

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

OCTOBER, 2009
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PUBLISHED MONTHLY
ST. LOUIS BRANCH



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WWW.WILPF.ORG

Brown Bag: Wednesday, November 4

World Community Center, 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Virginia Druhe

Virginia recently returned from two weeks
with Witness for Peace in Honduras



HONDURAS: MILITARY COUP OR CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT?

UNITED NATIONS DAY, OCTOBER 24

OCTOBER 22: UN DAY CELEBRATION

IRELAND'S SERVICE TO THE UNITED NATIONS,
featuring Helena Mulkerns, former Press Officer
with UN Peacekeeping Missions

12:30 – 2:00 p.m.,

Century Room C, Millennium Student Center,

UM-St. Louis;

info: 314 516 7299



OCTOBER 24: UN DAY PROGRAM

Panel: "HOW TO MAKE THE U.N. MORE EFFECTIVE"

2:00 – 4:00 p.m.,

Hanke Room, Ethical Society,

9001 Clayton Rd.

Co-sponsors: St. Louis WILPF, Citizens for Global Solutions, UNA, League of Women Voters
(Yvonne Logan will represent WILPF on the panel.)



NOVEMBER 3 ELECTIONS COMING UP

Voters in St. Louis County will see two propositions on the Nov. 3 ballot.

Prop. E-911 would levy a county sales tax of one-tenth of one percent to establish, operate and maintain an emergency communications system. The tax would raise \$13.6 million a year to finance the system, including radios, towers and computer equipment, and for a \$10 million upgrade to the county's siren system.

Prop. N would prohibit smoking in enclosed public places of employment and other public places, such as libraries, educational facilities, health care facilities, entertainment and recreation places, theaters, restaurants, places of work. Exceptions include casino gaming areas, private clubs, drinking establishments, cigar bars and posted smoking areas at Lambert Airport.

Proponents would like a tougher bill, but say the County could lead the way for Missouri to pass a state-wide law. Opponents say it interferes with individual and employer rights, doesn't go far enough, has unfair exemptions, and/or should be statewide.

Some city ballots will carry additional propositions. All require a simple majority.

In St. Louis City a special election will be held to fill the vacancy in the 4th State Senatorial District caused by the resignation of State Sen. Jeff Smith. In St. Louis County a special election will be held to fill the vacancy in the 73rd State Representative District caused by the resignation of Steve Brown.

League of Women Voters

NB: BULLETIN MAILING

You probably thought you were receiving World Series tickets with the last Bulletin, if you noticed all the taping.

Probably not.

But if you noticed, you might have wondered why we wasted so much precious time and energy putting two pieces of tape at the top, two tabs on the right side, and one on the left side.

When I took a Church Women United newsletter to the bulk post office on Aug. 28, I was told that the mailing would be "reviewed" because we had put one piece of tape at the top and one on the right side: should have been two pieces of tape at the top. But the mailing trays were accepted, and as far as I know, the newsletters were delivered the next day.

Preparing the Sept. WILPF Bulletin for the post office, we dutifully put two pieces of tape at the top. Only to be told at the bulk mail office that "new" (April 15, 2009) regulations were being enforced: two one-and-a-half inch, non-perforated TABS were needed on the right side and one

tab on the left. The mailing was refused!

I will be forever grateful to Dorothy Poor, who purchased the tabs, correctly applied them, and took the well-sealed Bulletins back to the bulk mail office the next day.

All of which led to a discussion at our Board meeting about cutting back the mailing list, sending some electronically, and sending the rest first class. Terri Williams contacted you and obtained email addresses for about half of the mailing list.

Would you like to receive your Bulletin electronically? You'd get it sooner, for sure, but would you read it? I prefer not to read newsletters on the monitor, and frequently refer to the Calendar on the back of the Bulletin to confirm specifics. What do you think about sending it first class, maybe cutting back on the complimentary subscriptions? Please leave a message at 314 862 5735 with your opinion.

Thanks,

Mary Jane Schutzius

CALL...CALL...CALL...CALL

School of the Americas Watch urges us to call Sen. Carl Levin (202 224 6221 or 800 473 6711) to ask for inclusion of the *WHINSEC Amendment in the defense authorization bill now in a House/Senate conference committee. The amendment calls for the release of the names of graduates and instructors of the SOA/WHINSEC.

*Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, formerly School of the Americas.



PEACE A POSSIBILITY???

A panel of five with input from the audience of 85 listeners took on the question "Israeli-Palestinian Peace: Possibility of Dream?" and when the evening was over the question mark remained. But most in attendance seemed to relish the exchange of information and ideas sweetened by an array of delicious cookies.

WILPF sponsored the program October 7 at the University City Library auditorium. Moderator Jane Mendelson introduced the panelists: Repps Hudson, former Post-Dispatch reporter and Washington U. adjunct professor of Readings on the Arab-Israeli Conflict; Mazen Badra, Palestinian peace activist who teaches at Sanford-Brown College and Webster U.; Robert Cohn, former editor of *The Jewish Light*; Gloria Gordon of Brit Tzedek; and Michael Berg, U.S. Campaign to End the Occupation and St. Louis Instead-of-War.

The six minutes allotted each speaker in the beginning allowed no time for longwinded exposition, and timekeeper Suzanne Reinhold was promptly acknowledged at her signal.

Hudson remarked at the start that "the problem probably won't be settled in the next 20 years." The strong alliance between the U.S. and Israel will continue, he said, and the problems don't lend themselves to simple solutions.

Badra said we need to stay hopeful for a peaceful solution and look for ways to exist without killing each other. He decried the growth of Jewish settlements on the West Bank – some 500,000 people – and said that in Jerusalem the Palestinians fear there's a policy to uproot them.

It's important to be mindful of the points of view of people in the streets, he said.

Cohn took us back about 4,000 years to King David, Solomon and the two oldest sons of Abraham to illustrate how long Jews have been around the disputed area.

Gordon described Brit Tzedek, a Jewish Alliance for Justice and Peace, as a grassroots effort to educate Jews in support of resolving the conflict, and J Street as a new political lobby in Washington to work for a two-state solution. The effort includes re-defining "pro-Israel" not to mean "Israel right or wrong." Gordon said major focus is on an Israeli majority favoring a two-state solution, and support of a government with clout, i.e. President Obama, to help official leaders negotiate a peace treaty.

Berg emphasized the devastating effects of encroaching settlements, checkpoints, and denial of human rights to Palestinians. He condemned the U.S. complicity of providing Caterpillar bulldozers used to destroy homes and olive orchards. As a nonviolent action he suggested boycott, divestment and sanctions.

Discussion on the next best steps to peace brought these comments:

Berg: The most important step is to stop military and economic aid until Israel complies with international laws. It might be reasonable for settlers to stay in the West Bank if they're willing to live under Palestinian laws. The U.S. needs to exert real pressure.

Hudson: Positions on all sides have hardened and middle ground seems to be gone. But suicide bomb-

ings have gone down; there's not so much killing, and that's why the Wall exists.

Badra: I think Israel has a right to build a Wall, but don't build it on my land, build it on your land. This Wall cuts off Palestinians from their land, their mosques, hospitals, and schools.

Cohn: Sanctions don't work, just make people more united against the users. They won't work against Iran.

Gordon: Peace is a clear possibility, but to achieve it strong support will have to be given for Obama's program. Sign and send the pledge "I've Got Your Back" to President Obama, and participate in the J Street conference October 25-28 to lobby for a two-state solution.

About ten people from the audience then formed a line up front, and each was allowed a minute to ask a question of the panel or make a comment. The first question referred to the Goldstone Report on possible war crimes committed by the Israelis and Hamas during the assault on Gaza, and asked why the U.S. has so far ignored it. Hudson said he thought the president had enough to consider without dealing with that report and Cohn concurred, saying that the president is already bogged down with war crimes. Berg and Badra disagreed, and Badra said Palestinians were furious that their own officials refused to support the follow-up.

Regarding the future of Jerusalem, Hudson said most Israelis don't believe the city should be partitioned. "That's the reality today."

See PEACE, cont on page 4



PEACE, *cont.* from page 3

Anna Baltzer, author of Witness in Palestine: a Jewish American Women in the Occupied Territories, said, "The entire state of Palestine is under the control of Israel. What would happen if you just gave everyone the same rights? Would that justify denial of rights to Christians and Muslims?"

Steve Best asked, "What would happen if the settlers on the West Bank were told they could stay where they are, provided they are willing to live under Palestinian laws?"

Ron Glossop, Citizens for Global Solutions, picked up on Berg's suggestions and asked, "Why not have the U.S. say to Israel: 'You have to stop settlements, and if you don't, we'll cut down on financial assistance.'"

Fortunately, answers to the what ifs and why nots weren't expected. With only minutes remaining before library closing time the program ended in a round of applause for the panel members, who joined the audience for cookies and conversation. WILPF hopes the talking continues.

The WILPF committee included Joan Botwinick, Louise Green, Betsy Hamra, and Mary Jane Schutzius, as well as moderator Jane Mendelson and timekeeper Suzanne Reinhold.

Dorothy Poor

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Judy Dasovich, MD, one of the Baucus 13, prefers no health care reform this year to phony reform. She spoke to a roomful of people at the MOSP meeting Sept. 17 at the Ethical Society. Dasovich was one of the 13 medical professionals arrested during the early Baucus hearings when she asked that Single Payer be represented at the "table" discussing health care reform.

She believes that phony reform will discourage doing the right thing and providing health care for everyone. She stressed that health insurance is not health care, that improved Medicare for All is the only plan that will do that. The "public option" will not be available to an employee whose employer provides insurance prohibitively expensive. The insurance companies are not fighting the public option part of the reform since it will supply more potential customers to them. Employers will find it cheaper not to offer insurance than to pay an annual government fine. The pharmaceutical companies feel safe in

their deal with the President to reduce costs within ten years.

Medicare for All, HR 676 will be offered on the House floor by Rep. Anthony Weiner, who asked the Congressional Budget Office for input. Rep. Dennis Kucinich attached an amendment to HR 3200 which would allow states to enact single payer by exemption from ERISA (federal law which constricts what states can enact). Sen. Bernie Sanders will offer S703 on the Senate floor for a vote (Senate counterpart of HR 676).

Health Care-NOW! will have a national strategy meeting at Sheraton Westport Plaza, Saturday-Sunday, November 14-15, 4:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., registration \$30: "By learning and sharing from one another we can build on the tremendous successes of the last year and develop the plan to push Congress to implement single-payer national health NOW."

Mary Jane Schutzius

WILPF Bulletin

Articles, reports, and information for the Calendar are due on the day of the Board meetings. The next Board meeting will be **WED. Nov. 4 (postponed because of election day)**. Bring or mail articles for the Nov. bulletin to the World Community Center, 438 No. Skinker, St. Louis, MO 63130. Or fax to 862-8155, Attn: WILPF. Contributions are welcome.

Co-Editors:

Dorothy Poor

Mary Jane Schutzius

Layout and Design:

Amy Smoucha



WILPFers SOUND OFF IN OP-EDS

Cogent opinion pieces by WILPFers **Arlene Zarembka** and **Zuleyma Tang-Martinez** were featured in September on the op-ed page of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.

Arlene, an attorney with one employee, pointed to the high and rising cost of her small-group health plan as compared to smaller costs and greater benefits offered in a large-group plan. "No one should have to wait until he is eligible for Medicare to have good affordable health insurance," she wrote. . . "Everyone should have the option to sign up for a national public insurance plan, with the same premium charged for everyone in the plan regardless of gender, age or health condition. Unless these measures are included in health care reform, insurance will become increasingly unaffordable for small businesses and individuals. We will remain at the mercy of pitiless private insurance companies whose only concern is to profit as much as possible from our need for health care."

Zuleyma wrote in defense of Caster Semenya, the South African female track star who was considered by some to be a male impostor after she was discovered to have testes and high levels of testosterone. Zuleyma, a biology professor at UM-St. Louis, wrote: "Contrary to popular opinion, the sex of an individual may not be an either-or categorization. Certain conditions, collectively known as 'intersexuality', result in individuals with a mix of characteristics as a result of variation in genetics, development, and hormonal con-

ditions. . . . The recent focus on intersexuality could have a positive outcome if it teaches us to value all forms of human diversity and increases tolerance toward those who differ from the majority. We cannot take for granted that the only sexes are unambiguously male and female. Biology thrives on variation; we need to understand the complexity of sex and respect intersexuality as an expression of this natural variation."

In another op-ed **Virginia Druhe**, an activist friend of WILPF, set forth her objections to Paul McKee's proposed Northside St. Louis development. "For 32 years I have been a resident of the area," she wrote. . . "I am fully opposed to this massive style of 'redevelopment' that is imposed from above by people who have little connection to the area. . . . The major problem in our neighborhood for 25 years has been the general refusal of the city to allow access to land for development to area residents for small projects."

She pointed to successful development in the area and took issue with the proposal's claim that the area is a "menace to public health, safety, morals and welfare," opining that it proves the document is not based on real knowledge of the area or its people. "There is a lot to be accomplished," she concluded. "Mass blighting and vague multi-billion dollar plans just waste precious time and resources. Mr. McKee's tax-increment financing proposal does not merit serious consideration."

WILPFers AROUND AND ABOUT

Sharon and Gary Pedersen's two-year-old home in Kirkwood was featured in Tim Bryant's P-D article September 18 for its innovative geothermal heating and cooling system. Gary was quoted as saying their heating costs are half those at their former home in Eureka, and that they appreciate the system's lack of a noisy outside air-conditioning compressor and the whisper of quiet fans that gently move air to and from the geothermal coils. "Summer cooling costs are low," he said, "and in the winter we pretty much get everything out of the earth."

Martha Pannetti extolled the advantages of the Canadian health care system compared with the high cost of the U.S. lack of system, in her letter of Oct. 3 to the P-D.

Both **Rita Mauchenheimer** and **Mary Jane Schutzius** had letters printed in the Oct. 12 *Post-Dispatch*: Rita addressed the military coup in Honduras and continuing violations of human rights; Mary Jane didn't think much of the Swiss health care system as a model for the US.

Congratulations to **Martha Dysart** on the birth of healthy twin grandsons and to **Joyce Best** and **Jaina Best** on the accomplishments of their grandson and son, who with his band took first place in two recent contests. We share your joy.

CONDOLENCES: WILPF members extend our sympathy to **Dr. Hugh Chaplin** on the death September 25 of his wife, Lee Robins, and to **Fay and John Scandrett** on the death, also in September, of her sister, Lois Boyd in Oxford, MS.



Email of Thu 10/1/2009
11:22 PM

To: WILPF Branches
Subject: [Branches] St. Louis Branch newsletter featured on Genevasite. Cheers for St. Louis and other Branches that inspire us all!

This is a great newsletter, brimming with activism, information and thoughtful analysis. Today it is featured on the WILPF international office website and you can read it at www.wilpf.int.ch/PDF/Newsletters2009/St.Louis_September.pdf. Enlarge to 100%.

We have other engaged Branches that make a difference in their own communities and beyond. We can take strength and gain inspiration from each of them.

And thank you, St. Louis, for work well done. And we all have so much more ~~work~~ still to do. But creating a better world for our children, grandchildren and their children is worth every effort we can make.

—
in peace, Carol Urner, National Program co-chair, WILPF, U.S. Section
[The entire Sept. Bulletin was the only entry on the website. Check it out. – Eds.]

SUBJECT: A CALL TO ACTION – Oct. 9, 2009

This morning, Michelle and I awoke to some surprising and humbling news. At 6 a.m., we received word that I'd been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 2009.

To be honest, I do not feel that I deserve to be in the company of so many of the transformative figures who've been honored by this prize — men and women who've inspired me and inspired the entire world through their courageous pursuit of peace.

But I also know that throughout history the Nobel Peace Prize has not just been used to honor specific achievement; it's also been used as a **means to give momentum to a set of causes.**

That is why I've said that I will accept this award as a **call to action, a call for all nations and all peoples to confront the common challenges of the 21st century.** These challenges won't all be met during my presidency, or even my lifetime. But

I know these challenges can be met so long as it's recognized that they will not be met by one person or one nation alone.

This award — and the call to action that comes with it — does not belong simply to me or my administration; it belongs to all people around the world who have fought for justice and for peace. And most of all, **it belongs to you, the men and women of America, who have dared to hope and have worked so hard to make our world a little better.**

So today we humbly recommit to the important work that we've begun together. I'm grateful that you've stood with me thus far, and I'm honored to continue our vital work in the years to come.

Thank you,
President Barack Obama
[Emphasis added; he's talking to and about us. – Eds.]



Yes! I want to join WILPF to work for peace and freedom.



Name _____ Phone _____
Address _____ City _____ State _____
Zip _____ e-mail _____

U.S. Section Membership: Individual = \$35, Household = \$40, Limited income = \$15, Student = \$5, Monthly Bulletin Only = \$15. Make checks payable to WILPF, and please mail to: WILPF, 438 N. Skinker, St. Louis, MO 63130-4834.



Getting in GEAR: WILPF Helps Create New U.N. Women's Agency

WILPF is such a vast organization, it can sometimes be difficult to explain what we do. GEAR provides one great, recent example of how activism - and your member support - makes our organization vital to building a better world.

Since 2006, the Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR) Coalition has campaigned for greater recognition of women, and better coordination of work on women's issues, within the U.N.

Led by the Center for Women's Global Leadership, the Women's Environment & Development Organization (WEDO) and WILPF, GEAR was formally launched in February 2008. It now consists of over 300 women's organizations across the world!

All that work has paid off. In mid-September, the U.N. General Assembly adopted a resolution that will combine the four main U.N. women's agencies into one entity focused on the rights of women. The U.N. Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the U.N. Division for the Advancement of Women, the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues, and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women will be merged.

AnnJanette Rosga, director of WILPF's U.N. office, says prior to GEAR it has been far "too easy to

ignore women's issues" at the U.N. "There was a commitment women's issues," she adds, "but enough high-level, well-coordinated leadership and not enough resources. Without a centrally organized, well-funded institutional presence within the U.N., and on the ground, at

important meetings, it's possible to allow women's concerns to be an afterthought. The hope with this new entity is that policy-level and so-called 'field-level' operations will be more strategically integrated. Real women's concerns

will be addressed more systematically - with greater accountability to agreed-upon legal norms."

The four existing women's agencies will be put under a single office, forming a full-fledged new agency perhaps by the middle of next year, according to the Inter Press Service. The agency will be headed by an under-secretary-general, the third highest ranking position within the U.N.

GEAR hopes the new entity will be operational by the time of the Beijing + 15 Review at the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in March of 2010. WILPF members are invited to attend the CSW.

from the October 2009 Enews, US Section



Area Legislators:

1st District

Wm. Lacy Clay
DC: 202-225-2406
StL: 314-356-1970
StL County: 314-383-5240
Website: <http://lacyclay.house.gov/contact.htm>

2nd District

Todd Akin
DC: 202-225-2561
StL: 314-590-0029
St. Charles: 636-949-6826
Website: <http://akin.house.gov/contact.html>

3rd District

Russ Carnahan
DC: 202-225-2671
StL: 314-962-1523
Website: <http://carnahan.house.gov/contact.shtml>

Sen. Kit Bond

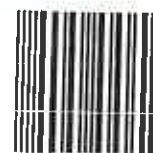
202-224-5721
StL: 314-725-4484
Fax: 202-224-8149
<http://bond.senate.gov/contact/contactme.cfm>

Sen. Claire McCaskill

202-224-6154
StL: 314-367-1364
Fax: 202-228-6326
<http://mccaskill.senate.gov/contact.cfm>

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CALENDAR

Thu., Oct. 22, 12:30 p.m.: UN Day Celebration (see page 1).

Fri., Oct. 23: dinner and discussion: Venezuela. Place TBA (cost: \$10/person) Speakers: Dan Hellinger, Webster University Venezuelans. Info: 314 721 2977

Sat., Oct. 24, 2:00 p.m.: UN Day Panel (see page 1).

Tue., Oct. 27, 1:30 p.m.: WILPF Executive Committee meeting, WCC

Tue., Nov. 3: Election Day

Wed., Nov. 4, 11:30 a.m.: Brown Bag (see page 1).

Wed., Nov. 4, 1:45 p.m.: WILPF Board meeting, WCC — **NOTE: postponed** from Tuesday because of elections.

Tue., Nov. 10, 11:30 a.m.: Women in Black vigil, near the Bread Co., Delmar Loop

Nov. 20-22: 20th anniversary of the Martyrs of the UCA—go to Ft. Benning to protest the School of the Americas/WHINSEC with IFCLA. Details at www.ifcla.net banner: SOA2009

