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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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How We Can Move Beyond

By Darien De Lu

WILPF US President

Here we are: facing a set of *bad* situations which many of us imagined we had long since put behind us – or, at least, gotten mostly *past*. I'm sure you know well enough what I mean, so that I can just reference these circumstances using the *positive* terms for what we had assumed or *hoped* for, but is now so at risk – reproductive choice, racial justice, functional US democracy, climate stabilization, much greater economic equity, clean and fair elections, and progress toward *peace*.

The slamming of the door on abortion access comes as a shock to most of us, even after all the setbacks and warnings of the last 20-50 years. That is just one of many other disturbing developments of the last five years, especially the outrages of the previous president, the continued police violence against people of color, and the widespread increase in violence and public bigotry of all kinds. Those shift my, and perhaps your, understanding of *how much* ground we *can* lose – if it was even gained in the first place.

I did not think I was naive, and don't we all know that the media and the government conceal and misrepresent so *much*? Yet the isolation and psychological stresses of COVID and the COVID risks for in-person activism (especially for those over 65) leave us undefended and ill-equipped to respond. We are living through times of Naomi Klein's *Shock doctrine* when rights are restricted, legal protections trampled, and privatization keeps advancing – all in the name of security and expediency, while a disoriented public is largely immobilized.

Many of us are struggling to reorganize our WILPF activism after two and a half years of COVID confinement. The shocks have been multiple and intense, and the sheer number of terrible events further assaults us – all with a backdrop of COVID grief and loss.

But we are WILPF! So we *are not* alone and isolated. In this issue you'll find inspiration and information to help us find our way ahead. As often happens in inhospitable times, *so much* is going on outside the spotlight. Were you aware that WILPF has a seventh issue committee, DPoW, to extend our activism in new directions? Have you kept up with what's happening in the renewed Advancing Human Rights Issue Committee?



Jan Corderman, Carolyn Caponi, Mary Walker, Darien De Lu, and Eileen Kurkoski at the Poor People's Campaign Rally in Washington, DC, on June 18.

Did you follow our International Congress in July?

Read how our work on deadly PFAS chemicals is moving forward and about the vibrant organizing in the Poor People's Campaign DC rally (and WILPF involvement). WILPF work on the PPC's voter rights campaign is outlined in another article. Plus you'll find explorations of *alternatives* – public banking and Cuba's innovations. Cuba is, *still*, struggling against suffocating sanctions; Pat Hynes offers a moral exploration of sanctions. The US has imposed sanctions against countries 61 times since 1993; Pat discusses particular instances, including the long-lasting embargo of Cuba.

Along with these analyses, this issue contains loving farewells to three widely known WILPF activists whose lives can inspire us. I worked with Marge Van

Cleef on WILPF's Board and recall her fierce and principled role in the Rapid Response Team. Edith Bell, a small and mild-looking woman, was a determined, kind, and enormously effective Pittsburgh WILPFer. And I, like others at the 2011 WILPF Congress in North Carolina, remember Miriam Thompson's outspoken and dynamic organizing.

Now, as our WILPF branches reemerge from the stresses of COVID times, another article presents model guidelines for healthy branches. We look to our branches to renew the strength of WILPF. They inhabit that challenging intersection point between local and global, practical and analytical, and – of course – personal and political. They are where members go *beyond* sharing information and resources to raise awareness and understanding of race matters. Branches can reach out to work locally with racially diverse groups for the personal changes that arise from direct experience.

Within our branches we have the opportunity for long-term connection and work on a human level. Branches seek to construct a *safe space* for activist critiques and work – one of familiarity, trust, and understanding of the multiple layers of real people. Not merely about meetings, our branches are where we confront the challenges of reconciling the tension of local and effective work while staying within our capabilities.

And *that* is at the core of WILPF's sustained activism!

Can Sanctions Ever Be Just — Let Alone Effective?

By Patricia Hynes

WILPF US Member at Large



Russia is now the most sanctioned country in the world as a retaliation for its criminal invasion of Ukraine, leading one former Obama administration Treasury official to describe the situation as “financial nuclear war.”¹ However, Western European countries depend on Russian oil and gas, so they have had to carve out an exception in order to purchase some fuel from Russia, thus allowing Russia to gain export revenue to sustain its military. Is it possible that Russian citizens will suffer more from deprivation due to the economic sanctions than will the government coffers? Further, European governments are forging deals with African countries to boost gas production for export to Europe, the consequences being a post-colonial loot misdirected from Africa’s energy needs and a disastrous setback for the climate crisis and the upcoming COP27.²

Ideally, economic sanctions can provide a policy tool short of military force for punishing, ending, or forestalling objectionable actions. However, economic sanctions can also be a blunt and ineffective policy tool, disproportionately harming the most vulnerable populations while not changing the targeted government.

Though US media rarely discuss the loss of Western influence on the rest of the world, it should be noted there is no international consensus on Russian sanctions. Half of the G20 countries do not support the US and European sanctions against Russia. These states also oppose the Western intent to isolate Russia, weaken it, and, in the case of President Biden, to bring about regime change via the US/NATO proxy war against Russia. What’s more, the US and other NATO countries have expended no time, resources, or intelligence on diplomacy to negotiate an end to the conflict. Thus, rather

than using sanctions to end the Russian Ukraine war, they are employing both sanctions and a proxy war *without* nonviolent methods of conflict resolution.

Overview of Sanctions

Historically, economic sanctions are penalties levied against a country, its officials, or private citizens in an effort to provide disincentives for targeted policies and actions and to force that country to obey a law or public policy. Sanctions were not employed as an independent tool of foreign policy until the twentieth century – and they were increasingly used after World War II, being viewed as a low-risk (for whom, we must ask), high-profile response to aggression.³

The widespread economic sanctions against the apartheid government of South Africa in the 1980s, including boycotts and divestment, is seen to be exemplary of the potential of sanctions to achieve a more just and free society without resorting to violence. Many other sanction regimes are not as laudable. In 1990, the United Nations imposed sanctions that banned world trade with Iraq after that country’s invasion of Kuwait. The sanctions continued after the Gulf War in 1991 because of Saddam Hussein’s refusal to comply with the terms of the ceasefire. By 1997 one-third of Iraqi children were malnourished, and by 1999 the economy was shattered. Former UN official Denis Halliday called the sanctions “genocidal” and quit his post to speak out against them.⁴ Thirteen years of UN sanctions contributed to a serious reduction in Iraq’s per capita income; but dictators like Hussein generally ignore sanctions – and thus ensued a slow economic war that impoverished the civilian population.

In principle, sanctions are invoked to stem terrorism, narcotics trafficking, human rights violations, weapons proliferation, and violations of international treaties. They have ranged from comprehensive economic and trade sanctions to more targeted measures such as arms embargoes, travel bans, boycotts, divestment, and financial or commodity restrictions. Since 1966, the UN Security Council has established 30 sanctions regimes in many African countries, the former Yugoslavia, Haiti, Iraq, Lebanon, as well as against ISIS, Al-Qaida, and the Taliban.

Notably the UN-sanctioned countries have not included powerful Western countries, though many have been involved in criminal wars – including the US war in Vietnam, the 20-year US-led/NATO war in Afghanistan, and the US war in Iraq, which included a handful of other European countries cobbled together as the “coalition of the willing” to cover for singular US aggression.

The Brookings Institute has noted that the United States uses sanctions increasingly “to promote the full range of American policy.”⁵ This somewhat neutral statement acknowledges that the United States commonly employs sanctions for geopolitical purposes – that is, to amass military or economic power against a rival and to promote regime change. But is this an effective strategy?

Cuba is among the most notable failures of this kind of attempt to enact regime change. Six decades of a US trade and travel embargo on Cuba have accomplished none of Washington’s policy objectives: the overthrow of the Communist government, promotion of capitalism, and prevention of foreign investment by other countries. In the current UN General Assembly, only the United States and Israel continue to support the sanctions against Cuba. Moreover, studies have found that the longer sanctions last, and the greater the ideological differences between countries, the less likely sanctions are to succeed.⁶

One of the most comprehensive studies of 170 cases spanning a century of economic sanctions “concluded that sanctions were partially successful only 34 percent of the time.”⁷ Where goals were modest, for example, the release of a political prisoner, the rate of success was 50 percent – whereas success in regime change or to disrupt a military action was much lower.

According to Robin Wright of *The New Yorker*, sanctions “generate meaningful change only 40 percent of the time” and can take a very long time to have effect.⁸ Moreover, opinions on whether sanctions were the determining factor in resolving conflict or effecting foreign policy goals can vary. Take the case of South Africa. Though many analysts agree that the demise of South Africa’s apartheid regime was largely due to widespread economic sanctions on South Africa in the 1980s, others argue that a “highly mobilized Black-led coalition was the key.”⁹

Many studies conclude that sanctions are more effective against states with coherent structures of power and social cohesion while being much less effectively used against dictatorships and failed states. Yet this, too, has proven not to be the case with three of the longest sanctioned functioning countries with varying degrees of one-party rule with coherent structures of power: Cuba, North Korea, and Iran (where there is a combination of strong theocracy and weaker democracy). Note that in each of these countries the United States has historically had an oversized imperialist role: beginning with the Spanish-American War in the case of Cuba, the 1950-53 Korean War to contain communism which led to the Korea’s

division along the DMZ, and the 1973 CIA-orchestrated coup in Iran against the left-leaning, democratically-elected Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddegh.

Double Standard Sanctions

The Palestinian BDS National Committee that leads the global Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement “opposes war,” as they stated recently, “whether it is Russia’s illegal aggression in Ukraine today...or the many patently illegal and immoral US- or NATO-led wars of the past decades which have devastated whole nations and killed millions.”¹⁰

They contrast their own BDS movement against Israel “to end complicity in Israel’s regime of oppression” that denies Palestinians “freedom, justice and equality” with that of current Western, xenophobic, McCarthyite boycotts and sanctions against ordinary Russians. Examples include banning Russian films and literature, removing Russian music conductors, refusing Russian patients in a German hospital, banning Russian citizens living in Russia from the Boston marathon, etc. The US-based company Airbnb withdrew from Russia immediately when its invasion of Ukraine began, as did McDonald’s and more recently American Express, even as these companies continue to do business in Israel and in the illegal Israeli settlements.

According to South African jurist and former Judge Ad Hoc of the International Court of Justice John Dugard, “If the West fails to show concern for [Palestinian] human rights ... the [non-Western rest of the world] will conclude that human rights is a tool employed by the West against regimes it dislikes and not an objective and universal instrument for the measurement of the treatment of people throughout the world.”¹¹

Contradictions and Ethical Dilemmas

Over time, sanctions can cause similar devastation to civilians as war, punishing them more severely than their government. Such longstanding punitive actions are often imposed by the United States – the most sanctioning country in the world – to seek regime change. Over six decades, the US embargo against Cuba has dispossessed it of \$130 billion in lost revenue and resulted in “historic increases in tuberculosis deaths, diarrheal cases, and contaminated water,” as well as optic and peripheral neuropathy cases as a consequence of food shortages.¹² The embargo has also punished US citizens in need of Cuba’s vaccine for lung cancer, recently blocked by the embargo.

A similar situation has played out in North Korea. The UN

Security Council and US sanctions against that country are harming most the North Korean people and humanitarian agencies that “provide a lifeline for some 13 million vulnerable” people. Sanctions have put 60,000 among 200,000 acutely malnourished children at risk of starvation and limited the shipment of basic medical supplies. Bans on exports, such as textiles, have jeopardized the livelihood of workers, especially women, consigning them to poverty.¹³

Sanctions against Iran are also harming ordinary people without leading to regime change. UN Special Rapporteur Alena Douhan has recently demanded that the US and its allies withdraw their “unilateral coercive measures against Iran,” and she has proposed preventive mechanisms “within the framework of the UN” to nullify such measures being taken in the future. Douhan, a professor of international law, cites the excessive harm of US et al. sanctions to “ordinary Iranians’ rights to employment, health, and food.”¹⁴

After withdrawing from its devastating and futile 20-year war in Afghanistan in August 2021, the US quickly enacted economic sanctions against the brutal Taliban government, while also withholding Afghan people’s money deposited in the New York Federal Reserve Bank. According to Mark Weisbrot, these punitive sanctions are inevitably being borne by the Afghan people, and “are on track to take the lives of more civilians in the coming year than have been killed by 20 years of warfare.”¹⁵

As Afghanistan illustrates, sanctions against other countries can be a consequence of past US actions. In 1954, left-leaning democratically-elected Jacobo Árbenz was overthrown as president of Guatemala by a CIA-planned coup to protect the profits of the United Fruit Company. Brutal, US-supported regimes since then have committed well-documented widespread torture and genocide, for which Guatemala has been sanctioned by some countries, including, ironically, the US.

Similarly hypocritical is the sanctioning of countries – such as North Korea and Iran – for possessing or pursuing nuclear weapons, as if it is more a matter of who possesses these weapons of mass destruction than simply their existence that is posing a threat to life on Earth. After all, The United States and Russia possess 90 percent of nuclear weapons in their military stockpiles.¹⁶

US efforts at the state level to criminalize the BDS movement are likewise duplicitous, given this country’s annual practice of selling weapons and giving more than \$3 billion in military aid to the apartheid state of Israel and doing likewise for Saudi Arabia during its criminal war against Yemen. Sanctioning some countries for human rights violations while abetting others sullies the alternative-to-war potential and credibility of sanctions.

Sanctions Infused with Ethical Intent

How do we help ensure that sanctions are both just and more likely to be effective in sustaining justice? A handful of disparate ethical sanctions movements – the 1980s South Africa movement against apartheid and the current Palestinian BDS movement, as well as the international fossil fuels divestment campaign – share certain characteristics. They were inspired by citizen-led grassroots groups and were joined in time by NGOs and institutions to differing degrees. Thus, they are largely free from the power politics of big countries and the United Nations (whether economic, military or geopolitical) that infect and undermine the justice intent of sanctions.

Given that many sanctions, especially UN-sponsored sanctions, are intended to defuse and resolve conflict, there are lessons to be learned from a sister effort in Liberia and the landmark 2000 UN Resolution 1325, which is focused on engaging women equally with men in peace and security within their countries. No one has spoken out more strongly in support of UN Resolution 1325 than Liberian Nobel Peace Prize winner Leymah Gbowee, who brought Christian and Muslim women together in her country to end its vicious 14-year-long civil war. According to Gbowee, interventions and sanctions to maintain or restore international peace and security have been most effective when they are applied as part of a comprehensive strategy encompassing peace-keeping, peace building and peacemaking.¹⁷ Ending conflict through force, sanctions, and negotiation is only the first step to achieving enduring peace. Ongoing peace building and peacemaking at the community and neighborhood level sustain nonviolent conflict resolution more reliably and build more lasting solidarity among people.

What do these ethical examples suggest for peace movements across the world regarding the current Russian-Ukraine conflict? We can mobilize to demonstrate unified international solidarity with antiwar protesters in both Russia and Ukraine. Our support should use media boldly and creatively to foreground our shared conviction that war is not the answer, and that war only breeds endless war. Post-war exchanges can bring Russians and Ukrainians together, as has happened with Palestinian and Israeli resisters to apartheid. Community-based peace building work, as the women’s movement in Liberia continues to do, is crucial for lasting reconciliation within former conflict-ridden societies.

Pat Hynes works, writes, and speaks on peace, social justice, women’s equality, and environmental justice issues. Her new book, Hope, But Demand Justice (Haley Publishing, 2022) was reviewed by Nancy Price in the previous issue of Peace & Freedom. This article is based on an earlier version in Fellowship of Reconciliation.

Continued on page 15.

The Cuban People Remain Inspiring

By Leni Villagomez Reeves

Co-chair, Cuba and the Bolivarian Alliance Committee



Pastors for Peace caravanistas from California at the Latin American School of Medicine (ELAM) with medical students from Togo and Cambodia.

I've been on many of the Pastors for Peace Caravans to Cuba, and in the pre-pandemic world I used to visit Cuba a couple of times each year on my own. But more than two and a half years passed between my leaving Cuba in March 2020 on the day that the borders closed and my return with the Caravan in July 2022. The intervening period has been hard everywhere. Many of us have lost friends and family to the disease – or to other causes – and we have not been able even to gather and mourn together.

Cuba is struggling to recover. Conditions are difficult, and this is only partly a result of the pandemic. People I know are struggling, and the shortages of almost everything make life hard. Still, during our trip in July, we could see that Cuba as a nation has continued to center people's needs and international solidarity. People in Cuba – not all of them, but many – have continued to cooperate to help each other. Even when under siege and suffering, Cuba and the Cuban people remain inspiring.

While I was gone, one of my Cuban friends, who was born in 1930 and will be 92 soon, had a small stroke. After she was discharged from the hospital, the medications she needed were not available in the pharmacy, but her family put out the word. People searched their cabinets and found the necessary meds to give to her. And someone found her

a wheelchair, so that her son can wheel her to the hospital for physical therapy and doctor's appointments. People share.

Why are there so many shortages? The first reason is the intensification of the US blockade, also known as the "embargo" or "sanctions." The US tries with great success to impose restrictions on commercial enterprises and financial institutions in other countries, preventing them from doing any business in Cuba, which is why it amounts to a blockade and not simply an embargo. The policy has been in place for over 60 years, but additional measures were enacted by executive decision during the Trump regime, including the patently cynical decision to place Cuba on the list of State Sponsors of Terrorism.

At the same time, the pandemic required a massive outpouring and reallocation of resources as Cuba determined to protect the population with stay-at-home measures including paid leave, contact tracing, isolation and treatment of infected people, and the development of Cuban anti-COVID-19 vaccines. Cuba vaccinated over 90% of people age 2 and over, and finally brought the pandemic under control. These strategies worked: Cuba has had about one quarter of the number of COVID-19 deaths, adjusted for population, compared to the US. These decisions place people before economic concerns, but they cost a lot of money.

Even throughout this period of extreme hardship, Cuba continues to extend international medical solidarity to other countries through their medical brigades, the sharing of vaccines, and, of course, the Latin American School of Medicine. The Latin American School of Medicine (ELAM for *Escuela Latinoamericana de Medicina*) is located in Havana, Cuba, at the site of a former naval academy. Students from more than 100 countries, including the US, study medicine there, mostly on full scholarship. We always have an opportunity to visit the school on the Caravan; sometimes we have attended the graduation ceremony.

The first time I saw ELAM students graduate, I cried. This had something to do with the fact that I'd had just a few hours of sleep the night before, but was mostly because this was the medical education of my dreams and I had missed it. I'm not complaining about my medical education which was excellent and occurred back when University of California medical schools didn't cost much to attend. Medical school is a process more than a place and many who start are starry-eyed idealists who want to serve and help people. By graduation, and certainly by the end of internship, the bloom is off the grape. Students' eyes are set in strained hyper-alertness, trying to stay awake, feeling deeply fatigued, exploited, entitled. Idealism is not nourished at most medical schools.

How could I tell that these ELAM students have really been trained to "serve the people?" Because after graduation, when the new ELAM trained doctors return home, instead of joining the elite (where most doctors are located in most societies), they dedicate not just a few years but their entire careers to poor people's medicine.

ELAM is free: room, board, books, lab, tuition. What is asked in return is that students return to their countries and practice medicine serving a poor, underserved group of patients. There is no enforcement mechanism; none is even possible. Yet about 90% of the students end up serving in poor and rural areas where they care for patients who would not otherwise have a doctor and who cannot pay much. They give up a lot for this opportunity to serve – a six-year program spent in a dorm situation far from friends and family and familiar surroundings and comfort. For many students it is a new language, which doesn't make reading and comprehension any easier. There is support, some of it institutional, much of it mutual and cooperative aid among students, but it is a challenging program.

I've been back to the school a lot over the years, and I've visited during the school year in order to attend a class (environmental medicine). Two self-confident young men, one from Palestine and one from South Africa, sat in the back of the room and raised their hands to answer every

question, but other students were still acting like shy high-school kids, looking down without answering. Some students come straight from secondary education and learn their basic science at ELAM.

After class I asked the professor, "Can you really make good doctors out of all these students?" "Oh yes," she said. "We work with them. It's a full-time job. You can't just tell them, you have to accompany them in their lives and demonstrate what you want them to learn." When I asked about how they managed to instill that idealism that leads the students to fulfill their unenforceable commitment to go home and do medicine for the poor, the Rector said, "You can't teach this in a classroom. You have to model it."

This year, after the usual explanation of how the school was founded and how it works and the music that is customary at all Cuban functions, our California group met with students from Cambodia and Togo. We discussed their medical education and ideals, and we found out why they were at the school during vacation. The government of Togo only pays for one trip to the school and another home after graduation. The government of Cambodia does not pay for travel at all and the young man's extended family had pooled their resources to get him there. Both spoke of how hard it would be after graduation, working in countries that lacked the kind of health system found in Cuba – free, universal access, community based, and prevention oriented.

I have heard the same from more than one US student after graduation as they adjust to residency here: "there's no health care system here"; "there's no outreach or public health preventive measures"; "it's so frustrating just to wait until people get really sick." Cuba spends a smaller percentage of its GDP on healthcare (in a non-pandemic year) than does the US, although certainly more than Cambodia or Togo.

ELAM exists to give a medical education to students who would not otherwise have that opportunity but we all felt sympathy for the young men who would not hear their first languages in a face-to-face conversation with anyone for six years. The US students here are from poor families also, but donated funds exist to get them home periodically.

At the celebration event for the US graduates and their families, the travel was in the other direction, as the graduates' families had come to see them graduate from medical school. The students were joyful and popped champagne. A brother came up to the mic and said, "Thank you to Cuba; this was his dream," and a mom in a hijab said, "She is one of nine children. I could never have sent her to medical school."

If you know a young person who wants very much to be a doctor "of science and conscience," point them to <https://ifconews.org/our-work/elam-medical-school/>

A Memorable First Trip to Cuba

By “Dr. Jean” Kennedy

Fresno Branch

They say “a picture is worth a thousand words.” That’s what I thought while visiting Cuba – it is difficult to put the beauty of this tropical country into words. It was an experience I will not forget, causing me to ask many questions about our longstanding policies that do harm to the hospitable people of a nation located only 77 miles (1,250 kilometers) from the United States.

This was my first time going to Cuba, but (God willing) it will not be my last. I traveled under the umbrella of the Pastors for Peace Cuba Caravan group. This was a humanitarian trip, and when we arrived, we were welcomed with open arms.

I engaged myself in all of the activities that were offered and it was a wonderful experience to get up close and personal with people. For example, one of the evenings we went to a neighborhood block party that started around 8 pm. The purpose was for us to visit a “mix living” complex and to see for ourselves how individuals became homeowners, as well as to meet up with the various residents. I understand that as “USAers” (that’s what the Cubans call us), we have been programmed to see Cuba’s government as a dictatorship that does not care for their people, but that is not what I saw and heard when mingling with the people. No one I met expressed fear of the “Cuban regime.” Instead, they shared their gratitude for the help they receive from their government.

The Cuban people I talked to also shared how the economic blockade was an attempt to destroy Cuba’s infrastructure and, in turn, to force Cubans to abandon their country and leave Cuba to be run by an outside imperial regime. Cuba definitely is a socialist country, but so are England, Canada, and other Caribbean countries. Our Cuban family reminded us that they too are “Americans” and ought not to be treated like a “bastard child.” I guess for us in the United States, our idea of a democracy is to squeeze the lifeblood out of another country that has been under our sanctions, and to block humanitarian aid coming in, or going out, from Cuba.

I learned that on 9/11 Cuba tried to send their own firefighters to help us USAers, and we blocked them from coming in to help their brothers! Do you recall Katrina and the hundreds of Black people in need of rescue?? Cuba again sprang into action and sent their best doctors to our rescue, but once again the Cuban doctors were blocked from entering the United States to help. Many people ended up losing their lives in Karina, a majority of them elderly and Black.

There is a whole generation in the United States of America that is unaware of its embargo sanctions and blockade

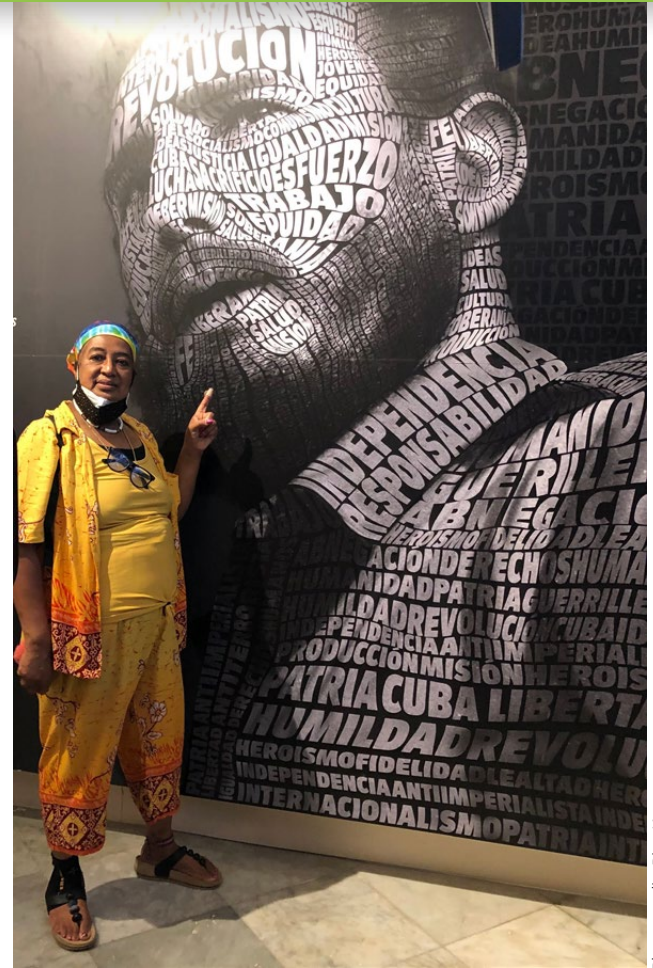


Photo credit: Risa Kumamoto

towards Cuba. Every country deserves to defend itself from enemy attacks, “except for Cuba.” I found myself asking, “Why is that?” Why should Cuba not be able to stand up and defend her country from military attacks? I looked at the beautiful talented children and thought how the blockade is preventing needed medicines and other resources coming into Cuba. When Mr. Trump was president, he decided to make the blockade even harder by pressuring other countries NOT to help with importing goods such as petroleum, and if they did, they would not be able to dock their merchant ships in USA waters or get aid from us. Now, it is one thing for the USA to put restraints on Cuba, but to also place restraints on other countries who wish to aid Cuba seemed a bit much for me.

I kept hearing Malcolm X’s words in my heart while I was in Cuba, “The revolution will not be televised,” and concluded this is why we in the United States of America won’t see Cuba and hear of its struggles on CNN, MSNBC, or on our local TV. We won’t hear of Cuba’s desire to be in solidarity with the American countries, and we definitely will not hear of our American ecumenical churches sending resources to aid Cuba. Obviously, my emotions were stirred as I visited the many places throughout Cuba. Yes, I do believe I will visit again.

WILPF's Unique PFAS 'Forever Chemicals' Programs

New branch PFAS Education Project will raise awareness about this environmental catastrophe.

By Marguerite Adelman and Nancy Price

Earth Democracy Committee



Marguerite Adelman and Pat Elder test the water in the Winooski River near the Salmon Hole, a popular Vermont fishing spot. PFAS was found at 148.5 parts per trillion (ppt).

In 2019, the Earth Democracy Committee expanded its program to include “Exposing the Pentagon: Hidden Polluter of Water” and partnered with Pat Elder.

The program expansion was based on a number of key publications that took the anti-war movement in a new direction. In 2015, David Vine published *Base Nation: How U.S. Military Bases Abroad Harm America and the World*, followed by Pat Elder and David Swanson’s 2017 article, “How War Pollutes the Potomac River,” and the 2017 collection of essays edited by Gar Smith, *The War and Environment Reader*.¹ Some conferences followed in quick succession: No War 2017: War and the Environment Conference (September 2017), the U.S. Foreign Military Bases Conference (January 2018), and the World Peace Council’s Against US/NATO Military Bases Conference (November 2018).

At the “Environment and Health” panel organized by Nancy Price for the January 2018 conference, Pat Elder described the EPA Superfund sites at six US military bases near Washington, DC, that were poisoning the Potomac River. Going down the alphabet from acetone to zinc, no per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) were on the list. They should have been.

Then, in a June 19, 2018 article in *MilitaryTimes* entitled “Why women were told ‘Don’t get pregnant at George Air Force Base’”, Tara Copp reported the heartbreaking stories of multiple women exposed to toxic contaminants. Over the

70s, 80s, and 90s, women living at George AFB in California had suffered multiple miscarriages, stillbirths, ovarian cysts, uterine tumors, and children with birth defects. The women learned by word of mouth or military doctors advised them privately. In seeking information, their medical records were heavily redacted or missing. Clearly, these tragic personal stories make evident the deadly impact of types and amounts of contamination when we are exposed to them. Closed in 1992, this toxic base was designated a Superfund site by the EPA in 1990 with PFOA and PFOS used in firefighting foam among the 33 hazardous chemicals and waste cited.

At the World Peace Council’s conference Against US/NATO Military Bases in Dublin, Ireland, Pat Elder used evidence from US and foreign bases and personal stories to make the case against the Pentagon’s record of contamination and utter disregard for health.²

2020 California Tour ‘Exposing the Pentagon’

In Dublin, after listening to Pat’s compelling presentation, Nancy Price invited him to join with Earth Democracy. With a generous \$12,000 grant from the Patagonia Foundation in 2019, the March 2020 tour “Exposing the Pentagon: Hidden Polluter of Water” could be partially funded. To prepare, Pat collected data on contamination at the California bases in the area of each host branch and these articles are posted at militarypoisons.org under States/California.

Twelve California branches from San Diego to Sacramento planned speaking events and there were two public forums planned – March 21 in Berkeley and March 22 on World Water Day in San Francisco sold out. This was 2020 and the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, so of course Governor Newsom shut California down in March. Regrettably, we had to cancel most of the tour and the forums. Fortunately, we’d already earned local publicity, newspaper articles, radio interviews, and sponsorship by local and national groups for the two forums, including Civilian Exposure, Code Pink, Veterans for Peace, World Beyond War, and the Berkeley Unitarian Universalist Church.

By early 2020, Pat was already testing water, fish, and oysters along the shore where he lives in Maryland that showed high levels of PFAS probably from nearby bases. He stresses that while there is so much focus on drinking water, food is a greater source for PFAS contamination that the Food and Drug Administration should investigate.

Vermont PFAS/Military Poisons Coalition

As a result of the California Project, the Vermont PFAS/Military Poisons Coalition was founded in 2020. WILPF Burlington members uncovered information about PFAS contamination at the Vermont Army and Air National Guards during opposition research about the F35s to be based at the Burlington International Airport. Individuals and groups were invited to join the new coalition. As the coalition membership grew, we applied for grant funding and identified three major aims: educate the public and legislators about PFAS; advocate for legislation to restrict PFAS; and collaborate with environmental, peace, water, and social justice organizations to grow our coalition, bringing attention to the many problems of PFAS.

Coalition projects during the first year included partnering with Pat Elder to redesign the Military Poisons website (www.militarypoisons.org), making it a research tool that could be used by anyone to learn more about PFAS and a recruitment tool to find others interested in working on PFAS issues. Six states were given comprehensive coverage on the website.

In 2021, Vermont PFAS/Military Poisons Coalition members focused heavily on education, producing three Zoom programs, an educational video, fact sheets in multiple languages, and letters to the editor. Members successfully advocated for key pieces of legislation in Vermont, banning PFAS in a number of products, and they attended farmer's markets and other events where they handed out educational materials.

In 2022, coalition members again focused on writing letters to the editor, advocating for the medical monitoring bill in the state, sharing information on ways to avoid PFAS, and creating a PFAS candidate survey to educate those running for public office about PFAS and to see where they stand on the issues. In addition, coalition members tested for PFAS in strategic rivers and ponds in Vermont, issuing news releases on their findings when high PFAS levels were found.

Earth Democracy's New Branch PFAS Education Project

The educational and research work that Pat Elder and WILPF Burlington have been doing has raised the visibility of PFAS and its dangers across the country. Our focus on military PFAS contamination makes us unique and points out the military/government accountability in endangering our environment and human/animal health.

Marguerite Adelman of WILPF Burlington has designed a free Zoom program that she is offering to WILPF branches



Lib Hutchby of the Triangle Branch (pictured here holding the "WATER IS LIFE" sign) attended the SAFE protest at the EPA in Washington, DC on September 20, 2022, along with Nancy Price. The large yellow letters spelled out, "EPA Do Your Job" and you can also see carnations next to photos and photo collages of children and family members who have been sickened and died from exposure to toxic contaminants.

across the country that would like to learn more about PFAS in their state and specific location; how to use the Military Poisons website to conduct research; actions that can be taken at the local, state, and national level to restrict PFAS; and ways to reduce personal risk from PFAS contamination. Each workshop will be tailored to your location and offered at a time that is convenient for you and your branch members.

All resource materials developed through the WILPF US mini-grants program and in the WILPF US Earth Democracy committee will be shared with WILPF branches that choose to participate in the free Zoom session, including information sheets, grant proposals, sample letters to the editor, and more. You can contact Marguerite at madel51353@gmail.com to request a Zoom workshop.

Our Voices Will Be Heard!

Due to the raised visibility of PFAS and other environmental toxins, there is a huge need to tell the stories of those who have been affected personally. On September 20, 2022, SAFE, a new national organization, is taking their case right to EPA's door in a march "to express our outrage regarding

this criminally negligent agency.” Pat Elder has been working with them on their website safeprotestepa.org. As explained on their homepage: “Most of us are women and we share similar, dreadful stories. We’ve organized ourselves as Scientists, Activists, and Families for Cancer Free SAFE Environments or simply ‘S.A.F.E.’

The September 20 action is the first annual event, but organizers state: “We are determined to return to Washington every year in greater numbers [to] demand accountability for environmental contamination that has sickened our children, families, wildlife and the environment.”

You can read the heartbreaking stories of mothers who have seen their children, husbands, and family members suffer cancers and other diseases on “The Advocates” page at safeprotestepa.org. In these accounts, mothers often discover that kids across the street are also suffering from the same diseases. Many of their children have been diagnosed with rare cancers for their age group, have had their cancers recur, and have gone through repeated operations and treatments. Additionally, biological agents, toxic poisons, and nuclear radiation threaten children at their schools.

When the mothers try to find out why these rare diseases are happening to their children, they first seek answers from local governments and health departments who shrug and point elsewhere. They try to connect with state and federal officials, receiving the same type of responses there. It’s the same story everywhere. Health departments say there are no cancer clusters, no single cause. Politicians dismiss the problems, and the corporations are happy to escape meaningful regulation.

The Bottom Line for Our Planet

Recent scientific studies are demonstrating that we may have already missed our chance to stop the widespread contamination of PFAS on our planet. PFAS is now found in rainwater worldwide, water that is used by many people without access to public drinking water systems.³ And even public water systems are not able to detect PFAS in water at levels below 2 parts per trillion (ppt), but any levels above 0 ppt are now considered dangerous to human health by the EPA.

The harm to human health from PFAS exposure takes time, sometimes many years. When it takes this long to see the negative health effects, people become apathetic. You also may have read about the many new methods being discovered to remediate PFAS in our environment. Do not be fooled by these self-promoting press releases from companies

and research labs looking to make a name and money for themselves. We cannot become complacent by looking for a solution to fix the PFAS problem. Sometimes the cure has proven worse than the initial problem. GenX, for example, was supposed to be a safer form of PFAS, only to be found to be more dangerous. Incineration of PFAS has been found to release new forms of PFAS into the air.

Why are these proposed remediation methods not a solution to the PFAS problem? As Terry Collins, the Thomas Lord Professor of Chemistry at Carnegie Mellon University, has written, “The environment is already totally unacceptably contaminated with PFAS and will be for decades even if not another PFAS molecule is ever sold again. You would have to be able to apply this new process to oceans, lakes, and rivers just for starters to have a ‘powerful solution,’ and this is a ludicrous thought.”⁴

Given the 9,000+ types of PFAS in our environment, the only viable solution is to stop producing all forms of these man-made, forever chemicals. And the only way to stop the production of PFAS is for a massive uprising of people to demonstrate against and get comprehensive legislation passed to restrict this planetary poisoning. In the US, we must hold the Department of Defense (DOD), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Health and Human Services (HHS), and other federal, state, and local agencies accountable, making them protect our health and our environment. We must work worldwide to raise awareness of PFAS and other chemical toxins that are in our communal air, water, and soil.

Many of us in WILPF are older and this problem will likely not affect us as deeply as our grandchildren and the future generations. We need to act now to ban PFAS forever. Passionate and committed WILPF US Branches and International Sections can make this happen.

Notes

¹ “How War Pollutes the Potomac River,” by Pat Elder and David Swanson, can be found at worldbeyondwar.org

² We encourage everyone to view Pat Elder’s landmark PowerPoint presentation from Dublin. It can be found at www.militarypoisons.org/videos-and-films. Scroll down to the bottom of the page, next to Power Points, it is the final link.

³ Tanner Stening, “Global Rainwater Is Now Contaminated with ‘Forever Chemicals.’ What Can We Do about It? *News@Northeastern* (www.news.northeastern.edu), August 10, 2022.

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New DPoW Committee Has a Three-Year Plan

By Deanna Murphy

Chair of the DPoW Committee



What is a Domestic Prisoner of War (DPoW)?

As the newest issue committee in WILPF US, DPoW is dedicated to a close examination of the societal, familial, and economic impacts of domestic violence. While many of us have direct experience with these impacts of domestic violence, or know someone who has, there are many more layers to this societal ill than meets the eye.

The lasting and harmful effects of this trauma-inducing phenomenon deserve much more attention. Many explorations of domestic violence are told from the perspective of the victims without looking at the reverberations on the entire family. Or statistics are given in order to secure funding for shelter allocations. But is that all there is to it? We shelter women and families for a period of time, help them get on their feet, and then all is smooth sailing from there?

At present, the majority of members of DPoW are survivors of domestic violence. Having emerged from these emotionally, sometimes physically, crippling situations, we understand that there are reverberations so costly to our existences that they cannot be measured. Some of us have to deal with the lasting impacts on our families. Some of us have setbacks career-wise that can never be made up. Some of us spend countless amounts of money and years in therapy trying to overcome the devastation wrought upon us by our abusers – predators who would use our hearts and anything else we cared about against us.

This is such a painful underside of our societies that most people never want to talk about it. It is so traumatic that most survivors would prefer to never address it, too. They want to move forward as if it never happened. As a result, sometimes those who harm our families are still invited to family gather-

ings, and we all pretend that things are and have been fine. The perpetrators of abuse are often treated as if they have never done anything wrong, and their victims are shamed for daring to say “this is not OK.” More abusers are free to continue their cycles of abuse unchecked than are held to account. Meanwhile, their victims carry the scars around as their private burden.

Our contention is that domestic abuse is NOT a personal burden. It is NOT something victims should have to carry around. The onus of shame belongs to the perpetrators who are preventing other human beings from reaching their full potential as human beings. They are costing children whole, healthy lives and well-being. They are endangering everyone around them in their quest for unchecked control, and they are costing us all resources that could be better utilized for the growth and development of society.

DPoW has a three-year plan. The first year, already underway, consists of educating ourselves and the public of the societal impacts from this scourge on society. We are focused on the United States initially, as we cannot lecture other societies on what they should be doing unless our homes are in order first. During year two, we will examine legislation. What is already in place, what needs improvement? How can WILPF play a role in working with other organizations to improve legislation? How does this connect with the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)? Can VAWA be amended to protect US citizens as well? In the third year, we expect to work on a series of improvements to our own judicial system that we hope WILPFers will support and move forward to endorse, along with other social-justice oriented peace organizations. As Margo Shulter, a contributing member of DPoW has stated, “Peace begins at home”.

If you would like to contribute to DPoW but do not have the time to join the committee, you can still support our work in many ways. As the months unfold, we will be issuing calls that will help bolster our work. In the short term, we are looking for name and information contributions to our DPoW wall, which consists of victims who have lost their lives to domestic abuse. As of now, we have collected enough names for a wall that can circle the globe several times over, but if you know of others, please send a message to nomoredpows@gmail.com.

We believe that more people can be liberated from the cruel and dehumanizing impacts of domestic abuse. We are looking forward to all that we can do together toward this end.

33rd International WILPF Congress



First-time Delegate Finds Congress Enriching

By Deanna "Dee" Murphy

WILPF US Delegate to the 33rd International Congress

Hello to all WILPFers across the world! I was asked to write about what it was like to attend the International Congress of WILPF for the first time, as a newer member of WILPF. What an exciting time it was to be able to attend. Having traveled as a military dependent in my youth but having been settled in Minnesota for the past 24 years, this was one of the best recent experiences I have had in which I've been able to interact with people from diverse cultures.

As a member of Soka Gakkai International (a lay Buddhist faith) since 2002, I've met many other practitioners of my Nichiren Buddhist faith. Like WILPF, Soka Gakkai is also an international organization, with over 12 million members in 192 countries. I live in a college town in central Minnesota, and many students come through to find our local district and practice this faith with others. I have had the great fortune to meet people from Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Nepal and Cameroon, all practicing the same faith.

It was due to my early travel engagements and these more recent international interactions that I was selected to be a delegate to represent the United States Section at the WILPF International Congress, hosted by WILPF Australia and held online July 16-24, 2022. Congress is WILPF's "highest decision-making body and the final authority." As a delegate to this important event, it was amazing to be able to see people from all over the world dedicated to the same mission: "to end and prevent war, ensure that women are represented at all levels in the peace-building process, defend the human rights of

women, and promote social, economic, and political justice."

The ability to understand a variety of cultural approaches and perspectives, and to communicate one's position clearly but with respect, are important skills that anyone who works on an international platform must incorporate. The days when Americans were automatically respected just for being American are long over, and with recent international blunders by US leadership, it is even more important that anyone sent to represent our country has a certain degree of humility and can demonstrate the ability to listen to other perspectives and the willingness to find mutually satisfactory outcomes to the challenges we all face as citizens of the world. In an environment dedicated to the strengthening and advancement of women, this is especially important.

When I applied to be a delegate, established WILPFers such as Phillip Cole and Marybeth Gardham enthusiastically supported and encouraged my efforts. Marybeth even went so far as to write a letter about why she felt that I was qualified. The US Delegation to the International Congress was extremely supportive as well, patiently bringing me up to date on events that had occurred in previous International Congresses, explaining what to expect, and always remaining open to my inquiries and questions. We had many meetings and we always seemed to leave them with a spirit of excitement and anticipation. We felt secure in the fact that, although this year's delegation had a diversity of perspectives on issues, we were on the same team and we would not hesitate to provide one another with the information needed should one of us miss a vote, a resolution, or an event.

As the days of the Congress unfolded, we found that we held a widely varying range of perspectives on the events that were occurring. You may have noticed this if you attended the International Congress Report-Back on August 18, 2022. However, I continued to be impressed by the level of respect shown for one another within the US Delegation. We listened respectfully to one another's alternative perspectives and presented the best, united face of WILPF US to other sections. Even after the Congress was over, the US Delegation remained in close communication.

It was a tremendously encouraging and enriching experience, and I hope to participate again during the next International Congress in 2025. I encourage all WILPFers to participate at the international level as you are able. This includes volunteering for the "in between" events that lead up to the events of the Congress, such as the committees in WILPF that help tailor the votes and resolutions for the Congress, and working within WILPF US issue committees

towards meeting the goals of resolutions already adopted and creating future resolutions.

For more information regarding what was adopted this year, please visit www.wilpf.org, and under "Resources" select "Congress Resolutions" in the dropdown, then click on the box at the bottom of the third column with the dates "2020-2029." (You can also explore adopted resolutions from past Congresses). These resolutions can serve as a basis for focused or expanded work from WILPF US. We are looking forward to the next few years of important domestic and international contributions towards a stronger, more united WILPF!

Adopted Resolutions

During the WILPF International Congress held in Brisbane, Australia, and online, six resolutions on the following topics were adopted:

1. Situation of Indigenous and Environmental Defenders in Brazil
2. Supporting the International Decade for People of African Descent
3. Breakdown Impacts on Women and Women's Role in Governance
4. Facilitation of Visas for Women Activists to Enjoy Their Right to Participate in International Meetings
5. Global Cooperation for the Health of the Planet
6. Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone

Making Connections: Congress Workshops Discuss Environment, Social Justice, and Demilitarization for Feminist Peace

By Cindy Piester

Presentations for WILPF's 33rd International Congress were offered by WILPF sections from all over the world, with about half of them being offered, presented, or sponsored by members of WILPF US. These many and varied weekday [workshops](#) were in addition to the business sessions on weekends. WILPF members can view the workshops on YouTube.

Looking Back and Moving Forward; The WILPF Peace Train to Beijing 1995 featured WILPF US's Robin Lloyd's archival footage of WILPF's historical journey from Helsinki to the Women's World Conference in Beijing. Participants shared

Meet the New WILPF International President



Sylvie Jacqueline Ndongmo of WILPF Cameroon stepped into the role of President of the WILPF International Board as of July 24, 2022. A longtime peace activist, she has been

a member of WILPF since 2012 and set up WILPF Cameroon in 2014. From 2018-2022, she served on the International Board as Regional Representative of Africa. She is taking over the position from outgoing president Joy Onyesoh, who served in the role for the past four years.

In a Q&A on the WILPF International website (wilpf.org), Sylvie expressed her wish for all WILPF members to "commit to upholding our feminist values and take action to challenge systems and structures of oppression, promote inclusive and peaceful solutions to conflict, and strengthen feminist peace activism more than ever." She also said she hopes "that greater trust is rebuilt among members, that we overcome barriers and strengthen the enablers in our work, and that we look for the best and most efficient ways to work together in the future." One area on which she plans to focus her energy is "ensuring more participation and increased visibility for the youths," which includes "promoting intergenerational connections between the young and older WILPF members."

life-changing memories and messages of feminist peace such as, "Our final destination is not Beijing, but a world without war!" evoking the need for another such event. Ukrainian feminist Hannah Moilenko concluded with a plea for global feminist support for the rule of law and peace in the Ukraine.

The **"Building Equity and Inclusion, Section by Section"** workshop was organized by WILPF US members Theresa El-Amin, George Friday, Melissa Torres, and WILPF UK members Lamona Chanda (moderator) and Marie Clair Faray (presenter). Theresa and George also wrote a winning WILPF

resolution, “*Supporting the UN Decade for People of African Descent.*” The discussion addressed ways branches, issue committees, and sections can work on equity and inclusion by challenging practices that have excluded members of color and low-income women.

Climate Justice+Women+Peace was organized by two WILPF US members: Nancy Price, who moderated, and Cindy Piester, who addressed the climate impacts of military emissions. Additionally, Patrizia Sterpetti (WILPF Italy) discussed repercussions against militants opposing US military bases in Sardinia, Åse Møller (WILPF Norway) discussed the impacts of NATO on Norway, and Tamara Lorincz (WILPF Canada) spoke on *NATO - the Greatest Threat to the Climate*. Say No to NATO, support Sardinian activists, end militarism by noting the impacts of military emissions on climate.

Towards Environmental Peace and Justice – A Space for Exchange and Learning This workshop featured “lightning” talks by many WILPFers including Beatriz Schulthess (WILPF Costa Rica) and Edwick Madzimore (WILPF Zimbabwe) on indigenous perspectives, Nancy Price on PFAS, and Katrin Geyer (WILPF IS) on Degrowth.

“Which Feminism?” a Role Play and Reflection Space WILPF’s International Board (IB) and International Secretariat (IS) hosted a role-playing workshop exploring the misuse of feminist labels and a discussion on developing our theoretical and ideological standing.

Ecofeminismo y antimilitarism en la agenda de WILPF was offered in Spanish and organized by Diana Maria Salcedo Lopez (WILPF Columbia). The impacts of militarism and armed conflict on the environment and protecting the rights of environmental defenders were highlighted.

Voices from the Asia-Pacific: Working for Peace, Denuclearisation and Demilitarisation Masako Takasaki (WILPF Japan) presented a *Report from Fukushima*; Sabrina Birk and Roti Make (WILPF Polynesia) discussed peace, decolonization, and denuclearization; Celine Kearney and Anna Hood (WILPF Aotearoa) considered Aotearoa’s allies for feminist peace; Ludmilla Kwitko and Barabara O’Dwyer (WILPF Australia) discussed the alarming growth of their nation’s military.

Building the Space for Younger WILPF Members Hosted by the Young WILPF Network, this workshop reserved for young WILPF members called for WILPF to organize towards centering the voices and perspectives of younger women, while building strong intergenerational relationships and practices.

Towards Transformative Feminist Economies of Care This workshop discussion addressed feminist inclusive economic system alternatives to capitalist entities such as the International Monetary Fund and was hosted by WILPF Colombia, WILPF Argentina and International Secretariat (IS), and facilitated by Nela Porobi Isakovi .

Killer Robots Taniel Yusef (WILPF UK), Allison Pyltak (WILPF Canada), Ray Acheson (WILPF IS), Sylvie Jacqueline Ndongmo, Guy Feugap and Armelle Tsack (WILPF Camaroon), and Edwick Madzimore (WILPF Zimbabwe) addressed the wide-ranging impacts of autonomous weapons in Africa.

The Illegitimacy of Nuclear Weapons in Italy: A Legal Study Organized by Patrizia Sterpetti (WILPF Italy). Attorney Aaron Lau shared encyclopedic knowledge of the legal means to oppose western nuclear weapons sharing programs.

Feminist Peace Movement Challenges and Opportunities under Taliban Regime. Jamila Afghani, Hareer Hashim, and other Afghans look at the Section’s work under the Taliban. Confronted by the desperation of a people forced to sell their kidneys and even their children in a bid to survive earned the taut attention of attendees. From within Afghanistan, WILPF leader Nazifa Jalalab urged feminist sisters to advocate for donors to give grants to the new NGOs.

Governance and Organizational Proposals for the Future was organized by Kerry McGovern and Mignon Keyser (WILPF Australia). The workshop discussed an Accountability Framework that lays out agreements, policies, processes, mechanisms and practices prepared by WILPF’s Organizational Development (OD) Group.

WILPF Welcomes Ten New Sections!

This year’s Congress officially welcomed ten new sections to WILPF’s global community of feminist peace activists. Eight of the ten are located in Africa.

- WILPF Argentina
- WILPF Austria
- WILPF Burkina Faso
- WILPF Burundi
- WILPF CAR (Central African Republic)
- WILPF Côte d’Ivoire
- WILPF Guinée
- WILPF Niger
- WILPF Sudan
- WILPF Togo

WILPFers View Congress Together at Vermont Gathering

By Robin Lloyd

Vermont Branch

It was delightful to view the 33rd International Congress with a group in a rural setting. Lloyd's Wing Farm has been the venue for VTWILPF Gatherings for over 20 years, and this year we gathered from July 19-24.

The first Congress weekday event that I got up for, as I was on the panel, was the workshop looking back at the Peace Train experience. It was exciting to be on Zoom with some of my comrades from that time 27 years ago, including Babsi Lochbiler and Felicity Ruby. It reminded me again of the parallels between our communal experience on the Peace Train, travelling across borders, and the experience of my grandmother Lola Maverick Lloyd and the other women who crossed the Atlantic in 1915 to try to stop WW1. This seminal event opened my eyes to WILPF's history and the ongoing global feminist movement, and it was fun to revisit it in this workshop.

The next afternoon we made a point of watching the Equity and Inclusion workshop which included insights from US and international women. Comments that continue to



reverberate in my mind are "We have been carrying colonialism for generations"; "Despite efforts there is not an equal playing field in WILPF"; and "WILPF is a clique".

In my opinion, this Congress, held on Zoom, was a good start to overcome exclusion by involving more members, letting them see each other, and especially by welcoming our new sections (most of them African), whose excitement at joining WILPF was wonderfully conveyed in the first Congress Plenary on July 15.

Can Sanctions Ever Be Just

Continued from page 4.

Notes

¹ Nick Wadhams, "Russia Is Now the World's Most-Sanctioned Nation," *Bloomberg.com*, March 7, 2022.

² Simon Pirani, "Europe Is Trying to Solve Its Energy Crisis with Fossil Fuel Projects in Africa," *Truthout*, August 20, 2022.

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⁵ Richard N. Haass, "Economic Sanctions: Too Much of a Bad Thing," *Brookings.edu*, June 1, 1998.

⁶ Adam Behsudi, "When sanctions work – and when they don't," *Politico*, March 15, 2022.

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WSD Learning Circles Revive Public Banking Activism

By Marybeth Gardam

Chair of the Women, Money & Democracy Committee



Shanda Williams (left) and Jacqueline Reike (right) are organizing for public banking in Vermont.

The Women, Money & Democracy Committee of WILPF US hoped that our first **Public Banking Learning Circles** would attract large numbers of people who wanted to learn what a public bank is, how it works, and how it can benefit women, families, economically depressed communities, small businesses, and communities of color while fostering peace and environmental justice. We offered tools and resources to educate women about exactly these points: The WILPF US Public Banking Toolkit, videos, and collaborators from An Economy of Our Own and California Public Banking Alliance.

The six-session series brought together women who admitted they didn't know much about public banking but agreed that the for-profit commercial Wall Street banks are ripping people off right and left. When more intimate groups of 10 to 15 women gathered, they had the opportunity to exchange more information and to benefit from the experience of their group facilitators: **Susan Harman** of the Public Banking Institute and California Public Banking Alliance; **Rickey Gard Diamond**, founder of An Economy of Our Own, author of *Screwnomics*, and Ms. Magazine columnist, and me (**Marybeth Gardam**, Chair of WILPF's Women, Money & Democracy Committee).

It went so well the first time in 2021 that we convened a second series in 2022. This time, a happy accident brought together five women from Vermont who shared an interest and passion around transitioning to a more equitable economy. And their interest gained momentum because of another instance of serendipity: good political timing.

The public banking movement in Vermont had been vibrant

and hopeful a few years ago under the leadership of Gwen Hallsmith, an economist and author, but efforts came to a halt when the new State Treasurer at that time decided to shut down any chance of the idea taking root in Vermont. Now that official's term is nearly over, and the five women from our learning circle have the tools and resources necessary to do the relationship building and outreach across Vermont, and to convince the candidates for State Treasurer of the common sense wisdom of a Vermont Public Bank. They've set out to do just that, with continued mentoring and advice from the Learning Circle guides. Hallsmith has since moved to Canada, but has given the group permission to use her Vermont Public Banking email list to assemble folks who were active last time and are eager to

keep working toward this important goal.

Local leaders are **Shanda Williams** and **Jaqueline Reike**, both Learning Circle graduates and women on fire about economic justice in Vermont. Weekly organizing meetings are underway on Friday evenings in preparation for the November 2022 election for State Treasurer, and the women plan to meet with all the candidates and to invite Vermont legislators and influencers to join their efforts. They are reaching out to allies whose dreams for environmental solutions, better public education funding, affordable housing, support for small businesses, and affordable student loans could benefit from public banking. Already they have some unions and other allies as endorsers.

On October 7, they are holding an in-person gathering at the Pavilion Building of the Vermont State Capitol in Montpelier called "Money Matters: Women and Trans Therapeutic Journey to Financial Freedom." This event is in collaboration with the Vermont Kindness Project and is cosponsored by WILPF US and An Economy of Our Own, among other allies. And they are planning a statewide Zoom forum on public banking for October 14 to put their hopes and ideas before the whole state.

The Women, Money & Democracy Committee is pretty pleased with this outcome from our Public Banking Learning Circles. We would love to see the same kind of informed and motivated cohort grow in every state. We are working with An Economy of Our Own to package our Public Banking Learning Circles, with resources and facilitator packets, so that by this time next year activists can mount their own organizing and educational efforts in every city and state. If you are interested, contact wmad@wilpfus.org.

Reaching Underrepresented Voters to Get Out The Vote

By Judy Adams

Peninsula/Palo Alto Branch

Do you miss democracy? It's up to the people (us) to rise up to work against voter suppression, election deniers, and those who stormed the Capitol in a violent act of insurrection January 6, 2021. In contrast, thousands of protesters from the Poor People's Campaign and its partners, including WILPF, massed peacefully in DC on June 18, 2022. As we approach Election Day, we must stand up peacefully for the rights of the disenfranchised and mobilize voters to restore justice and equality.

WILPF's Voting Rights Solidarity Action committee members brainstormed and strategized how to get out the vote (GOTV) in this year's critical elections. Two resources were created. **Ashley Carrington's Voting Rights Toolkit (VRT)** includes graphics for flyers and social media; a sample letter for letter-writing campaigns; text/phone banking and canvassing details and scripts; and other resources. She encouraged branches to partner with other groups to increase their effectiveness.

My project was a **resource document on voting rights** introduced by an article about voter suppression cowritten by activists from the Poor People's Campaign (PPC), the Kairos Center and Repairers of the Breach. It also includes several nonpartisan postcarding/letter-writing opportunities; information about the influence of swing states; 2022 voter registration deadlines, primary election dates; and additional information on ending voting suppression.

The varied materials provided by Ashley's VRT and my research are meant to give options for your important work to reach as many voters as we can in this critical election year. All of these materials are available on a new webpage on the WILPF US website, the Freedom to Vote page, listed in our Resources section on the homepage www.wilpfus.org.

Making Calls with the Center for Common Ground

Early on, my branch's weekly silent vigils began to sprout signs for voting rights issues. Branch members sent postcards, and later had opportunities to do phone banking through the BIPOC-founded Center for Common Ground, the organization that the PPC uses for voter outreach. Founded in 2018 by people of color, it serves BIPOC communities, mostly in the South. Its primary goals are to empower underrepresented



voters in voter suppression states to engage in elections, and to advocate for their voting rights.

The Center's philosophy and approach are relevant to WILPF's current efforts to expand our outreach to people of color. The Center does not charge fees for its services. However, callers working through the Center must read a set script, and can only identify their own organization for name recognition. When I've made calls, I've let those I call know that WILPFers are working for voting equality. As an added value, the Center organizes "Democracy Centers" for ongoing voter education.¹

Our liaison for the Poor People's Campaign, Emily Keel, remarked in a recent eNews article that "these less frequent voters are vital to holding our democracy together and to meeting the demands of the [PPC's] Reconstruction Agenda."² In the process of working on my project, I appreciated the support of our colleagues in the Poor People's Campaign: Emily Keel, and PPC/WILPF member Samantha Turner, both in the Carolinas. Samantha helped rally participants to send over 20,000 postcards to their neighbors of color through the Center. Awesome!

My main work with the Center was on its National Guided Phone Bank Calls, well organized into two-hour sessions, and you can add extra hours. Calls go quickly after an excellent training video, and you can meet trainers and fellow callers by video. If I had a question, I could pop out to the trainers and get my answer. The best part was speaking with the voter and mentioning that I was calling as a WILPF member. I was often thanked for calling. For more information on the option of phone banking with the Center, go to www.centerforcommonground.org/phonebanks. You can also engage in text banks and postcard campaigns.

Let's Get Out the Vote and work as if the future of democracy depends on us – because it does!

NOTES

¹ Learn more about the centers and hear "testimonies" of participants at www.centerforcommonground.org/democracycenters.

² Emily Keel, "Think Democracy and How We Keep It," wilpfus.org, September 2022. For more information on the Reconstruction Agenda, go to: www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/join-us-as-we-build-the-third-reconstruction

The Death of Abortion Rights Signals a Threat to Democracy

By Laura Dewey

Detroit Branch President



Washington, DC - June 18, 2022: Black Bodies for Black Power Protest for Women's Rights. Johnny Silvercloud / Shutterstock.com.

The Supreme Court's decision to nullify *Roe v. Wade* on June 24, 2022, was the culmination of fifty years of a growing backlash among the fundamental Christian right, the passage of restrictive abortion laws in states, and an extreme-right Supreme Court created by a president who undermined democracy while in and out of office and exploited an authoritarian strain among voters.¹

The stripping away of abortion rights along with voting rights in numerous states signals a trend building for decades – the rise of authoritarianism and the further decline of democracy.

As devastating as the ruling is, it serves as a valuable lesson that must be relearned: civil and human rights, once won, must be continually defended. We've seen this with the vote, with hundreds of thousands losing this fundamental right, and we're seeing it now with reproductive rights.

As of August 26, abortion is illegal in eleven states. Abortion is banned after six weeks' gestation in two states, and after gestation periods ranging from fifteen to twenty-two weeks in five states.²

Since 1992, states have passed numerous laws weakening abortion rights by requiring pre-abortion counseling, ultrasound, and waiting periods. This was precipitated by *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, the 1992 Supreme Court case that affirmed abortion rights but allowed restrictions if they didn't create an "undue burden" on the woman seeking abortion. States tried to shut down abortion clinics by requiring abortion doctors to obtain admitting privileges at hospitals. The

Supreme Court ended this charade in two court cases, *Whole Women's Health* (2016) and *June Medical Services* (2020), but these were decided before the conservative justice Amy Coney Barrett was confirmed.

An Ideology in Search of a Legal Theory (Or: A Bogus Legal Theory)

The court's ruling against *Roe* was based on a specious legal theory: originalism. The right to abortion is not mentioned in the US Constitution and is not "deeply rooted" in the nation's history; therefore, that right isn't "implicitly protected by any constitutional provision." Further, the majority opined, "Until the latter part of the 20th century, such a right was entirely unknown in American law." The originalist argument is the reason the ruling sent shudders down the spines of LGBTQ people who have had the right to marry since 2015.

The originalists ignore that abortion was legal during colonial days and in the early history of our nation, provided it was performed before "quickening," or when a baby's movements were felt in the womb. This was based on English common law. And you can't get more "deeply rooted" than the Magna Carta (1215), which asserted the right to control one's body and which informs our Constitution. However, beginning in the 1820s, states began to pass laws making "post-quickening" abortion illegal (thought it should be noted that these laws were still more progressive than today's misnamed "heartbeat" bills).

The Court decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* essentially made abortion a states' rights issue. The right to abortion now depends on where one lives. Since 1992, restrictive abortion laws have been passed in several states, but abortions were still available in all fifty until now. Live in California? Got access. Live in Ohio? Tough luck, as a ten-year-old rape victim found out this year when she was forced to travel to Indiana to obtain an abortion. In the fifty-year history of women having abortion access, this is new.

Of course, residency-dependent rights are not new when it comes to voting, either historically or now. For more than twenty years, states such as Georgia, Florida, and Arizona have been passing voting-suppression laws intended to suppress the Black vote. In 2021 alone, nineteen states passed thirty-four laws making it harder to vote.³ Texas passed a voter ID law so onerous it resulted in the tossing of 23,000 ballots in the March 2022 primary, 13% of the total number of ballots.

Four days after the *Dobbs* ruling, the Supreme Court

issued another devastating order in *Ardoyn v. Robinson*, which reinstated Louisiana's racially gerrymandered congressional districts. African Americans make up a third of Louisiana's population, but Black voters will control only one of the six districts.⁴

So, whether you have the right to seek an abortion or the ability to vote and be represented depends on where you call home. States' rights rule over civil rights. This fact alone tells us what a deeply undemocratic society we have always been.

It's no coincidence that both voting and abortion rights have been attacked by conservative-led states and the Supreme Court. This is part of a larger trend that arguably began with the infamous Powell memo of 1971, gained traction under the anti-regulatory Reagan administration, and exploded under the presidency of Donald Trump. That trend is: less democracy and more authoritarian rule.

We are already ruled by a minority. This is guaranteed by the Electoral College, the inherently undemocratic nature of the Senate, the filibuster, voter suppression, gerrymandering, and winner-take-all elections. The ruling minority now consists of a court that is imposing its originalist, Christian fundamentalist, pro-corporate and deregulatory, and misogynist and racist views on the rest of us. And what better way to hold onto power than oppressing women and stopping people of color from voting?

This is what ending abortion rights is about – power. It may be about “pro-life” for the true believers in the grassroots, but for the far-right politicians, life has nothing to do with it. Maintaining power is the interim goal, with the continuing aim of deregulating industry, allowing polluters to continue polluting, keeping Wall Street happy, and building and selling every weapon imaginable. The ultimate goal is ever more profits.

What too many women don't know to the peril of democracy is that women generally have priorities that don't match those of the extreme right. This fact is true across the globe: when more women serve in parliaments, social legislation is more likely to get passed. In Australia in 2007–13, when more women than ever held seats in parliament, “more than 300 pieces of legislation [were passed] in such key areas as carbon pricing; paid parental leave; improved health, aged and child care; disability funding and worker safety”.⁵

So oppressing women is important if you're a Mitch McConnell or the CEO of Raytheon or Exxon Mobil. And forcing women and transgender men to give birth is very oppressive, in that it holds them back socially and economically. The ability to determine the size of one's family was a revolution, not only for women, but for men and entire families because it

gave people more economic freedom. Most women seeking abortions are already mothers, and 59% of women who want abortions are poor.⁶ And while poor people obviously do vote, they vote at rates far lower than those with higher incomes (46% versus 68%, in one study).⁷ Taking power by any means (suppressing the vote) and holding onto it is the goal of the rising extreme right.

We Need Another Backlash

The Planned Parenthood Action Fund, Center for Reproductive Rights, and ACLU all provide lists of “Things You Can Do Right Now for Abortion Rights.” These include showing up to abortion rights protests, donating to abortion funds and independent abortion clinics, and sharing your stories or posting why you believe #AbortionIsEssential.

In January 2017, women rose in massive numbers to protest Trump. From the streets they went to the voting booths in 2018 and helped flip the US House blue. We need an even stronger reaction this November. We must elect people in the House and Senate who are pro-choice, pro-voting, pro-labor, pro-environment, pro-people. Then we must push for the Women's Health Protection Act, passed by the House in July, along with the Equal Rights Amendment. Barring action in Congress, the struggle for reproductive autonomy will remain in the states.

Let's work for the biggest, baddest backlash in November and beyond.

NOTES

¹ Matthew C. MacWilliams. “Trump Is an Authoritarian,” *Politico*, September 9, 2020.

² “Abortion in the U.S. Dashboard,” KFF (KFF.org), accessed September 2, 2022.

³ “Voting Laws Roundup: December 2021,” *Brennan Center for Justice* (brennancenter.org), originally published December 21, 2021; updated January 12, 2022.

⁴ Ian Millhiser, “The Supreme Court just handed down very bad news for Black voters,” *Vox*, June 28, 2022.

⁵ “Impact analysis: Legislative and policy achievements of EMILY's List women in power, Federal Parliament 2007-2013,” *EMILY's List Australia* (www.emilyslist.org.au).

⁶ Theresa Ghiladrucci, “59% of Women Seeking Abortions Are Mothers Facing High Poverty Risk,” *Forbes*, December 24, 2021.

⁷ Matt Stevens, “Poorer Americans have much lower voting rates in national elections than the nonpoor, a study finds,” *New York Times*, August 11, 2020.

Dr. Bernice King: 'Poverty in All of Its Forms Is Violence'

By Jan Corderman

WILPF US Treasurer and Des Moines Branch

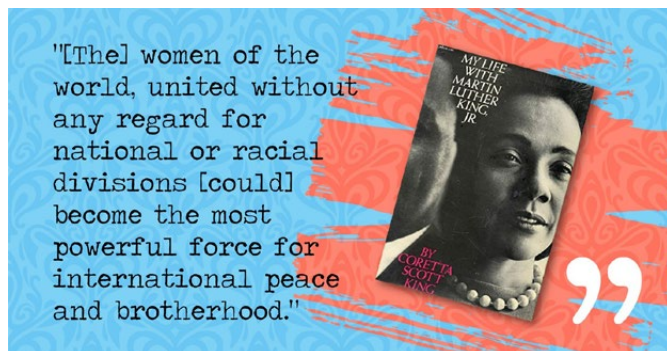
While 2020's election was critical, 2022 is shaping up for an even bigger impact. The forces are lining up to chip away so many of the safeguards of our democracy that we used to take for granted.

We also know that economic downturns and high inflation rates hurt low-wage workers more. It's the same when there's an attack on Roe v Wade or on voting rights – poor people are impacted disproportionately.

That is why the Poor People's Campaign declares:

A movement that votes does not vote for any party or any one person, we vote for our people and for our lives. We vote to summon a Third Reconstruction that can birth us out of an impoverished democracy and usher in a new world.

The Original Poor People's Campaign



In her 1969 book *My Life with Martin Luther King, Jr.*, Coretta Scott King shared her motivations for joining WILPF.

Martin Luther King Jr announced the Poor People's Campaign at a staff retreat for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in November 1967. We appreciate that America's students spend time in class on Dr. King's iconic "I Have A Dream" speech, but too few learn about his moral crusade for a "revolution of values" in America. That revolution included what Dr. King called **The Poor People's Campaign**.

Just a few months after announcing the Campaign's first March on Washington, King's staff were stunned that he would consider going to Memphis when they were so far



From left, Emily Keel of the Triangle Branch, then Sylvia Metzler, Tina Shelton, and Pam Albright, all from the Greater Philadelphia Branch at the June 18, 2022 PPC march in DC. Photo by Jan Corderman.

behind in organizing the rally. But for King, the sanitation workers' strike was the poverty campaign in microcosm. On March 18, 1968, he addressed the striking sanitation workers who were organizing with AFSCME, the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees, a Labor Union that I was a member of and I suspect many of you were members of as well. King told the packed crowd of 15,000 at the Mason Temple, "You are highlighting the economic issue. You are going beyond purely civil rights to questions of human rights."

At the end of the speech, King announced he would return soon to lead a march with the workers through downtown Memphis. King was back in Memphis on April 3, 1968, to lead a second march. The speech King gave that night, the last one he would ever give, became one of the most iconic in his long and accomplished career: "I just want to do God's will," he said. "And he's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land." Tragically, King was assassinated the following day (April 4) while standing outside on a balcony at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis.

On April 8, a second civil rights march was finally held in Memphis. This one was peaceful. It was a memorial march. King's widow, Coretta Scott King, and three of their four children led 20,000 people through downtown Memphis.

In late May of 1968, the Poor People's Campaign began to arrive in Washington. It would eventually include a mule

train of 15 covered wagons that had departed from Marks, Mississippi. It was actually on Mother's Day when Coretta Scott King, who had lost her husband a mere month earlier, and the women of the National Welfare Rights Organization led a march of 7,000 through Washington's streets. These women (and men) were the first wave of demonstrators for the Poor People's Campaign.

Revived PPC and June 18 Moral March on Washington



We know that Coretta Scott King, who was a member of WILPF along with her husband, would be proud to know that WILPF US has stepped up to this unfinished work. As soon as she became aware that the reemerging PPC would be seeking strategic partners, Mary Bricker Jenkins

approached then President Mary Hanson Harrison in mid to late 2017 and prepared an article for the monthly WILPF-US eNews. **Our WILPF-PPC** Initiative was born and branches began taking up the charge. We were ready to roll even before the PPC called for partnership endorsements in January 2018.

The Poor People's Campaign, through the leadership of Rev. Dr. William Barber II and Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis and so many others, has brought people together to confront the interlocking evils of systemic racism, poverty, ecological devastation, militarism and the war economy, and the distorted moral narrative of religious nationalism.

During the summer of 2018, from Mother's Day to the Summer Solstice, Branches across the US Section across the sponsored and participated in the **Poor People's Campaign's 40 Days of Moral Action**. Each week we lifted up a theme through a series of events including nonviolent moral fusion direction action in our state capitals and Washington, DC.

Dorothy Van Soest kept us energized as our next WILPF 4 PPC liaison. We appreciated the inspiration she gave us through her writings and discussions on ONE WILPF calls and at other events. Emily Keel of North Carolina's Triangle Branch has continued to bring us together over these past

months and into the future. Along with Rowan Fairgrove of the San Jose, CA, Branch, Emily organized our efforts to fully participate in the **Moral March on Washington and to the Polls on June 18, 2022**.

Thirty-eight WILPF members attended this rally. Four of us drove in from Des Moines to be there for the march on Saturday. On Friday night we attended a fun, well-attended event sponsored by the Southern Anti-Racism Network (SARN), with coordination from its Board Chair, Theresa El Amin, who is also the convener of WILPF's Fannie Lou Hamer Branch located in Columbus, GA. Luci Murphy, a singer, political activist, community organizer, and language interpreter, chaired the event. We learned that Luci has spoken against US police brutality, Palestinian and Colombian population displacement, and the Cuban blockade in her songs. After the rally, she followed up and invited folks in the area to join WILPF. Luci quickly met the threshold of ten members and she is now the convener of WILPF's DC-MD-VA Branch.

At the national rally, we heard from Dr. Bernice King, lawyer, minister, CEO of the MLK Jr Center for Nonviolent Social Change, and the youngest daughter of Martin and Coretta Scott King. Her rhythmic, intense style energized us. She declared: "We can attest to the reality that poverty in all of its forms is violence. We have a moral responsibility to speak up, to stand up, to show up and never shut up until all of our brothers and sisters can rise from the shackles of oppression, depression, suppression, and the real violence of poverty."

Several WILPFers attended associated events including an amazing picnic sponsored by Code Pink. Members also used their time in Washington to get together in coalition with other groups to make plans for accelerating the pressure to ban nuclear weapons, curtail the military industry's ever-increasing spending, and more. If you would like updates or want to join in the continued planning, please contact Emily Keel at ppc-comm@wilpfus.org.

On Sunday, Dianne Blais, WILPF US Board member and Convener of the Jane Addams Branch, invited everyone to a luncheon at her house. President Darien De Lu started us off with a song of blessing.

Emily's leadership of our WILPF-PPC Initiative continues with ever louder calls to take action against immoral policies and interlocking injustices. Emily says that if each of us makes phone calls and texts from home, organizes fun postcarding get-togethers with other WILPFers, and joins in coalition with other like-minded members of our communities, we will make a difference on November 8.

Many Issues Are Covered by the AHR Committee

By Donna Pihl

Chair, Advancing Human Rights Committee

As the new chair of the Advancing Human Rights Issue Committee (AHR), I am often amazed at the actions, activities, and intentions of the subcommittees. For the last 12 years, I have been a Cape Cod WILPFer. Here in little Harwich, MA, with the pandemic and Zoom, my world has opened to the national and even international WILPF arena. I attended my first US Congress in the summer of 2021 and was impressed with the amount of work being done. Participating in AHR meetings this past year, I've realized that many of the topics apply to me personally.

Here is the work covered by active AHR subcommittees:

The **Border and Migration Justice** subcommittee advocates for the human rights of people seeking freedom, opportunity, and safety. Through the scrutiny, removal, and replacement of unfair and inhumane policies and protocols, we join our voices against the immoral treatment of migrants both arriving at militarized borders and residing in non-native countries and we work with others to implement an expedited, safe, and dignified path to entry and citizenship in our own country.

We recognize the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Articles 13 and 14, supporting the right of people to move from one country to another, to seek asylum, and to be free from persecution. We also recognize that border policy can be at odds with UDHR. As residents of the United States, we fully acknowledge that we are most able to influence our own government's policies, while we can join with world citizens to advocate for freedom, opportunity, and safety for all world citizens.

Border and Migration Justice meets on Zoom on Tuesday evenings about once a month. Please email Tina Shelton at tinades@verizon.net if you would like to receive email notices of upcoming meetings. We welcome other voices! Our intention is to center the voices of those from impacted communities.

Ending Mass Incarceration and the Death Penalty (EMIDP) subcommittee of the AHR committee is convened on the second Monday of each month on Zoom to engage branches in supporting efforts in their states to end mass incarceration and the death penalty. Participants in the subcommittee include members of branches in CA, GA, DC/MD/VA, MA, NC, VT, and the Jane Addams nationwide branch.

The Fannie Lou Hamer branch in Columbus, GA, will host an in-person meeting as part of the second annual Fannie



Lou Hamer Human Rights Conference on December 10, 2022, at the Fourth Street Missionary Baptist in Columbus, GA. On January 11-13, 2023, the historic Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta will host a national conference on Ending Mass Incarceration. WILPF members from around the South are expected to attend. Theresa El-Amin and George Friday are the convenors of the EMIDP subcommittee.

UN Decade/Reparations subcommittee of the AHR meets monthly on Zoom in recognition of the UN Decade for People of African Descent which began on January 1, 2015, and ends on December 31, 2024. One major accomplishment of the UN Decade/Reparations subcommittee was to pass a resolution at the International Triennial Congress in July 2022 in support of the UN Decade for People of African Descent.

This subcommittee has agreed to explore passing resolutions and ordinances in municipalities in states where members in branches are represented. Branches in CA, DC/MD/VA, GA, MA, MI, NC, and VT are represented. Theresa El-Amin and George Friday are convenors of UN Decade/Reparations and welcome new participants at any time.

UN4Women. The scope of the UN4Women subcommittee is basically "anything and everything" covered by/at the United Nations that is related to women, specifically the Women, Peace & Security Agenda: UNSCR 1325 (etc.), CEDAW, and ICERD. This subcommittee has had an inactive period but looks forward to starting meetings again in October. The AHR chair should be contacted for further information

As you can clearly see, the AHR program is diverse and timely. With the death of Queen Elizabeth, reparations are again being discussed. Cape Cod received 52 migrants including babies on Martha's Vineyard with no notice and now they are being tended to and assisted at Camp Edwards military base. Women and children around the world are still in danger of being trafficked. With the war in Ukraine raging, war refugees are in desperate need of help. And on and on.

Please contact me at AHRchair@wilpfus.org for information about the Advancing Human Rights program. Everyone is welcome!

Fundraising and Serendipity?

An Interview with Jeneve Brooks

By Mary Hanson Harrison

WILPF US Development Steward for Major Donors

Both Jeneve and I are new to our positions. Jeneve is WILPF US Development Liaison – working on appeals, new donors, and grants – and I am now a Development Steward for Major Donors. As a reader of *Peace & Freedom*, you most likely know a bit more about my WILPF work, so I wanted everyone to get to know more about Jeneve and her vision for WILPF US work. Why are two fundraisers for WILPF US discussing serendipity, you may ask? Read on!

MHH: Jeneve, what has serendipity got to do with you and WILPF US?

Jeneve: Well, it's a funny story. During Christmas dinner last year, my family played a game where we had to name a person from history that we would love to go back and interview, and I immediately said Jane Addams. I have a PhD in Sociology and Jane Addams is considered one of the main influences on our discipline given her amazing work on world peace, economic/social justice, and community building through Hull House. This was right before I saw the job ad for WILPF US. Talk about serendipity!

MHH: Yes, serendipity is one of those occurrences that gives us hope in these trying times. However, the benefits of recognizing it depend on sagacity as well as chance. It requires the wisdom to choose a certain path that will lead to success, to take advantage of the timing. For instance, you reminded me the other day that it's the 100th Anniversary of Jane Addams' book *Peace and Bread in Time of War*. Do you think that her messages on pacifism and humanitarian aid to send food to former enemies, as well as her critique of the press, speak to our mission today?

Jeneve: I do! I truly see Jane Addams as the supreme social connector who brought people and resources together to make substantial strides towards peace and justice. I think that at WILPF US, we can continue to embody her spirit of collaboration in our development work. You and I have talked about how wonderful it would be to hear from WILPF US members directly to get their fresh ideas and start this process of building a community of folks – member donors, foundations, organizations, etc. – to move WILPF US forward! I invite folks to email me directly at wilpfus.jenevebrooks@gmail.com and let's start this conversation and engage in community building.

MHH: Sounds like a great opportunity, Jeneve, and possibly more serendipity to look forward to! I look forward to hearing



Jane Addams (1900), Library of Congress, Bain Collection.

from readers and working with you to build that community. Also, dear readers, we hope you will continue supporting our continuing efforts to keep WILPF US moving forward through your financial support. You can donate on our website www.wilpfus.org!

Thank you Jeneve, and thank you readers.

Our groups had come together in Vienna hoping to receive the momentum and sense of validity which results from encountering like-minded people from other countries and to tell each other how far we had been able to translate conviction into action. The desire to perform the office of reconciliation, to bring something of healing to the confused situation, and to give an impulse towards more normal relations between differing nations, races and classes, was evident from the first meeting of the Congress. This latter was registered in the various proposals, such as that founded upon experiences of the last year, that peace missions composed of women of different nations should visit.

There was constant evidence that the food blockade maintained in some instances long after the war, had outraged a primitive instinct of women almost more than the military operations themselves had done. Women had felt an actual repulsion against the slow starvation, the general lowering in the health and resistance of entire populations, the anguish of the millions of mothers who could not fulfill the...obligation of keeping their children alive. There was a certain sternness of attitude concerning political conditions which so wretchedly affected woman's age-long business of nurturing children, as if women had realized as never before what war means.

—from Jane Addams, *Peace and Bread in Time of War* (1922).

Stronger Branches, Stronger WILPF

By Shilpa Pandey

Chair, WILPF US Membership Development Committee

Having served as the WILPF US Membership Development Committee Chair for almost six years now, one of the constant challenges for myself as well as for the committee has been to come up with ever new ideas and workable solutions that can ensure our organization not only grows its membership base but also grows in manner that leads to stronger branches and branch leadership.

In our various discussions, one of the key points that kept coming up was that increasing numbers of our branches were in need of support and help if we wanted to ensure continued leadership at the branch level. We know how vital it is to have strong branches for us to be able to continue to do our important work. It has also become clear to us that it is more and more necessary for our branches to remain democratic in their functioning as well as for them to be coordinated and in sync with our national and international sections.

To respond to these needs, the national Board recently approved six time-honored “Branch Recommendations and Protocols” to clarify some basic aspects of branch structure and functioning. This will lead to a somewhat more structured approach to our organizational communication and functioning. For any organization to function cohesively – and especially so for an organization such as ours, that lobbies on important political issues – it is imperative to have some form of structure in place that allows us to effectively share information and to organize around the issues we care deeply about.

We all agree that it is so important for us to make certain that there is at least some form of democratic governance and leadership selection, where local members vote or agree to have a consistent governance method. Also, a leadership structure and designated contact person are important for facilitating communication. To that end, branches should identify a chair, a treasurer, and a contact person.

Many of you may already be aware that WILPF national, our issue committees, as well as our branch leaders all need to disseminate important information to the rest of our organization. This is the reason we established what is now known as a “branch contact” whose information is listed on our website so that they can be contacted and a “branch liaison” who receives and disseminates information from internal WILPF emails via that branch’s listserv based on what is appropriate for each branch. We’ve all noticed that it’s so much more



effective to communicate if there are clear channels so that important information does not get lost.

Another important area is that of ensuring that the WILPF US logo and name is used prominently in each branch’s printed and published documents. This ensures that we are seen as one organization and enables us to have a collective voice when it comes to action at the ground.

It also helps for each branch to have a branch bank account that allows branches to deposit dues and donations as well as to be able to receive any grant money that WILPF National shares or any other donations

Having some common-sense guidelines for our branches will allow us to grow and sustain ourselves in today’s times. That is why we have come up with these six time-honored WILPF US branch procedures that all of our branches can benefit from.

It is the branches where so much of the important work of WILPF US takes place. Let’s work together to infuse more life, more energy, and more creativity into our branches to make them even stronger!!

I’m sharing these recommendations because I want all of our members to know that together we can work to make our beloved WILPF US sustainable, relevant, and poised to take on the challenges of our times with a cohesive, collective, and strong voice.

Please reach out to me at emailtoshilpa@yahoo.com if you have other creative ideas to share!

You can find the Branch Recommendations and Protocols on our home page, <https://wilpfus.org/>, in the Branches section.

Edith Bell, a Lifelong Activist with Boundless Energy

By Susan M. Smith and Mary King

Pittsburgh Branch

The death of 98-year-old Edith Bell on May 22, 2022, is a huge loss to WILPF and to activism in Pittsburgh. During her time in the United States, she started three WILPF branches – in Wisconsin, West Virginia, and finally Pittsburgh in 2002. She was active with Pittsburgh's Thomas Merton Center, especially the Anti-War Committee. In 2003, she co-founded the Pittsburgh Raging Grannies who sang (and sing) frequently at events, such as marches, the Occupy Movement, and sometimes on street corners. She sparked Pittsburgh WILPF's initiative for Cities for CEDAW (the UN's Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women) which grew into a separate and connected movement. As a result, Pittsburgh's City Council signed the treaty in 2017 and has conducted related investigations since.

One of Edith's favorite yearly activities was the April 15 Tax Day event in a community park. WILPF members share literature about where our tax dollars actually go and ask people to vote with a handful of pennies where they think our dollars should go, placing the pennies into jars labeled with budget categories. This event is always accompanied by Pittsburgh's Raging Grannies and Edith was usually there singing. (WILPF and the Raging Grannies have many overlapping members and, as a result, they often work together.)

Born in Hamburg, Germany, Edith was sent to Amsterdam as a youth to avoid Nazi persecution of Jews, though it didn't work. On her resume, she listed her first job as "Dug ditches and carried logs at Bergen Belsen Concentration Camp, Germany." She was a Holocaust survivor of four Nazi camps. Her father died from starvation in Theresienstadt, and her mother was murdered in the gas chambers in Auschwitz. Edith actively spoke to people about the Holocaust and its lessons through the Holocaust Survivors Center and local schools. Edith said, "I am very aware of what can happen when whole groups of people are declared subhuman, may they be Jews, Arabs, gays, African-Americans, or Indians. You can treat them any way you like and your conscience won't bother you, as they are not human. Therefore, I speak out when people are categorized and called names."

After the war, Edith moved to Israel and worked as a dietician. Later she relocated to Panama where she met her future husband and later moved to the U.S. with him. They moved first to Wisconsin and then settled in West Virginia



where they raised their children, Danny and Alice. She worked as a dietician and sales representative for *Highlights* magazine. In West Virginia Edith was a founding member of Food for Us, a food cooperative, and Mercer County's Peace Coalition. She generously volunteered her time to many related causes.

For years, Edith organized WILPF meetings, film and book discussions, and marches. She made signs and showed up at planning meetings and events of related organizations. She became an active and often leading member of several of them, such as Stop Banking the Bomb, Black and White Reunion, Thomas Merton Center, and Remembering Hiroshima/Imagining Peace. Edith insisted that her life be defined by her work for peace and justice, not only as a Holocaust survivor, but she understood how important her story was. She used her own experiences to illustrate parallels to our own build-up to wars and their aftermath, through sharing, speaking, and writing. She was adamant that future generations not endure what she had. "My grandchildren keep me going, and I worry about the world we are leaving for them. So, I will keep fighting. I am not going to stop now."

Edith did keep fighting. She was concerned about peace and justice issues all of her adult life, going strong until shortly before her death at 98. As a wife, mother, grandmother, and volunteer, Edith always had a strong moral compass. A colleague speaks for all of WILPF Pittsburgh when she said: "Perhaps most importantly, Edith is a source of inspiration, leading by example and convincing us that if she, in her 90s, can participate with intelligence, commitment, and a wonderful sense of humor, the least we can do is to attempt to follow in her footsteps!"

Miriam Thompson, Changemaker and Movement Mentor

By Lucy Lewis

Triangle (NC) Branch

Miriam Thompson, longtime WILPF Triangle (NC) branch member, died on Mother's Day, May 8, 2022 – a day of rededicating ourselves to reconciliation and peace – at the age of 85 after a brief illness. At the celebration of her life, activists from around the community remembered her as a fierce, tireless, and visionary changemaker, educator, loving ally, and movement mentor to many engaged in the work of justice and liberation for all.

Miriam was born in New York City in 1937, where she attended the High School of Performing Arts. She received her BA from Queens College and her MSW from Hunter College. During the next few decades, she worked with, and for, countless organizations and campaigns in New York City. This included serving as a founder and director of Advocates for Children of New York; directing the United Auto Workers Union Local 259 Community Action Program; and directing the Urban Leadership Project for CUNY's Worker Education Program.

After moving from New York City to North Carolina in 2008 to be closer to her daughters and grandchildren, Miriam quickly became a pillar of our WILPF Triangle branch as well as the area peace and social justice community. For a number of years, she was a member of the WILPF Triangle branch steering committee and led our labor efforts in a "right-to-work" state; she also created and strengthened our alliances with numerous local organizations. She constantly challenged us to reach out more, to engage more, and to write more letters-to-the-editor.

One of the last protests she helped organize with our WILPF branch was a Peace in Ukraine street rally. She made sure, as always, that there was an action that everyone present could take, ensuring that we had petitions to President Biden and paper slips to distribute with the White House call-in number.

She cofounded the Abrahamic Initiative for the Middle East, served on boards including the NC A Phillip Randolph Institute, NC Medicare for All, was a former chair of the Chapel Hill-Carrboro NAACP Labor Committee, and was active with the Moral Mondays/Poor People's Campaign. Miriam deeply understood the meaning of intersectionality and the slogan "No Justice, No Peace."

She was passionately committed to numerous justice issues, including Palestinian and Black liberation, worker and immigrant rights, affordable health care and housing, LGBTQ



rights, abortion rights, fighting and eradicating racism, saving and improving public education, environmental justice, and many others. As just one example of her indomitable spirit, when she was hospitalized shortly before her passing, as she first regained consciousness she told her family that she had "finished organizing the nurses and freeing Palestine from Israeli occupation."

It is hard to imagine how she found the time, but Miriam adored and supported avant-garde music, theatre, and film her entire life; she was also an avid earth lover and traveler.

As a measure of the tremendous regard the community had for Miriam, June 28th was proclaimed Miriam Thompson Day in her adopted town of Chapel Hill. After citing numerous examples of the significant contributions she had made, the proclamation ended, "the Chapel Hill Town Council...calls on all residents to honor her legacy by taking action to make the world a better place..."

And as her daughter Rinah recently wrote, "If you want to honor her, engage in the revolution. Don't wait. Pick something to do - and do it with all your being."

Miriam is survived by her daughter Julie Keane and her husband Aaron Keane, her daughter Rinah Rachel Galper and her wife Clare Mullman, and her grandchildren Ruben and August Keane.

In a 1994 documentary calling for single-payer health care, "National Health Emergency – An Activist Survey", Miriam is the first woman to speak, and she concludes the film as well. (The documentary also features Marilyn Clement, director of WILPF US from 1994-1997, and one of Miriam's closest friends). [1994 US Health Industry Documentary - YouTube](#)

Marge Van Cleef, Renaissance Woman and Teacher

By Tina Shelton

Philadelphia Branch

Marge Van Cleef was a Renaissance woman – her many talents included gardening, canning (always sharing the bounty freely), sewing, candle-making, knitting, and making music. She practiced a non-consumer lifestyle before we had words for it as her values guided her to realize that living lightly is a less exploitive way of being on the earth.

Marjorie (Noll) Van Cleef was born on May 3, 1935, in Philadelphia to Elmer and Hilda Noll, and grew up in nearby Jenkintown. She married Henry Van Cleef and they had two children, Elizabeth and Chris. Their marriage ended, and she met longtime partner Bill Dyson. Marge and Bill shared a passion for activism and for more than 30 years they protested, questioned authority, and worked for change. They lived in New Haven, Connecticut, and in the Philadelphia area.

Marge was a teacher. She started learning music when she was four years old and took her musical gifts to the Conservatory at Oberlin College, where she earned a degree in music. She also earned a Master's Degree in Education and taught in public schools and community colleges, where she was well-respected and admired. Outside of the classroom, she was constantly teaching critical thinking and social justice to all around her. Marge's large collection of documents related to the justice and anti-war movement can be found at Swarthmore College and other university institutions.¹

One of the many ways Marge taught was through writing book reviews and articles for peace organizations, such as Know Drones and Philadelphia Catholic Peace Fellowship. She also wrote each and every pamphlet used for the monthly Philadelphia Center City Death Walk/Vigil that she initiated and led. With peace activists from the Bryn Mawr Peace Coalition, these public events combined street theatre and public education.

WILPF was only one of many of Marge's activist home bases. She was involved with Brandywine Peace Community, Women Against Military Madness, Educators for Social Responsibility (speaking in over 100 classrooms), SANE/Freeze, the Philadelphia Area Anti-Drone Network, which she cofounded, and she organized the Center City Death Walk/Vigils for years. She was a past member of the WILPF National Board, and a dedicated organizer of the Membership Council, a group that formed to democratize WILPF. For many years, she was a



member of the Disarm/End Wars Committee, working to keep WILPF focused on its core mission in a meaningful and results-focused way. She knew innately that a better future is dependent on a deep knowledge of the problems of the past, but also that creating the future involves creativity, community building, and deep connections.

Marge and Bill traveled often to WILPF Congresses and events as well as to many other peace gatherings. She also loved to travel with her family, and one of her last trips with Bill and her grandson included a stop at the George Floyd Memorial in Minneapolis. She leaves behind four stepchildren, three grandchildren, and a brother.

Marge was creative, outspoken, and politically acute. She was a caring grandmother and a voracious reader who was known for remembering and integrating what she learned from her reading and from other people. Those who shared reading groups with her could count on her to recommend a book written by a local author who may not yet be well-known but will be!

Her vision was built on the knowledge that movements are not built on structure alone, but on ideas and action—structure follows. Her friends knew the themes of Black Lives Matter and that she avoided buying products from corporate giants due to their exploitation long before these ideas were common. She staunchly advocated for anti-capitalism, anti-racism, and against all war, nuclear weapons, and violence. She was ahead of the curve on so many justice trends, and was consistently speaking truth to power through civil disobedience and demonstrations. A Renaissance woman indeed! We loved Marge; she is deeply missed.

NOTES

¹ Links to collections where her papers have been donated:

Marge Van Cleef Central America Solidarity Collection

https://txarchives.org/utlac/finding_aids/00427.xml

The Marjorie Marge Van Cleef Central America Solidarity Collection contains mostly printed materials and ephemera documenting human rights, environmental impact, and sustainable economic development policies in Central America between 1973–2009.

<https://www.swarthmore.edu/search?keys=marge+van+cleef>

Branches Show Up for Peace and Justice



Cape Cod Branch members participated in the annual Fourth of July parade in Orleans, MA. A bright red pick-up truck with a large WILPF banner on the front, smaller ones on the sides, peace signs, and "VOTE" messages carried WILPFers Pat O'Brien and Donna Pihl, decked out in red-white-and-blue caftans and tights. Alongside them marched WILPF US past president Chris Morin, Kristin Knowles, and Elenita Muñiz, appropriately sashed and gowned as "I Miss Democracy," a peace-and-justice beauty queen originated by WILPF US past president Mary Zepernick. Nearly 1,000 business cards were handed out urging the hundreds of bystanders to "Vote for Democracy!"

On September 18, 2022, the **Greater Philadelphia Branch** held a roundtable discussion on deconstructing white privilege, part of their ongoing effort to build a safe space for branch members to explore their own biases and confront systemic racism. Shelah Harper and Sylvia Metzler led the Zoom discussion, "The ABCs of White Privilege" based on the short video with that title by Amber Ruffin. In July, branch members went on a tour of Johnson House, a stop on the Underground Railway and a host of the exhibit "Dreams of Freedom: The Threats that Hold Us Together," presented by the Sankofa Artisans Guild.

On April 7, 2022, the **Fresno Branch** held an adventure to celebrate the Earth at the San Joaquin River Gorge. Gorge experts gave a tour and they learned about wildlife, the layout of the

land, the river's course and Millerton Lake, and the hydroelectric plant workings. All of this would have been lost had the Temperance Dam been built. On June 4, branch members joined the Rainbow Pride parade held in Fresno's Tower District, carrying a double-sided banner to show WILPF supports justice for LGBTQIA+ people. The Raging Grannies led off the Pride Festival celebration and were received with enthusiasm. And the Fresno WILPF Library Committee delivered their annual gift of the Jane Addams Books for Children (2021 winners) to six branches of Fresno County Libraries and to the Jane Addams Elementary School library.



Martha Hart of **Humboldt WILPF** attended the Poor People's Campaign rally in Washington, DC, on June 18, 2022, and joined the follow-up Zoom meeting to the rally which discussed "7 steps we can take before the midterms." She wrote, "In Humboldt, we are looking at how we can support the homeless members of our community become registered to vote. Helping people register...and get to the polls lets them know their voice counts."



In support of the call from WILPF to re-engage on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, the **Peninsula/Palo Alto Branch** sponsored a small rally outside the Palo Alto, CA, post office on June 7, 2022. Four branch members were joined by other peace activists in the area.

Framing the group were two WILPF banners, "End the Nuclear Era" and "Peace and Planet Before Profit," and several WILPF TPNW petition signs were also displayed. The group distributed various brochures at their table.

Lib Hutchby of the **Triangle Branch** co-organized a "Climate Emergency" event in Raleigh, NC, on August 2, 2022, for the National Day of Action. The protest, held at the Terry Sanford Federal Building, demanded that President Biden declare a national climate emergency and use his executive authority to help end the era of fossil fuels. In a DC event, 412,000 signatures in support of the declaration of climate emergency were delivered.



Burlington WILPF was proud to be one of the sponsors of Africa Day (formerly African Freedom Day and African Liberation Day). The June 30, 2022 event was focused on the feminist and charismatic former president of Burkina Faso, Thomas Sankara. Attendees, including Robin Lloyd and Katherine Vose, watched a short film about Sankara's life and participated in a lively discussion with Jacob and Eric Agnero, a former journalist from the Ivory Coast. On July 20-24, the Vermont WILPF Gathering took place at Lloyd's Wing Farm. The group watched International WILPF Congress events together and held discussions of their own. Speakers included WILPF member and author Greg Guma, Charlott Dennett, and Paki Weiland and Mike Van Dusen, who participated in a dialogue on the pros and cons of NATO at the Rochester Village Square.

A new branch of WILPF is forming in **Kentucky-Indiana!** Julie Segal, former national membership director in Philadelphia in the mid-1970s, is the organizer with help from Jan Corderman and Shilpa Pandey. The group plans a Zoom meeting in late November 2022. For more information, contact: jdsegal@earthlink.net.

Peace in Ukraine

On May 7, 2022, peace organizations across the nation and the world held events to support peace in Ukraine. Peace Fresno organized a demonstration on the northeast corner of Blackstone and Nees. Several members of **Fresno WILPF** joined members of Peace Fresno to bring awareness to the Ukrainian/Russian situation and to call for alternative actions, far less horrific than war, such as negotiation, diplomacy, and engaging the United Nations to result in a more positive, peaceful outcome. Cars honked in support.



Madison Branch members picketed for peace in Ukraine at University Avenue and University Bay Drive in Madison, WI, on September 12 in conjunction with the CODEPINK Week of Action on Ukraine. This collaborative effort included Veterans for Peace (Madison), WILPF Madison, Physicians for Social Responsibility-Wisconsin, Poor People's Campaign (Dane County), and the Madison Working Group on Peace in Ukraine.

Boston Branch member Eileen Kurkoski and members from MA Peace Action and Vets for Peace spoke with Dana Hanson, assistant to Newton's Congressional Rep Jake Auchincloss, about ending war with Ukraine using "Diplomacy: We Can't Risk Nuclear War." She ended up signing a petition.

The **Sacramento Branch** cosponsored multiple Peace in Ukraine events on September 15, 2022, as part of the national Week of Action on Ukraine. Starting in the morning, members of the sponsoring groups demonstrated in front of the downtown Sacramento Federal Building. There, a local network TV station covered the press conference about the town hall meeting that evening and the importance of peace nego-



tiations on the war in Ukraine. Over 20 people participated in the town hall event, which was the first hybrid in-person and Zoom event the branch has undertaken. The support and facilities of local Peace Action allies made the hybrid meeting possible.

Hiroshima/Nagasaki Commemorations



The **Peninsula/Palo Alto Branch** held a Community Art Project for Hiroshima Day on August 6, 2022, organized by Judy Adams. For the third year in a row, the branch partnered with Art Ventures gallery in Menlo Park. This year, local Japanese artist Yoko Tahara submitted a wire and cloth sculpture depicting fish that could be damaged by radioactive elements in water used to cool the Fukushima reactor cores. As part of the event, participants used the artist's hand-carved printing blocks with images of fish and fish skeletons to decorate a long scroll, depicting them floating down an ocean channel. The scroll will be exhibited with Tahara's sculpture at the gallery.

The **Greater Philadelphia Branch** commemorated Hiroshima Day on August 6 by participating in the Brandywine Peace Center's demonstration held at Lockheed Martin (the US's leading nuclear weapons contractor) in King of Prussia, PA. Signs were held supporting the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).

Greater Phoenix WILPF was back with its annual Hiroshima Day Commemoration on August 6. Branch member Marjorie Thornton hosted the event at her home, which has an atrium with a traditional Japanese koi pond at its center. Members from several local peace



and justice organizations gathered. They ate Japanese snacks, viewed a video about the bombings and the current feelings of *hibakusha*, discussed propaganda during WWII and now, and listened to a dramatic reading. Peace cranes were distributed and attendees were asked to deliver them to others, telling the Sadako story, and to circulate a petition calling for a negotiated settlement in Ukraine. The evening ended with setting memorial candles afloat in the koi pond and singing peace songs.

On August 9, 2022, **Maine Branch** WILPFers commemorated the 77th #NagasakiDay by gathering at the Auburn-Lewiston Peace Bridge. They brought a string of peace cranes, a nuclear abolition sunflower, and a #NuclearBan banner with QR code for the petition supporting Congressional Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton's bill HR2850. Earlier in the week, several peace and justice groups met to commemorate #HiroshimaDay in nearby Lewiston.

Fresno Branch members attended the Nagasaki Day commemoration on August 9, held at the Shinzen Friendship Garden. At the event, Jean Hays read a statement written by Melissa Fry describing the International Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) and encouraging participants to sign WILPF's petition to Congress and the President asking them to sign and ratify the TPNW. They had the petition available at a table following the ceremony.



Living and Leaving a Legacy of Pacifism



"My mother, Ruth Shriman, taught me all my values. She was the last chair of the Chicago Branch and she founded the Jane Addams Senior Caucus, a militant advocacy group, which continues today."

– Ellen Schwartz
Sacramento Branch



"My grandmother was there from the beginning of WILPF. Today, our Milwaukee Branch is carrying on Addams' mission of seeking an international peace coalition through our active support of the United Nations."

– Annette Robertson
Annette Robertson, Joan Robertson,
Carol Alexander



"For 55 years with WILPF US, I've passionately supported disarmament (Ojai Branch) and now I also support Natasha's and Jim's educational movement, Rock Tree Sky. Putting children's welfare first has always been Addams' agenda."

– Nuri Ronaghy
Jim Bailey, Natasha Efross,
Nuri, Alan Shorb

This year we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the publication of *Peace and Bread in Time of War* by Jane Addams about her pacifism and WILPF's journey for peace before and after WWI.

In chapter eleven, "In Europe after Two Years of Peace," Addams wrote: "The members of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom had certainly learned from their experience during the war that widely accepted ideas can be both dominating and all powerful. But we still believed

it possible to modify, to direct and ultimately to change current ideas, not only through discussion and careful presentation of facts, but also through the propaganda of the deed."

The WILPF family stories pictured here honor the generations and the regenerative power of WILPF's mission.

Today, more than ever, our persistence and foresight are needed to forge a peaceful and collaborative effort to transform the future. The time is now to make an investment in the legacy of WILPF. One excellent way is to plan today for a charitable

bequest. Remember, you don't need to be a millionaire to set up a meaningful bequest.

The important thing is not to put it off a moment longer. To find out how easy it is to get started with a charitable bequest, email us at plannedgiving@wilpfus.org and check out this brochure at: <https://wilpfus.org/other-donations#bequests>.