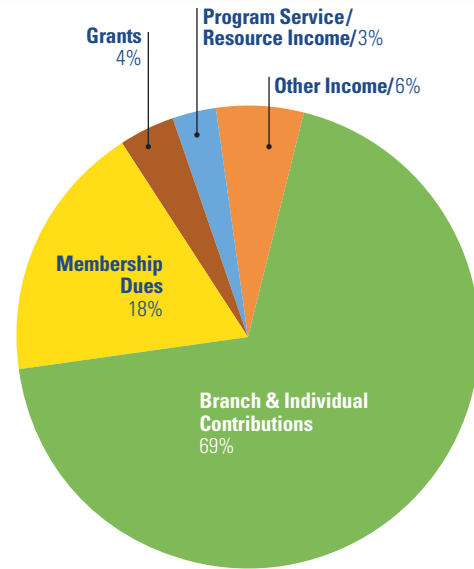
Your membership makes all the difference – and each one of us is a member-owner-stakeholder!

Let's maximize our impact on peace-and freedom-building during our second century!

2023 Income & Expenses

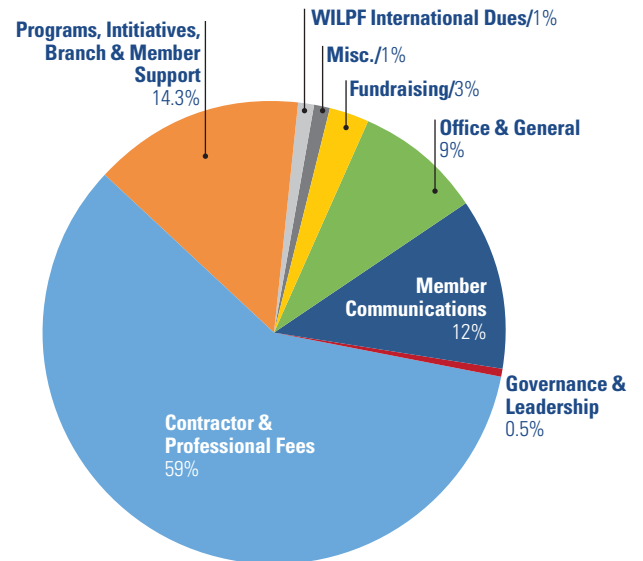
Income

Bequests	\$17
Branch & Individual Contributions	\$96,984
Grants	\$5,587
Membership Dues	\$25,256
Program Service/Resource income	\$4,314
Other Income	\$7,734
Total Income	139,892



Expenses

Fundraising	\$6,758
Office & General	21,474
Member Communications	\$29,737
Governance/Leadership	\$1,262
Contractor & Professional Fees	\$148,379
Programs, Initiatives, Branch & Member Support	\$38,929
WILPF International Dues	\$3,138
Misc	\$2,778
Total Expenses	\$252,456



to be used to support operational expenses – they are to support program work.

Both last year and this year, we have had to take funds from our existing savings accounts to infuse our operating budget so that we could keep ourselves afloat. While this can work for a little while, it is not a sustainable way to run an organization.

Increased Fundraising Efforts

At its core, budgeting's primary function is to ensure an organization has enough resources to do our work. To get there, we consider not only the immediate impact of our actions, but also the long-term implications of our financial decisions.

Individual voluntary direct contributions are regularly our largest source of income and come almost exclusively from our members. Our member-stakeholder mandatory dues are

our second-highest income source. We could not continue to function without these "new funds" income — our \$35 minimum annual dues and other additional contributions — that our owner-members provide to support WILPF throughout the year. We continue to be hopeful that the efforts of our contracted consultants will result in the awarding of grants to WILPF-US and our Membership Development Committee has also worked with several branches on a new initiative to increase membership. Results of these endeavors are under assessment and will be reported out to all members.

We will be also be providing information to our membership on the 2024 budget after it is approved by the national Board, projected to happen at the March 2024 regular meeting; this and all national Board meetings are open to all of our member owners-stakeholders of the WILPF-US Section. We welcome your ideas.

Branches Show Solidarity Locally and Globally



On September 15, 2023, the **Greater Philadelphia Branch** joined Fridays for Our Future at a rowdy march and rally in Philadelphia to show solidarity with our youth. On September 21, Tina Shelton and Sylvia Metzler cheerfully joined the Peace Day Philly gathering at City Hill where Tina shared a land acknowledgement. Branch members also participated in a rally for Defuse Nuclear on September 27 and a Peace in Ukraine protest at Lockheed Martin on September 30. In December 2023, the branch became an endorser of a new coalition, “Fridays at Fetterman’s,” a network of activists who will gather on the sidewalk outside of Senator Fetterman’s Philadelphia office to let him know that his constituents are serious about calling for a ceasefire in Gaza. Meanwhile, the branch is continuing its every-other-month Zoom discussion group on “Deconstructing White Privilege.”

The **San Jose Branch** holds a monthly meeting over Zoom each month with wonderful speakers. Here were their 2023 topics: November 2023 – [Justice & Disappearances in Honduras: A Personal Perspective with Zenaida Velásquez](#); October 2023 – [Peace Building with Barby Ulmer](#); July 2023 – [International African American Museum \(IAAM\)](#); June 2023 – [Poor People’s Campaign Moral Poverty Action Congress](#); May 2023 – [An African American Journey, presented by Clarissa Moore](#); April 2023 – [The Silicon Valley Pain Index with Dr. William Armaline](#); March 2023 – [WILPF and Peace: A History](#); January 2023 – [WILPF Actions: International to Local](#). WILPF San Jose also cosponsored a Santa Clara County Together We Vote Block Party and partic-

ipated in the research action on Ranked Choice Voting. Branch members continue to attend a local weekly Friday Peace Vigil in coalition with other peace groups.



The new **Miami Mujeres Branch** has been pursuing social justice for women both locally and globally. Branch members have made multiple trips to Lotus House Women’s Shelter in Miami bearing necessities for women and children and they have prepared and cooked dinner for residents of the shelter. Spending time with residents one-on-one, members have grappled with the harsh truth of domestic violence in their own community. The branch has also done a donation drive of essential school supplies, books, and toys, for Project Esperanza, a nonprofit which aids the Haitian refugee population of the Dominican Republic. Branch founder Eva Egozi hand delivered the donations and learned about Project Esperanza’s initiatives first-hand.

The first open-to-all virtual **Jane Addams Branch** meeting was held on January 17, 2024, with Dr. Judith Hand as the first guest speaker. Judith has worked for years on [A Future Without War](#), and she introduced Project Enduring Peace

(PEP), which includes the outline of a plan to end international wars. WILPF US board members, issue committee and ad hoc committee chairs, and branch chairs then spoke and responded to questions. You can watch a [YouTube recording](#) of this meeting. The format, with a guest speaker, followed by WILPF leaders and then questions and discussion will continue to be the model for future open meetings on the third Wednesday of each month at 5 pm PT / 8 pm ET.



Burlington (VT) Branch leader Marguerite Adelman also serves as Coordinator of the Vermont PFAS/Military Poisons coalition. On January 30, 2024, individuals impacted by widespread pollution from toxic PFAS chemicals and pesticides joined this coalition for a day of legislative action at the Montpelier Statehouse. With table displays of the numerous products that contain forever chemicals, activists greeted and spoke with representatives, raising awareness about the national PFAS and pesticide contamination crisis and sharing their platform for the 2024 legislative session. They urged legislators to support crucial, health-protective bills like S.25 and S.197.

WILPF Week of Action

WILPF International called for a “Week of Action” November 9-14, 2023, and WILPF US branches organized vigils, demonstrations, rallies, and public actions to draw attention to the war in Gaza and to call for an immediate ceasefire. Here are highlights of actions taken by branches:

Members of the **Southern Piedmont Branch** joined about 100 students at UNC Charlotte for an evening vigil on November 4, 2023, in support of Palestinian lives lost in the Gaza strip. WILPF Southern Piedmont member Steven Smith spoke at the rally, which was organized by student organizations.



On November 9, the **Fannie Lou Hamer Branch** kicked off the week with an [action at a location in Columbus, GA](#), where many passing cars could see their big "CEASEFIRE" sign.

Greater Phoenix Branch members joined forces with other groups to participate in several demonstrations on street corners and at Arizona State University. Attendance has been as high as over 1,000 people. They also leafleted at or near public events, including sports, cultural, and arts events. And they are working with the Palestine Solidarity Committee, an umbrella organization, on making an upcoming visit of Rep. Rashida Tlaib a success.



The **Peninsula/Palo Alto Branch** held their first silent vigil about Gaza on October 13 and they've held several others since. During the week of action, they joined other peace groups for two actions: On November 11, the coalition member group MVP organized an evening candlelight vigil calling for peace in the Middle East, with an estimated 150 in attendance. On November 13, branch members attended a vigil organized by Palestinians at Representative Anna Eshoo's office, with statements read and recorded by her staff, and a peaceful march around the block. Branch member Cherrill Spencer read to the group of about 60

the WILPF US statement calling on the United States Congress to "act urgently to prioritize the protection of civilians... loss of life ... serious violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law." The event closed with testimony by a member of WILPF Palestine on the overwhelming injuries and suffering in Palestine.

The **Humboldt Branch** has focused their efforts on regularly calling their local congressional representative and senators and on getting an appointment to talk to their congressman in person. The branch was also involved in a local community radio show that included reading poems about peace, one by a local Jewish rabbi and several by Palestinians and Palestinian-Americans.

More Actions Against War in Gaza



On November 2, 2023, ten **Triangle (NC) Branch** members kept vigil at the Peace & Justice Plaza at noon across the street from the UNC-Chapel Hill campus, with petitions asking US Rep. Valerie Foushee to co-sponsor HR 786 calling for immediate de-escalation and ceasefire in Israel and occupied Palestine. Four members traveled to Durham for a late afternoon Ceasefire Now Rally sponsored by Jewish Voice for Peace. On November 10, 2023, the Triangle Raging Grannies organized a Fast for the Children of Gaza, and Triangle WILPF members participated in Raleigh at the protest and at home. Two branch members attended and one spoke at the Carrboro Town Council meeting on November 14, 2023, along with about 30 others, supporting a proposed resolution calling for an immediate de-escalation and ceasefire, greater humanitarian aid to Gaza,

and resolving that Carrboro supports all of its Muslim and Jewish residents, condemns Islamophobia and antisemitism, and... the resolution will be forwarded to the President of the United States and Carrboro's congressional delegation. The resolution passed 4-3.

On October 10, 2023, Jan Corderman of the **Des Moines Branch** [spoke at a PSL Free Palestine Rally](#) held at night that was attended by a handful of branch members.

Fresno Branch members have been reaching out to US government officials and urging a ceasefire, as well as participating in demonstrations and prayer vigils. The branch has been calling attention to the slaughter of civilians and attacks on "safe zones," including medical facilities, schools, refugee camps, and other essential infrastructure. The branch [issued a statement in writing](#) calling for several actions, including a real ceasefire, an end to US support, balanced media coverage, and support for Amnesty International's call to expedite the investigation into the state of Israel's war crimes and other crimes under international law.



On November 18, 2023, **Greater Philadelphia Branch** members held a retreat in a member's home where their focus was learning from the Middle East Peace and Justice Action Committee (MEJPAC) about recent events in Israel and Palestine. Genie Silver of MEJPAC shared her knowledge and expertise, and other members shared their experiences traveling to the area in past years. All those present agreed they were grateful for the role of WILPF to educate members and provide a framework to work for peace in the Middle East.



Life Happens: Be a Sustainer!

By Laura Dewey
Detroit Branch

Several years ago, when I began sending \$5 each month to WILPF, it felt like a decent sum to me. I wasn't making a heck of a lot of money, and although my two grown daughters had flown the coop, the Bank of Mom helped them out on occasion. With a house and car as my "dependents," \$5 a month was right for me.

Then life happened.

As a freelance editor, I found myself with more jobs than ever, and my income (and taxes!) grew. My kids became financially independent, and I found myself with a little more cash to spare. So, I upped the monthly donation to \$10.

Why am I telling you this? Because when life happens, change happens. Our circumstances may improve over time or sometimes overnight. Change can be good or bad, but it is a constant.

One thing that should be a constant is funding WILPF US. Giving a little or a lot each month, or sustaining, provides WILPF with a modest but stable source of funds. Dependable and reliable: that's what a sustainer is.



WILPFers Laura Dewey (L) and Barb Beesley (R) at an Earth Day event.

Will you join me in providing a monthly donation to our beloved WILPF US? It's easy to do; just [click here](#). Give what you can afford, whether it's \$5 or \$100 a month.

I'm proud to help sustain the wonderful peace work of WILPF. And if you want to hear why you should consider being a legacy donor, watch my video remarks [here](#).

Thank you!

How to donate: [Click here](#) or mail your check or money order to our national office at:

WILPF US, PO Box 13075, Des Moines, IA 50310