

Peace & Freedom

MAGAZINE OF THE WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

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SEARCHING FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST



ALSO INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- GAZA: WHO PROFITS? • WORLD MARCH FOR PEACE
- WOMEN IN THE RANKS: COMING IN HOT
- U.N. PRACTICUM • WHITE PRIVILEGE

MARILYN CLEMENT

As we went to press we learned of the passing of WILPF's former executive director Marilyn Clement. This remembrance was written with the help of Marilyn's friends and colleagues, who sent fond messages and tributes.

Marilyn served as WILPF's director from 1994-1997. She promoted the 1995 Peace Train and helped bring a delegation of 230 women (and 10 men) on a three-week journey across Eastern Europe, thereby contributing to a Platform of Action which has resonated as a touchstone of activism for almost 15 years. She co-organized WILPF's Sister-to-Sister Cuba project, helped build the Drugs and War tour, and engaged in many other projects that helped build WILPF. She was the founder and national coordinator of Healthcare NOW! She died in August after a long battle with cancer. Despite being ill, she never stopped campaigning for healthcare reform. You can read more about Marilyn and hear a talk she gave at www.healthcare-now.org. I was lucky enough to work with her and remember her generous spirit and fierce commitment. — T.P.



Inside This Issue

Human Rights for Women	3
Gaza: Who Profits?	4
WILPF in Israel/Palestine	6
A Visit to the West Bank	8
Fighting a Double War	10
Women in the Ranks: Coming in Hot	12
World March for Peace and Nonviolence	13
U.N. Report	14
U.N. Practicum: Imagine the Future	15
Branch Action News	16
Jane Addams Peace Camp and Book Awards	18, 19
Report from White Privilege Conference	20
Interns Make a Difference	21
Y-WILPF Network	22
The Curse of the Prophetess	23

Cover: Woman and child in Bil'in, a village in Gaza, watch a weekly demonstration protesting the occupation. Among the international protestors was WILPF member Regina Bircherm who reports, "This woman tossed down a bag of peeled onions to use when we are tear-gassed. Nearly all of us needed them. I also happened to have a lemon in my pocket which was very helpful in taking the sting off my face."

Photo: July, 2009, Regina Bircherm

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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.

WILPF has sections in 37 countries

coordinated by an international office in Geneva. U.S. WILPF carries out its work through grassroots organizing by WILPF branches. WILPF supports the work of the United Nations and has NGO (non-governmental organization) status.

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Human Rights for Women

By Nancy Munger and Laura Roskos, Co Presidents, U.S. Section

In December, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) will turn 30 years old. Now ratified by 186 of the 193 member states of the United Nations, CEDAW's provisions securing equal rights for women have not been ratified by the United States nor has the United States ever adopted an Equal Rights Amendment to its own constitution.

Several articles in this issue of *Peace & Freedom* discuss issues facing women in armed conflict. Fortunately, the United States has consented to Security Council Resolution 1325 mandating women's full and equal participation in peace negotiations and post conflict reconstruction, and women's full and equal access to protections and humanitarian aid in times of war. But it is in CEDAW that we find the most adequate articulation of women's human rights, not only in conflict situations but in all situations and contexts. CEDAW, which carries treaty status, would legally bind the government to implement its provisions.

There is reason to hope that the U.S. Senate will finally vote on this critical treaty this fall. Secretary of State Hilary Clinton participated in the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 where she publicly stated her support for U.S. ratification of CEDAW, a promise reiterated during her 2008 presidential campaign. The Obama administration has included CEDAW among the three human rights treaties slated for fast track action, along with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The administration has also made several encouraging appointments with regards to women's rights, including Susan Rice as ambassador to the United Nations, Melanne Vermeer as ambassador-at-large for Global Women's Issues, Harold Koh as legal advisor to the Department of State, and Sonia Sotomayer to the Supreme Court. Although support for CEDAW does not fall strictly along party lines, several of its staunchest supporters are Democrats with significant seniority and clout in the current senate. Therefore WILPF, along with hundreds of other women's organizations (see www.womenstreaty.org for more information and resources), is amping up its advocacy in support of CEDAW ratification this fall.

As you participate in community forums on CEDAW or when you visit your senator to secure her/his commitment on CEDAW ratification, please keep in mind that WILPF supports ratification without compromising Reservations, Understandings and Declarations (RUDs). In past Senate discussions of CEDAW, a number of RUDs have been proposed that would water down the intent and



At Wing Farm: *Front, left to right, Nancy Ramsden, Barbara Soros, Dorothy Tod, Robin Lloyd. Back, left to right, Laura Roskos, Nancy Munger, Kathleen Krevetski.*

effectiveness of CEDAW, a treaty that understands women's human rights as indivisible and universal.

Most importantly, from WILPF's perspective, CEDAW—as a U.N. treaty—places women's equality within the context of conflict prevention and sustainable peace. Like all human rights treaties, CEDAW both protects and empowers the vulnerable. WILPF sees the affirmative rights defined in CEDAW as fundamental to ending violence against women.

CEDAW's definition of discrimination is more rigorous and explicit than that which has evolved in U.S. civil rights law. It prohibits distinctions, exclusions and restrictions which have the effect of producing gender disparities and inequalities regardless of the practice's original purpose. In Massachusetts, the League of Women Voters has challenged the practices of insurance companies which charge women and men the same premiums for annuities and life insurance yet, on average, pay out smaller monthly benefits to women retirees. These benefits are calculated on the basis of actuarial tables, a practice that was not designed to discriminate against women but nonetheless produces a discriminatory outcome. Such a benefit structure could be considered discriminatory under CEDAW.

Whereas the U.S. market economy typically casts children as the personal responsibility of their individual parents, CEDAW recognizes the intrinsic social value of children and child-bearing as a social function and upholds the obligation of governments to support women's rights to freely choose their partner and to decide freely on the number and spacing of any children they might have, with-

Continued on page 21 ►

Gaza, Bil'in and the West Bank: Who Profits?

By Regina Birchem

On March 7, 2009 I entered Gaza through the Rafah, Egypt crossing with an international delegation organized by Code Pink Women for Peace. I went to show solidarity and to protest the cruel isolation of 1.5 million Gazan people.

Gaza is like a prison, with air, land and water access blocked. It is a strip of land with the most densely populated communities in the world. Between Dec. 27, 2008 and



Children in Bil'in, a village in Gaza, where weekly demonstrations protest the occupation with signs such as those at left.
Regina Birchem photos



Jan. 18, 2009 it was bombed day and night by Israel with U.S.-made F-16s and Apache helicopters.

When former U.S. President Carter visited in June, he said the situation was

“...heartbreaking, infuriating, and embarrassing.” Five months after the destruction, he wrote, “not a sack of cement, not a pane of glass, or a board of lumber has been approved by Israel” for passage into Gaza.

One cannot just leave Gaza and forget what has been seen there. International delegations to the border are ongoing, although most are denied entrance.

The week of Obama’s speech in Cairo on June 4, I arrived in Tel Aviv to join a group of about 40 to enter Gaza again, this time through the Israeli/Gaza Erez border crossing. After three attempts to enter at Erez it was clear that entry to Gaza from Israel was not going to happen.

Instead we went to Jerusalem, Haifa, the West Bank

and Galilee. We witnessed that the West Bank is becoming an open air prison with more than 600 checkpoints and physical barriers, with a variety of mechanisms for prohibiting movement, and many military control points.

The Israeli Coalition of Women for Peace (a feminist organization of Jewish and Palestinian women of which WILPF-Israel is a member) arranged that we would “have a look” at the shockingly unsustainable new Jewish settlements on Palestinian land, at the separation Wall and separate roads for Palestinians and settlers, to see the remnants of villages from the 1948 Nakba, the appropriation of water resources, destitute refugee camps, active destruction of Palestinian historic cultural sites, house evictions and demolitions.

We went to Bil'in, a rural Palestinian village of about 1,700 people for their 225th weekly, non-violent demonstration and protest against the Wall. (www.bilin-village.org and www.bilin-ffj.org for more information.) They were also protesting against new and expanded Jewish settlements appropriating 60 percent of their land, separating the people from their olive trees, their history and future, and their means of livelihood. The village is seven kilometers west of Ramallah and near what is called

One cannot just leave Gaza and forget what has been seen there. International delegations to the border are ongoing, although most are denied entrance.

the “Green Line” (from the 1947 Armistice), a desirable place for Israeli settlements, all illegal according to the Geneva Conventions. The unarmed demonstrators – villagers, Jewish, Palestinian and international activists – confronted the line of soldiers guarding the fence and were met with tear gas, rubber bullets, stun weapons and similar devices.

Bil'in is not atypical; the struggle to exist is going on throughout Palestine. Villages such as Bil'in are raided at night, arrests and kidnappings are common, and many lives are lost in demonstrating against the Wall and land confiscation.

Palestinian, Jewish and international activists struggle side by side against the injustices. The colonialist, unjust,

unsustainable, militaristic policies do not bring peace, security and an ecological/environmentally sound future for anyone – Palestinian or Israeli.

WHO PROFITS?

There are now more than 120 Jewish settlements on Palestinian land officially recognized by Israel though considered illegal by international law. Between 80 and 100 more are dubbed “illegal” by Israeli officials. More than half a million Israelis now live in these settlements heavily subsidized by the Israeli government through funds from



Women and children celebrate International Women's Day at the Malwasi Agricultural Region, Rafah. Photo: Regina Birchem

the U.S, other donor countries and individuals.

There are complex cultural, historical aspects of the occupation and the apartheid Wall. One aspect is financial. Who is profiting from the on-going occupation, curtailing of human rights, and expansion of settlements and land confiscation?

The Israel Coalition of Women for Peace has a research project intended to expose companies and corporations involved in the occupation's industries. The project “Who Profits?” (www.whoprofits.org) establishes a database that focuses on three areas: the settlement industry; economic exploitation of Palestinian resources, markets and labor; and the supply of equipment, know-how and services for the repression of the occupied population, through the institution of the Wall, checkpoint regimes, and other devices.

Two companies under contract to expand the settlement Mahityahu-East (on Bil'in land) are Green Mount Inc. and Green Park International, based in Canada. At the time of this writing, the companies were taken before the Quebec Superior Court to seek an immediate order from the Canadian court to end actions defined as illegal by the Fourth Geneva Convention.

HAVE A LOOK, OBAMA....

President Obama, Hilary Clinton and their advisors should go to Gaza and the many villages like Bil'in and see how

tenuous the reality of Israeli “efforts” at a peace settlement are. Maybe they, as many of us, will find it “heartbreaking, infuriating and embarrassing.”

Regina Birchem is a member of the WILPF Pittsburgh branch and served as WILPF International President, 2004 2007. Contact her at: regbirchem@earthlink.net.

Portrait of a land under seige



Above: Family with small child in makeshift hut in Gaza City residential area destroyed after 22 days of Israeli bombing.

Below: Destruction in Gaza City.



Photos: Regina Birchem

Feminist Ethics of Care: WILPF in Israel/Palestine (1945-1975)

By *Catia Cecilia Confortini*

In 1915, more than eleven hundred women from two continents at war met in The Hague with the ambitious goal of stopping the conflict. They established the International Congress of Women for Permanent Peace and appointed seven envoys who traveled to belligerent governments pressing for the immediate cessation of hostilities and presenting their plans for lasting peace. The women's initiatives didn't end the war, but they started an organization that will soon celebrate its 100th birthday. At their second Congress in Zürich in 1919, these early leaders renamed the organization WILPF.

We now know that our predecessors were prescient about the outcome of the First World War as they condemned the Versailles Peace Treaty. They thought the treaty terms imposed unfair and unnecessary burdens on the losers, upheld the victors' rights to the spoils of war, denied the right of self-determination and imposed unilateral, rather than universal, disarmament – thus continuing to sanction the use of force in international relations. The women rightly believed that such terms would only increase animosities, poverty and despair, which would eventually lead to another catastrophic war.

The early WILPFers were ahead of their times in many ways and often took action at great personal cost. Yet as we prepare to celebrate WILPF's 100th year, its many accomplishments and our courageous founders, we must resist the temptation of painting too rosy a picture. For even our foremothers made decisions that reflected sometimes narrow understandings of peace. We can learn from them, as we study how the early WILPFers broke boundaries and eventually reached more inclusive and better informed ideas about peace.

In my Ph.D. dissertation, I trace WILPF's policy changes in the areas of disarmament, decolonization and the conflict in Israel/Palestine between 1945 and 1975. The latter case perhaps better illustrates the evolution of WILPF's thought and the process that made it possible. WILPF's current position on the conflict in Israel/Palestine derives from a 1975 International Executive Committee (IEC) policy statement which advocated: the creation of two states based on 1967 borders; the mutual recognition between Israel and the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people; a U.N.-sponsored peace conference to solve all outstanding issues; and a total arms embargo to the area. This was an unprecedented move by WILPF, which had until then been hostile to Palestinians and timidly supportive of most Israeli policies.

In *Truth Against Truth*, the Israeli organization Gush

Shalom contends that there are essentially two narratives about the conflict, one Palestinian/Arab, the other Israeli. On the one hand, the Palestinians think that Israel was a creation of the Western Powers and an extension of colonialism; the Israelis believe that Israel was created *despite* the Western Powers, with the intent of providing a safe home to a persecuted minority, and a return to the ancestors' land, rightfully belonging to the Jewish people. There are several corollary narratives based on these two basic narratives, but WILPF's



Left to right: The author with Aliyah Strauss of WILPF Israel and Louise Katz Sullivan of the WILPF LA Branch.

early policies reflected an understanding of peace that was exclusively based on Israeli 'truths.' This was at least partially due to many WILPFers' experiences of the Holocaust.

My analysis of documents held in the International WILPF archives at the University of Colorado - Boulder reveals that our foremothers were not immune from 'Orientalist' views about Arabs, Palestinians, and Islam. From the beginning, Israel was posited as the Western, modern and thus more peaceful state, in contrast with a backward and bellicose other (the Arabs, Arab states, and the Palestinians). Arab (particularly Muslim) women were taken as the symbol of this backwardness and their 'liberation' as a justification for the establishment of a Western democracy (Israel) in the region. So, for example, an IEC resolution of 1948 viewed the Arabs' refusal to accept the creation of Israel as an act of aggression, rather than self-defense. In 1956 the IEC did not overtly condemn Israel's role in the invasion of Egypt during the Suez Canal crisis. Israel was hailed as the only democracy in the Middle East (capable of bringing a freedom previously unknown to Arab women) but its undemocratic practices were unquestioned; Palestinians' claims to self-determination went mostly unheard; Israel's economic model was celebrated as bringing development without exploitation of the people; an international development model that created and reproduced women's economic and social disadvantage was uncontested; and military belligerence was ascribed to Arab states and (later) Palestinian organizations, but not to Israel.

However, beginning at least in the 1950s, WILPF suffered a paralysis, and for years it was unable to produce a comprehensive policy statement on the conflict. This failure was more than an indication of internal disagreements; rather, our organization was painstakingly trying to figure out how the two different narratives about the struggle over territory could be reconciled. So, how did WILPF reach a more inclusive understanding of what peace looked like in Israel/Palestine in the mid-1970s? I believe that our foremothers' methodology had much to do with the change.

Specifically, they adhered to a process that favored inclusive decision-making, recurrent self-criticism and the enactment of a feminist ethics of care. They applied these practices to WILPF's own beliefs about justice and peace. The components or prerequisites of 'peace' as the statement of aims defined them (i.e., freedom and democracy, self-determination, economic development to satisfy human needs, and disarmament) were their starting points and were derived from their liberal internationalist tradition. However, WILPFers' assumptions about race, gender, and class relations shaped how these general principles translated practically in the context of the Middle East. The 1975 statement eventually reflected an inclusive and better informed meaning of 'peace' for Israel/Palestine, as evidenced in its attempt to reconcile the Israeli with the Palestinian narrative and formulate policies that took both 'truths' into account. Their self-reflective feminist critical methodology came to fruition in this statement, but had been applied with some regularity, if not consistently, beginning at least as far back as the Suez Crisis.

Constantly throughout the years, our foremothers critiqued the assumptions that were behind their policies. They facilitated inclusivity in deliberations, and continued to look for input on their policies from a variety of sources. They were conscious, for example, that the lack of a Palestinian section was an obstacle to fully informed decisions. The creation of the Lebanese section in 1962 brought in a much needed voice and fostered sometimes heated but necessary debates. WILPFers used a good dose of self and social critique to challenge their values, practices and norms, based on the information they acquired through different venues. Contacts and information coming from WILPF's close observation of the U.N., its agencies and nongovernmental organizations also exposed the women to a variety of opinions. These outside social critics and WILPF members and leaders like Edith Ballantyne, Libby Frank and Dolores Taller (to name but a few) facilitated and promoted dialogue, inclusive deliberation and the exercise of self and social critique.

One more instrument of their methodology was derived from Jane Addams' very ideas. At the 1968 Congress, Dorothy Hutchinson gave this farewell speech

as outgoing International Chair:

Jane Addams's greatness lay in her rare combination of two qualities. . . These are Intelligence – the mental capability which sets man apart, and Compassion – the emotional capability which enables Man, by an effort of his imagination, to feel suffering which is not his own, so acutely that he is compelled to act to relieve it. . . . The function of the WILPF has always been to study public policy, to make moral judgments based on imaginative identification with those who are victimized by inhuman public policies, and to educate ourselves and others for effective political action to change these policies.²

As we prepare to celebrate our 100th birthday in the next five years, we would do well to keep following Hutchinson's advice and the other methodological principles that guided WILPF out of a stalemate and into more inclusive and better informed policies regarding the Israel/Palestine situation. We need to make sure that the voices of people who are not represented in our organization or are silenced in a world of injustice and war find a friendly, open and compassionate setting in which to express their opinions; we need to practice a radical welcoming toward those voices and be willing to truly listen and cooperate. These practices may be more easily followed in a non-hierarchical structure, but our history suggests that structure is secondary to the constant practice of a feminist critical discipline of self and social criticism. As we continue to debate the shape and role of our organization, let us take new inspiration from our foremothers in our quest to bring about truly emancipatory social change.

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Catia Cecilia Confortini is a board member of WILPF's Los Angeles branch. She holds a Ph.D. from the University of Southern California's School of International Relations. Her dissertation, titled Imaginative Identification: Feminist Critical Methodology in the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (1945-1975), received the 2009 Peace and Justice Studies Association Graduate Student Research Award. She can be reached at conforti@usc.edu.

Footnotes:

¹ Available for download at <http://zope.gush-shalom.org/home/en/channels/downloads/truth>. I wish to thank Aliyah Strauss, of WILPF Israel, for making me aware of this publication.

² Dorothy Hutchinson, Chairman's Keynote Address, "The Right to be Human," 1968, pp. 7-8, box 25, 16th International Congress Report 1966 and 17th International Congress Report 1968, WILPF SCPC Accession, University of Colorado at Boulder Archives.

A Visit to the West Bank

By Elenita Muñiz

Editor's Note: The following article is a report from WILPF member Elenita Muñiz, who traveled to Jerusalem this past spring. Muñiz was there to visit her daughter Micaela Schweitzer-Bluhm (called "Mica" here), where she was serving as the Public Affairs officer at the U.S. Consulate. While there, Muñiz, her daughter and several colleagues from the consulate's Public Diplomacy section, visited Ramallah and a women's NGO called SAWA. SAWA works to end violence against women.

Muñiz brought along "The Clothesline Project," (CP) which was founded by the Cape Cod Women's Agenda in 1990, as a response to the public's ignorance about violence against women and as a way for women to share their stories of violence and survival. The first line was hung with 25 shirts, decorated by women survivors and in memory of victims who died at the hands of their perpetrators. Now there are CP groups across the U.S. and in several other countries. The Cape Cod clothesline has over 1,000 shirts. A national display of the CP was held in 1995 on the Mall in Washington, D.C. in conjunction with a rally sponsored by NOW. At that display, 123 CP groups came or sent shirts, and 6,000 shirts were displayed. After the CP was displayed at the 1991 WILPF U.S. Section Congress at Bryn Mawr several branches took the idea home, started their own groups, and helped spread the idea around the U.S. During her trip, Elenita also visited a music center for children in the Ramallah refugee camp.

We drove out of Jerusalem and into the West Bank, past Palestinian towns and Israeli settlements that looked like big collections of apartment buildings with red roofs. We passed part of the wall, on a two- or three-lane highway, built for Israeli use, with the small Palestinian roads off to the side which were frequently blocked by piles of rock and dirt. Traffic was very slow and heavy, due to an accident. When we reached the scene of the accident, there were police and military from the Palestinian Authority, as well as Israeli police and Israeli soldiers, all armed.

We finally reached Ramallah and our guard opened the door and as I stepped out, another guard (all these guards are over 6 feet tall, young, and good looking and all wearing wireless ear pieces) asked me to follow him and wait here for the others to join us. Then he escorted us up the three flights of stairs to the offices of SAWA, which is Arabic for "together" and is the name of the NGO where I

was speaking. The director, Ohaila, took me around and introduced me to each of the 25 women there, some young, some old, some in headscarves, a few not. I met women who were volunteers on the hotline, and others from other NGOs working on the issue. The U.S. Consulate supports SAWA's work to end violence against women as part of its outreach to the Palestinian people.

While Mica and the others hung the clothesline, I gave a history of the project, which another colleague translated. I started out by saying thank you, and then, of course, crying. But I told them about the Clothesline Project, how it was started, the color codes, the sounds, etc.

Then we broke up so they could look at the line. People helped translate what the shirts said and I answered questions about the line, about who could make shirts,



Elenita Muñiz in Ramallah with Randa Janho Sousou, from the Ministry of Women's Affairs.

what to do if someone was too shy to make a shirt, etc. After a bit, we broke out the blank shirts, pens and glue, along with ribbons, flowers, and doll clothes I had brought, and everyone made a shirt. Some were general, some about women the volunteers had dealt with on the hotline, and some did shirts about themselves. Mica took pictures of each shirt – we hung them after we took down the Cape Cod shirts. Then we re-gathered and I answered questions and we talked about the challenges of their community, religion and expectations.

Later I wondered aloud whether they could find any support from their communities of faith, as we do in the U.S., and they laughed out loud and got into a lively discussion about whether any of their clerics support their work or not. It was fun and passionate and exciting to see their interest and their varied feelings about the best way to incorporate the Clothesline Project into their work. Finally, we stopped; they handed International Women's Day carnations to everyone; we took a group picture, and left.

All this time, one of our guards was standing outside at the top of the stairs. We had to leave on the schedule the guards had for us.

After lunch, we went about two blocks and pulled into The Kamandjati Music Centre, where our other guards were waiting for us, and were escorted into the office of the school. The director, Saad, gave us the history of the school and a tour. Kamandjati was started by a violin player who grew up in the refugee camp in Ramallah, then studied in France. There are four Kamandjati centers, three in the Palestinian territories and one in Lebanon. They had applied to the U.S. Consulate for support for their program, which gives music lessons to children from the refugee camps and assembles a student orchestra for performances. I was delivering instruments donated by faculty at my school on Cape Cod.

The Kamandjati Centre was very cool, rehabbed into a single building from two Palestinian homes where the families lived upstairs and the animals downstairs, but now it has a modern front door, a courtyard, upstairs offices, a balcony upstairs for outdoor lessons and concerts, and two airy spaces downstairs for lessons and practice. They'd planned a mini-concert for us, presented by a violinist who was about 10 years old, two 12-year-old flutists, a teenager who played a drums/tambourine, and another young man who had spent three months in France studying music and recording a CD, who sang to the accompaniment of the musicians.

We opened the box of instruments and the kids unloaded everything with pleasure. Later Saad took us across the street to their instrument workshop where a young man who is learning to make violins showed us one finished instrument and one under construction. Our guards went with us.

Then we were off again, into a non-stop traffic jam, so it took two and a half hours to get back to Jerusalem, with our guard and the two other guards following in their own SUV as we passed each checkpoint or other landmark.

Meeting and having lunch with the women at SAWA was very moving. They have some different issues than we do – honor killings, for instance – and almost no community support. Certainly, as they hastened to tell me, they have no support from most of their clergy! But the effect of the endless war on women is apparent and destructive here, as it is at home and in Darfur, and in the Congo, and in Bosnia, and in Sonora, and in Afghanistan; it's just overwhelming, cruel, bitter, stupid, and inexplicable.

While we were at SAWA, the hotline supervisor was overwhelmed and had to walk away and sit in the kitchen and one of our colleagues came and got me so I could talk to her. I told her about my partner back home, who also had to walk away from the Clothesline Project and advised



her to be gentle with herself. It was quite an experience and I am very glad I was there.

Postscript: After I wrote this message to send home, we learned the very next day that the Kamandjati Music Centre in Jenin had been burned down by unknown persons. The theory was that it had been done by fundamentalists who dislike any Western influence on the children. So sad, when these kids have so little to start with. How can music be harmful?

Elenita discovered WILPF through the Cape Cod branch's community college course, "Roots of Violence: Seeds of Change", back in 1989 and has been involved ever since. She is a member of the Cape Cod branch and works as publications director at an independent school, Falmouth Academy, where she co taught an elective called "Seeds of Change" this year. She can be reached at: elenita@cape.com.

Remembering Lea

LEA ZELDIN, co-chair of the Madison WILPF Branch and editor of the Midwest WILPF newsletter, died this past spring following a stroke. She was 80. A strong advocate of alternative media, single-payer healthcare and health and safety, she spent her last day working at a radio station where she hosted a health and wellness program called "Health Writers." She is survived by her four sons: Stephen, Robin, Paul and Eric.

Zeldin was an ardent civil rights advocate during the 1960s, organizing a local chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality and as a young mother often showed up for pickets and sit-ins with her kids in tow. She organized and marched against the Vietnam War and other conflicts. Zeldin helped found Madison's Dr. Martin Luther King Free Community Dinners, a wonderful combination of her political and culinary concerns. Precise about her politics, she was fun and freewheeling when the discussion turned to food. Zeldin adored the slow food movement, traveling to Italy to learn more about the international drive to combat the compromises of fast-food culture by preserving unique cuisines and cultures of distinct regions around the world.

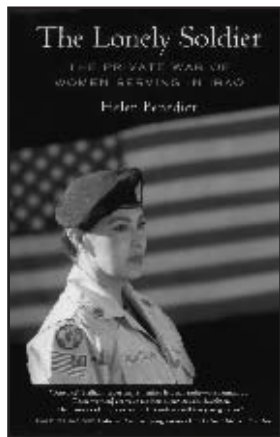
Zeldin placed great faith in the transformative power of the communal meal. In the 1960s, she did not just distribute free and healthy food to those in need – she sat down and ate with them at potlucks.

In 2007, Zeldin was honored with a Dane County Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Recognition Award. ❖

This piece quotes extensively from the *Madison Capital Times* and is written with additional help from WILPF member Rose Daitsman.

Fighting a Double War

The *Lonely Soldier* chronicles the real lives of American military women in Iraq. While it is hard to read some of these stories of discrimination, harassment and rape, it's also hard to put this important and compelling book down. It's written by Helen Benedict, a prolific author and professor of journalism at Columbia University.



One woman who served in a company of 1,500 men (and less than 18 women) tells Benedict in an interview: "I was fresh meat to hungry men. The mortar rounds that came in daily did less damage to me than the men with whom I shared my food." In a recent interview with *Peace & Freedom*, Benedict said,

"The military is still permeated with stereotypes of women as weak, passive sex objects."

The Lonely Soldier notes that women are banned from ground combat, but that the "Iraq War has made a mockery of this ban. Because its battlefields are towns and roads, there is no frontline and the U.S. military is so short of troops, women are frequently thrown into jobs indistinguishable from those of the all-male infantry and armor divisions."

In September, Benedict will testify before Congress about the situation for women serving in the military. She has also written a play based on the book, *The Lonely Soldier Monologues*, which was performed in two theaters in New York this spring. She is hoping the play will tour. Anyone interested in producing the play in other theaters or in learning more about Benedict's work can visit www.helenbenedict.com.

— *Theta Pavis*

Can you talk about the key issues facing women soldiers right now?

Benedict: The main issue they are facing is lack of respect. They are still seen as second-class soldiers, and that is reinforced by the Pentagon ban on women in ground combat. That, coupled with the age-old misogynist culture – a lot of men still think women don't belong in the military – creates a culture of rape. Women still have to prove themselves more than the men do, and they've got this terrible threat from the men who are supposed to be on their side.

In the book you talk a lot about the fact that the military's official policy is that women cannot serve in combat, and yet they often wind up in dangerous situations.

Benedict: Yes, women are trained to handle weapons, and fight hand-to-hand, and to practice rescuing people, and

carry people on their backs. The situation is riddled with contradictions because they are told that they will not be in ground combat but they are. All sorts of people are told they are not going to be in combat and are, including members of the National Guard.

Women are often told they will serve as "combat support," right?

Benedict: Yes, but combat support can mean you are driving right alongside combat troops ... you can get attacked out of nowhere. You can be carrying the meals and be ambushed, hit by an IED [improvised explosive device], or be in a firefight. Because of the shortage of troops, especially in the first few years, a lot of women were made into gunners, sticking out of the roofs of vehicles with ... machine guns. They had to kick open doors and raid houses, which is one of the most dangerous things you can do. One of the women told me: "We were right there with the infantry. And we were doing their jobs and they were doing our jobs and it blended together." Even more ironic is the fact that the Pentagon has given out medals to women for valor in combat, at the same time they are banning them [from combat].

WILPF has actually done a lot of work around improper recruitment practices in schools, and I was struck by the stories you tell about how recruiters go into schools, how they lie to young people about where they might be sent, or what benefits they can get. Do you have any thoughts about how this can be stopped?

Benedict: I think that this premise of recruiting being hooked onto No Child Left Behind – to get federal funding schools *have* to let recruiters in and parents *have* to give the military their phone numbers – should simply be undone. It's allowing recruiters to target incredibly young and naïve students, and more and more you hear about the sexual assault of young female students [by recruiters]. Children that young should not be subject to that kind of recruitment. [Under the current regulations] a parent has to know to write and say, "You may not contact my child." It is just an obvious con job; these things should be unlinked. I don't think recruiters should be prowling around the school halls and having lunch with the kids and calling them at home.

What about when young people do sign up?

Benedict: When you sign up, all promises that were made to you before you sign the contract, well, there are no rules that they have to keep those promises. So technically they [recruiters] have free rein to lie all they want. When you enlist in the military you are signing away your civil rights as an American citizen. You are not allowed to sue, and you can be called up again even after your contract is over.

It is like indentured servitude. There is no other job that does this to you in America.

Can you talk about how ill-equipped the military is to handle women's health problems? There have been many reports in the news about shoddy care at VA hospitals such as Walter Reed, but your book points out many stories where women's medical issues were completely ignored and neglected.

Benedict: There are virtually no female doctors or gynecologists in the military. Maybe there were one or two bases in the whole country where they had a gynecologist. It is not only that a lot of women prefer women doctors, there was nobody trained in female health. There is a lack of trained counselors for rape and sexual assault, and particularly for sexual assault and combat trauma. There have been recent improvements. There is a good program in New Hampshire, near Dartmouth, and one in Los Angeles. Their problem is getting the women to come in, because if they are harassed or sexually traumatized, the last thing they want to do is come back to anything that reminds them of the military, and most VA [hospitals have] all male patients, all male doctors. So now there are some wonderful clinics but they can't get the women to come in. There needs to be better outreach, and soldiers need to be able to get their benefits right away. It is a moribund and ridiculously inefficient system.

Can you say more about that system?

Benedict: The VA only has seven inpatient Post Traumatic Stress Disorder programs for women; nearly 200,000 women have served in Iraq and about half will be coming home soon. They suffer higher rates of trauma and depression than men who served in Iraq. Some 40 percent of homeless veteran women say they were raped or sexually assaulted in the military.

You show that enlistment went down after 9/11, and desperate to recruit and keep soldiers, the military has allowed men with criminal records, even those with records of domestic and sexual violence, to stay in the military.

Benedict: Things have changed because of the economy; recruitment levels have gone up to pre- 9/11 levels. The media gave the impression that people were rushing to sign up with patriotic fervor after 9/11, but there was a 58 percent drop in the recruitment of African Americans, for example. The economy has changed that now, and recruitment has gone way up, especially in the Army Reserves, and more women are signing up now even than men. Things could change because women may not be so outnumbered in the future.

Your last chapter outlines a number of things that could be done to change the situation for women serving in the military, while they are at war, and once they

are discharged. One item is to get rid of the "Don't ask, Don't tell" policy, yet as we were preparing this issue of *Peace & Freedom* news broke that the Supreme Court had refused to hear a constitutional challenge to the policy.

Benedict: That policy is important. Because discrimination against anyone who is seen as anything other than a big macho, heterosexual killer – well, when you allow discrimination in the law, it perpetuates the idea that discrimination is OK. More women than men have been drummed out of the military [using Don't Ask, Don't Tell] because you can accuse someone you don't like ... It's astonishing that more women

should be drummed out than men when there are so few of them. It's a tool of persecution. Anything that threatens that macho, heterosexual killer image of what a soldier is makes people really nervous ... The military culture is a throwback. It is several decades behind civilian life. They tell you, "We are color-blind and gender blind. You are your uniform." But the truth of the matter is that is not true. But if women choose that career they should go in with open eyes and know what to expect.

What else should be done?

Benedict: Remove the combat restrictions because it will open up equality. We should make much more real and serious consequences for those

found guilty of sexual assault and rape. A soldier found guilty of violence at any time in his life should be expelled from the military forever ... Anyone found guilty of intimidating a victim from reporting should be court-martialed.

The military language on how to protect yourself has to be changed. The military says that if you tell a friend [about an assault] that friend is obliged to report it ... It's a way of shutting up a victim, if you can't talk to a friend, it is like a rule that basically insures that women will shut up, and it is just so inhumane and illogical. ❖

*The Lonely Soldier
The Private War
of Women
Serving in Iraq*
By Helen
Benedict
(Beacon Press,
2009)



From the book: Facts about Women and the Military

"In the army, nearly 90 percent of rape victims are junior ranking women, average age twenty-one, while most of the assailants are noncommissioned officers or junior men, average age twenty-eight."

"More American women have fought and died in Iraq than in all the wars put together since World War II."

By September 2008, 600 American female soldiers had been wounded in action and 102 had died in Iraq – more than in the Korean, Vietnam, first Gulf, and Afghanistan wars combined."

Women comprise 14 percent of all active duty forces.

Women make up 11 percent of soldiers deployed in the Middle East.

Women in the Ranks

WILPF member produces new play

By Theta Pavis

A new one-woman play, *Coming in Hot*, was co-adapted for the stage by WILPF member Jeanmarie Simpson and Shannon Cain. The work is adapted from the book *Powder: Writing by Women in the Ranks, From Vietnam to Iraq*, a collection of memoir and poetry by women who served in the military. It was edited by Lisa Bowden & Shannon Cain and published by Kore Press in 2008. It is the first-ever collection of memoir and poetry by women who've served in the U.S. military. Helen Benedict (*see page 10*) wrote the foreword.

Contributors to *Powder* have seen conflicts in Somalia, Vietnam and Operation Desert Shield. They've worked as air traffic controllers, medics, Arabic linguists, sonar technicians and interrogators. The poems and personal essays collected in the book are inspired by a variety of events: heat exhaustion on an afternoon in Mosul; a first jump from an airplane; fending off advances from Iraqi men; an attempted rape by a Navy SEAL; interrogating suspected terrorists; contemplation of suicide; and a spiritual meditation on preparing the bodies of fallen comrades for burial.

The play *Coming in Hot* will premier in Tucson, Arizona this September. Jeanmarie Simpson says, "We have already begun to field requests for performances nationally. After the debut in Tucson, we will package a

film version as a DVD, along with a script for classroom use and pitch it to larger theaters." She also wants to take the play to every Veterans Administration hospital in the country.

Simpson has been a peace activist for 25 years and is an accomplished actress with more than three decades of experience on the stage. She will perform all of the characters in the play. Simpson also wrote the play *A Single Woman* about WILPF leader and pacifist Jeannette Rankin, the first U.S. Congresswoman, and performed in the film version of the play.

Simpson says doing a stage adaptation of *Powder* "interests me deeply as a mother and grandmother, with a son who is about to be deployed for the second time."

I asked her to tell me more about her son and she wrote the message below for *Peace & Freedom*.

— Theta Pavis

For more information on the book and play, please see <http://korepress.org/Powderstage.htm>. Jeanmarie Simpson's website is www.jeanmariesimpson.com. She can be reached at jeanmarie@jeanmariesimpson.com ❖



Jeanmarie Simpson: A mother's tale

When my son joined the JROTC his freshman year of high school, I knew he would one day go to war. He assured me that he would never join the military, but I knew he would, and in spite of my vociferous protestations, he did, in August of 2000, when he was 19.

The morning of September 11, 2001, I awoke to Bob Edwards on NPR saying that the Pentagon, Capitol and White House had been evacuated. I was confused, thinking it was some kind of simulation or something. When I discovered what had occurred I knew, for certain, that my son would be going to war. I wasn't surprised. I was shocked at the enormity of it, at the sadistic nature of the attacks that took some three thousand people, including a high school friend of mine.

We live in a culture that still demands the blood of our children, and especially our male children. We participate in wholesale human sacrifice and call ourselves "civilized."

With *Coming In Hot*, I feel the blood of my sisters who want to be a part of the saving of the human race,

GI Jane-style, who want to participate in the juggernaut that is the U.S. Military, who want to take home paychecks and medical and dental benefits subsidized by 50 percent of every federal tax dollar ever collected. They want to feed their families, they want to find their identities among the cacophony that is "service." I feel these women's struggles in my solar plexus, I feel their confusion and heartbreak as they try to fit in and make sense of it all. But I know there is no making sense of it.

When my son learned that the missiles his ship had been lobbing at "military targets" had killed civilians, when he realized his own complicity in the slaughter of human beings, he put his head in his hands and cried. There is a part of me that feels guilt for having put on this earth a person who has taken the lives of innocents. Even as I love him, even as I miss him and my arms ache to hold him, I am guilty.

So I do this work. What's the alternative? ❖



A march of 100 people of different nationalities and cultures
will journey together across six continents

World March for Peace and Nonviolence

By Nancy Price

The World March for Peace and Nonviolence is a call for all people to unite and take responsibility for changing the world. Launched in November, 2008, the vision behind it is for an unprecedented social mobilization calling attention to our dangerous global situation. It is being created and shaped by everyone and every community that wishes to participate.

The march will run from October 2, 2009 to January 2, 2010 and go from New Zealand to Argentina, with complementary activities in cities and communities world-wide.

WILPF, U.S. Section, has endorsed the World March and is promoting it as an opportunity for WILPF members and branches to plan events highlighting the issues we are working on locally as part of realizing peace and nonviolence across the United States and the world.

As WILPF envisions a transformed world at peace, where there is racial, social, and economic justice for all people everywhere (through making connections that link and challenge root causes of oppression, especially racism, sexism, heterosexism, militarism, economic disparity, and political disempowerment) the World March for Peace and Nonviolence organizers embody a similar vision.

The World March consists of two parts: First, a march of 100 people of different nationalities and cultures will journey together across six continents beginning on October 2, 2009 – the International Day of Nonviolence – in Wellington, New Zealand. They will finish on January 2, 2010 at the foot of Mount Aconcagua in Punta de Vacas, Argentina.

Second, events will be held in cities and communities worldwide and along the route – marches, festivals, forums, conferences, and other activities – to create consciousness of the urgent need for peace and nonviolence. There is a World March USA website to facilitate the reg-

istration and planning of local events (www.world-marchusa.net). These are posted on a map along with contact information for ‘State Coordinators.’ As WILPFers plan their World March activities, we ask that they also inform National Program Co-chairs Carol Urner (carol.disarm@gmail.com) and Tura Campanella Cook (turacc@earthlink.net).

Statement of Purpose and Goal

The organizers state: “We are facing the global failure of a system whose methodology of action is violence and whose central value is money.” They emphasize the critical situation throughout the world in which we live as characterized by poverty across vast regions; confrontations between cultures; racial, sexual, religious and age discrimination, and violence that contaminates the daily lives of hundreds of millions of people; armed conflicts that plague many areas, and profound economic and environmental crises.

Believing this to be a time of great crises and of great opportunity, they wish to bring people and communities together to map out and plan a different future for the next generations.

The organizers emphasize that it is time to reject all forms of violence and to bring about real peace. It is time to eradicate nuclear weapons, to withdraw troops from occupied territories, for a progressive and proportional reduction of arms, for signing non-aggression treaties among nations, and for the renunciation of war by governments as a way to resolve conflicts. Moreover, it is time to provide for those who suffer violence in any form and for any reason to be heard, and their suffering addressed and healed.

Nancy Price is a member of WILPF's Save the Water committee. She can be reached at nancytprice@juno.com.

“Peace is everyone’s right and nonviolence is also a shared and permanent responsibility.”

— President Vazquez of Uruguay, endorsing the World March for Peace and Nonviolence



Commission on the Status of Women

By Anita S. Pulier

For the past 53 years, representatives of United Nations Member States and NGOs have gathered at U.N. headquarters in New York to evaluate progress on gender equality, identify challenges, set global standards and formulate concrete policies to promote gender equality and advancement of women worldwide.

Thousands of women from all over the world come to New York to attend these meetings. Over 400 NGOs are represented, including WILPF.

This year's theme was "The equal sharing of responsibility between men and women, including care-giving in the context of HIV/AIDS."

U.S. WILPF, along with the National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) and the Center for Women's Health and Human Rights at Suffolk University ran a very successful Practicum for college and graduate students who attended the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) meetings and participated in discussions and reporting. The NGOs that attend the CSW strive to contribute to and influence the final statement or "Agreed Conclusions" document of the CSW, which was released to the public in June.

The sense of "sisterhood" between the attendees is inspiring. People want to hear each others' stories and to lend support. Unfortunately contact between governments, the U.N. agencies and the NGOs seems quite limited indeed.

As a WILPF US-U.N. representative I have attended the past four of these CSW meetings and must report that I remain skeptical about what percentage of the goals laid out year after year in the "Agreed Conclusions" are achieved. Nevertheless, I firmly believe these meetings are invaluable. The stories told, contacts made, and the general consciousness-raising that's done here help reinvigorate civil society and its commitment to the global struggle for women's rights.

At the conclusion of these meetings some confusion remained about CSW's 2010 theme. The UNIFEM website states that: "At its 54th session in 2010, the Commission will review implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcomes of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly and its contribution to shaping a gender perspective towards the full realization of the Millennium Development Goals." A daunting agenda!

Meanwhile work on renovating the U.N. building, which is over 60 years old and has asbestos and other problems, is starting after years of controversy and discussion. A tent-like structure is going up in the park next to the main building and three leased locations (two in Manhattan and one in Long Island City) are being prepared. Slowly, U.N. offices will move into these spaces over the summer, but it remains unclear where the 2010 CSW will be held.

Anita Pulier is one of U.S. WILPF's NGO representatives to the United Nations. She can be reached at tequita@yahoo.com.

Update on New WILPF UNO Director

We were thrilled and delighted that AnnJanette Rosga agreed to come on board as director of WILPF's United Nations office in New York City. She holds a Ph.D. in the History of Consciousness (interdisciplinary social sciences) from the University of California, Santa Cruz.

Prior to joining WILPF, Anjie was an assistant professor at Knox College in Illinois, and then at the University of Colorado-Boulder, where she taught courses in social and feminist theory, research methodologies, and the cultural study of law, crime and violence. Anjie's recent research was on U.S. training of police in emerging democracies, especially vis-à-vis human rights and child trafficking in Bosnia-Herzegovina. She has published on human trafficking, bias-related crime and human rights indicators.

Anjie has received several awards, including fellowships from the Fulbright Institute and the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. As a researcher for the film *Licensed to Kill*, Anjie was co-recipient of the Sundance Filmmakers' Trophy Award for Best Documentary in 1997. She has also been a consultant for Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, UNICEF, the U.N. Office of the High Commis-

sioner for Human Rights, UNDP, and the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces. Anjie began her position with WILPF in November, 2008.

As most of our readers know, the WILPF-U.N. Office in New York hosts two projects, PeaceWomen and Reaching Critical Will. The PeaceWomen Project monitors and works toward rapid and full implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. To these ends, PeaceWomen hosts www.peacewomen.org, a website that provides accurate and timely information on women, peace and security issues and women's peace-building initiatives in areas of armed conflict.

Reaching Critical Will (www.reachingcriticalwill.org) is the disarmament initiative of WILPF that seeks to increase the quality and quantity of NGO preparation for and participation in various international disarmament forums.

U.N. delegations and NGOs rely on both PeaceWomen and Reaching Critical Will for regular update summaries. Another important source of updates is at WILPF's main U.N. website: <http://sites.google.com/site/wilpfuno/news>. — Anita S. Pulier

Imagining the Future at the WILPF U.N. Practicum

by Jessica Morgan

I was thrilled when an unexpected phone call from the National Women's Studies Association presented me with the opportunity to attend this year's WILPF Practicum in Advocacy at the United Nations.

The chance to schmooze with the likes of Charlotte Bunch, Carolyn Hannan and Marylin Waring while discussing international reproductive health over New York cheesecake, in the midst of dodging delegates in the crowded U.N. cafeteria – well, that was a week to remember! As a second-year graduate student in Women's Studies at the University of Cincinnati, I've developed a passion for international feminist issues and international law and turned it into my thesis. Still, I've had little practical experience to share with my committee at school.

Participating in the WILPF Practicum 2009 helped me to expand my interests into a lived experience filled with ideas, lessons, and more questions to pursue.

At the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) meetings, I experienced the intersections of 50 years of history in the fight to establish first civil and political rights, and later the economic, social and cultural rights forming the legal framework on which individuals and groups defend their human rights. To focus these intersections further, the meetings of the CSW have been instrumental in shaping the U.N.'s position on the lives of women, including the original referendum which led to the drafting of The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) – a cornerstone for women's equality at the international level. In addition, contemporary issues defined the CWS experience for me, as women of various ages and backgrounds came together to wax feminist and engage on the issues.

Ongoing discussions on the shifting role and composition of the gender entities within the U.N. (such as the Division on the Advancement of Women, UNIFEM, and the CSW, to name a few) and the U.N. body itself, also shaped our work throughout the week.

The global financial crisis quickly became a priority theme for the meeting "Care-giving in the Context of HIV/AIDS," as questions of inequality, responsibility and



The author, center, of the University of Cincinnati, at the U.N. practicum with left, Caroline Hodes, York University in Toronto, ON, and right, Zakiya Luna, University of Michigan.

sustainability were considered by the representatives present. Much discussion throughout the week focused on how and where community values beyond the merely monetary might be realized and lived.

Often in U.S. national media we hear about the AIDS pandemic, and we hear about massive bailouts for companies lacking in transparency – but we rarely hear of the connections between the two. Social inequalities

are magnified by the AIDS pandemic, and these inequalities are deeply shaped by economic inequalities that are now reaching a fever-pitch as the world redefines economic relationships in light of the crisis. Many women and girls throughout the world are afflicted with HIV/AIDS, while throughout the world social relations reproduce traditions that place women in the roles of care-giving.

Arguments for equal responsibility have no place in this crisis, because we cannot talk about equal responsibility unless we talk about the social relations that produce inequality.

I have taken much from the experience at the Practicum with WILPF, but most specifically I leave with a new imagination for what the future will bring, not only for the whole

U.N. body, but also for what changes may come for feminist issues on an international scale. I see a space within this that I can access with enough commitment and hard work. What possibilities exist to represent more fully and completely the possibility of a world focused on human rights and the capabilities of all people?

How could reconstruction of the U.N. respond more fully to shifts in global capitalism in the past 50 years, and foresee new changes in the next 50? Thanks to WILPF, my commitment to asking these kind of questions has been reinforced and I look forward to exploring them in years to come. ❖

I leave with a new imagination for what the future will bring, . . . a world focused on human rights and the capabilities of all people?



BranchAction News

By Georgia Pinkel

I've decided that this is one of the best jobs around. I get to read all the lovely newsletters, finding out about the many ways we WILPF women have to solve problems, honor powerful women, and just have fun doing the work. I hope you all remember to include me on your regular mailing list for paper newsletters (G. L. Pinkel, 2718 Falk Rd, Vancouver, WA 98661) or electronic versions (glpinkel@gmail.com). I look forward to also receiving information from our Y-WILPFers.

BEST PRACTICES

Don't forget to check with **Triangle** to find out how to do a local radio show or a teach-in on "Why We Need Unions!" Did your branch have pink and green squares present at this year's Mother's Day Vigil in Washington, D.C.? Our national co-presidents were there to participate in all the events! Try some "Coffee with discussion," as **Minnesota Metro** does on Saturday mornings, covering topics such as Women and Water Rights, Human Rights through Children's Books, and Toward a Commons-Based Society. Book discussion groups are a great way to engage new people and revitalize old members. **Portland** started its book group with the *Shock Doctrine* by Naomi Klein, and then moved on to Howard Zinn's *A People's History of the U.S.* **Portland Y-WILPFers** are reading a book a month. **Des Moines** is reading David Korten's *An Agenda for a New Economy*. **Minnesota Metro** has a unique partnership with the Minnesota Women's Caucus for the Arts, and is producing an art show based on "Women and Water." **Santa Cruz** prints its Planning Meeting decisions, a list of new members, and some pointed quotes in every newsletter—this keeps everyone informed, as well as providing some laughs! Members are encouraged to look for the film *Jerusalem...The East Side Story*; it may be available at your local video store. Or check out our own Ann Fagan Ginger and her book *Undoing the Bush-Cheney Legacy*.

NETWORKING TOOLS

Minnesota Metro kicked off its Spring Membership Drive with a potluck dinner in April. You can use CafePress online to create local versions of WILPF T-shirts, buttons and other promotional items. Do your



The Baltimore and Catonsville members meet with U.S. Section co-presidents Laura Roskos and Nancy Munger.

members Twitter? Are they on Facebook? Let's look at these new tools for organizing; we can all benefit from these networking opportunities.

SPECIAL PEOPLE

Naima Richmond, **Minnesota Metro**, was one of the special people able to attend the Inauguration. What a gift! The entire **Los Angeles** branch was honored by the Pacific/Los Angeles Chapter of the U.N. Association and presented with the Eleanor Roosevelt Award for distinguished service in the pursuit of peace, culture, education and understanding. **Santa Cruz** honored the life of lesbian activist Phyllis Lyon as its current "Courageous Woman" during the annual fundraiser. Mary Church Terrell (1863-1954), an early WILPF member and co-founder of the National Association of Colored Women, was honored with a U.S. stamp; ask for it and other stamps depicting women! **Santa Cruz** Raging Grannies, chosen "Best Protest Group" by *Good Times Magazine*, held a spring fundraising concert. **Portland** will attend the grand opening of the Walk of the Heroines in June, culminating a two-year effort to honor local WILPF members with a plaque on the Peace Wall there. Check out www.woh.pdx.edu. **Des Moines** member Alita Siasoco was named outstanding Asian by the governor for community leadership and for forming the Filipino Association of Iowa.

CALENDAR EVENTS

Santa Cruz's holiday party of Sacred and Profane music (the Peace Choral and the Raging Grannies were on the same bill) had the house schmoozing and humming. **Catonsville** and Women in Black in Baltimore marched to honor Dr. King with six giant Peace Puppets. **Santa Cruz** held a local Inauguration Day celebration complete with a march through downtown Santa Cruz. **Los Angeles** celebrated International Women's Day with a luncheon featuring Jackie Goldberg speaking on "Change We Can Believe In: How to Make it a Reality." Traditional Tax Day War Protesters vs "tea party" tax protesters made for inter-

esting times this year. Did your branch march for peace in the local July 4th Parade? **Cantonsville** was ready with their puppets and signs. **Des Moines** lead the Mother's Day Renaissance parade with two, 10-yard banners reading: "Mothers mending the social fabric" and "WILPF working for an economic renaissance." Planning for August's Hiroshima/Nagasaki commemorations were in full swing this summer. Be sure to document your branch's involvement.

LOCAL ACTION ON NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

WILPFers from the **Triangle** were among the 44 people arrested in a nonviolent confrontation with Duke Energy as they protested mountain-top removal for coal mining at Cliffside. Check out www.mountainjusticesum-mer.org. **Triangle** spearheaded community support for a year-long strike at Moncure Plywood, which came to a successful conclusion this April. Women from the Congolese community in Burlington, VT, working with State Rep. Keshia Ram, presented a resolution in March asking for support for justice and women's rights in the Congo (DRC). The International Violence Against Women Act (I-VAWA) will be re-introduced in this Congress and directs the U.S. government to create a comprehensive five-year strategy to



Laura Roskos and Carol Urner with Joan Drake in front of White House on Mother's Day weekend.

reduce violence in 10 to 20 diverse countries that have severe levels of violence against women and girls. Talk to your legislative representatives and politicians at both the state and national levels. **Santa Cruz** is a proud member of "Think Local First," a new organization of local merchants and community organizations focusing on keeping the economy local, vibrant and sustainable to counterbalance globalization and corporate influence. **Des Moines** co-sponsored a youth-focused "Earth Day" in May, with over 100 kids involved in learning about alternative, earth-friendly practices. **Portland** hosted two White Privilege workshops in June.

reduce violence in 10 to 20 diverse countries that have severe levels of violence against women and girls. Talk to your legislative representatives and politicians at both the state and national levels. **Santa Cruz** is a proud member of "Think Local First," a new organization of local merchants and community organizations focusing on keeping the economy local, vibrant and sustainable to counterbalance globalization and corporate influence. **Des**

LOCAL ISSUES: HARD TIMES COME HOME TO ROOST

This winter **Catonsville** investigated homelessness at the local level. They also provided the funds to feed 100 men breakfast at a local shelter, the beginning of a commitment to do this four times a year. **Sierra Foothills** members help prepare dinners for The Gathering Inn, which feeds the homeless in Placer County, CA. **Santa Cruz** has joined the effort to save the local Beach Flats Community Center, which provides much needed services to the local Latino community. **St. Louis** is educating people about a local nuclear power plant financing itself on the backs of rate payers. The branch is also supporting Global Zero's call to dismantle and retire the world's nuclear weapons. **Portland** continues its six year tradition of taking the issues—local, state, national and international—to the people through their weekly leafleting vigil in downtown Portland. **Des Moines** highlighted an event with Howard Dean on the issue of a Public Health Insurance Option, as part of the ongoing discussion around for-profit insurance industry options, universal coverage and single-payer models.

PEACE ACTIONS

For the past 30 years, **Fresno** has been donating Jane Addams books to the children's room of the Fresno County Library. This year, the library highlighted this connection with a historical display. In September, California State University Fresno's Arne Nixon Children's Library received this year's award books at a special reception featuring Margarita Engle, one of the authors. Therese Ballet Lynn of **Los Angeles** has made an English translation of the *Peace Train 1995 from Helsinki to Beijing*, by Angelica Dullinger (originally published in Germany in 1997); copies are \$15, including postage. Contact the LA Branch. **Santa Cruz** once again supported a successful summer Peace Camp. (See page 21).

HAS YOUR BRANCH INVITED OUR CO-PRESIDENTS?

Our co-Presidents visited with both the **Cantonsville** and **Baltimore** branches in May (see photo, top of page 16) to exchange information on current projects at all levels, as well as reviewing the new mini-grant program. Last winter they also joined with **Minnesota Metro** for a WILPF potluck, and attended a monthly meeting of the **West Palm Beach** branch.

Send your news for Branch Action to G. L. Pinkel, 2718 Falk Rd, Vancouver, WA 98661 or by email to glpinkel@gmail.com.



Jane Addams Peace Camp: A Santa Cruz Tradition

By Gabby Litsky

For 12 years we've run a Peace Camp for one precious week each summer. We picked the first week of August – the anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki – with a purpose, since that's when many people reflect on the threat of nuclear annihilation.

The camp is supported by Santa Cruz and Watsonville WILPF, as well as the Resource Center for Nonviolence and the Center for Nonviolent Communication.

It is with intention that we choose to work peaceably and for peace in the world. The volunteers who organize the Jane Addams Peace Camp believe that the place to start is with children. We serve 60 children each summer, ages six to 17.



Volunteers are at the program's heart.

Campers come from diverse backgrounds and every corner of Santa Cruz County. We fundraise and provide scholarships for all children who want to participate. Our goal is not to discriminate in any way, including ability to pay. We've even traded a sushi meal with a parent for a scholarship.

The generosity of many community members and organizations make scholarships available. We conduct the camp at Orchard School, a private school in Aptos, CA. We also have many artists and community activists who come to camp as guests.

Each year we choose a theme such as "Every Voice Counts" or "Extending Hands" to inspire our curriculum. In January we start looking

for counselors, contact the facility we use for the camp and start our letter-writing campaign for donations of money, food, supplies and volunteers. We prepare a brochure promoting the camp. The camp's mission is to foster an understanding of peace and justice through art, music, drama, games, stories and discussion. The WILPF branches help distribute our brochures and spread the word about the camp.

The last three years the Center for Nonviolent Communication has donated training for our counselors and youth leaders prior to camp. We have learned a lot about how we listen to each other and our campers, how we can communicate more effectively, respectfully and peacefully, and how we can problem solve in way that provides a win/win situation. Our counselors try to incorporate the skills we learn at this training into their curriculum. The camp activities are designed to promote:

- Listening to our inner voice
- Appreciation of many cultures
- Cooperation, with respect for others
- Expression of feelings
- Caring for the earth
- Management of conflict
- Learning about peace and justice
- Advocacy

Our camp offers a Youth Leadership Program for middle and high school students. We invite them to be a part of the leadership of camp. They contribute ideas about the curriculum, lead activities for the younger

campers and provide positive role models while backing up counselors in their groups. This year we will have our first counselor that has also been a camper and youth leader. A home-grown addition!

We believe that peace is learned through interactions



All of the projects at Peace Camp are designed to help the children learn about cooperation and how to get along with each other.



"Hearing Everyone's Voice" was this year's theme carried out through art, music, drama, games, stories and discussions.

with family members, friends and community. Young people replicate what they observe around them. Therefore, if they experience loving and respectful ways of being on this planet, peace will grow through the generations. The Jane Addams Peace Camp provides opportunities for young people to develop skills in peace making, creative problem solving, ecology and most of all making friends and having fun.

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Wilma Gold contributed to this article. Gaby Litsky has been a WILPF member for 22 years and an early childhood educator for 30. She edited the WILPF Peace Camp Manual with Marilyn Shelton of WILPF's Fresno Branch which has a lot of information about how to create a camp. Anyone interested in information can contact her at glitsky@aol.com or (831) 462 9023.

Honoring Great Books

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The 2009 winners of the Jane Addams Children's Book Awards were announced this spring. *Planting the Trees of Kenya: The Story of Wangari Maathai*, written and illustrated by Claire A. Nivola (Frances Foster Books/Farrar, Straus and Giroux, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group) was the winner in the Books for Younger Children Category. This book profiles the first woman from Africa to win the Nobel Peace Prize (2004). Environmentalist and activist Wangari Maathai founded



Kenya's Green Belt Movement in direct response to the devastated natural resources and poverty caused by the deforestation of her homeland for commercial purposes. In a picture book that glows with orange and green landscapes dotted with bright blue, red, purple and

yellow details, Nivola presents Maathai as a steady leader who saw community building as a way to resolve problems. She drew first on her own courage, then on the courage of many women, to sow seeds, nurture seedlings and plant trees. Together, they built a movement that continues to inspire people to take charge of their lives, their land and their future.

The Surrender Tree: Poems of Cuba's Struggle for Freedom by Margarita Engle (published by Henry Holt Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group) is the winner in the Books for Older Children Category. This book poignantly explores resistance to slavery and occupation in Cuba in the late 1800's. Allied with the rebels fighting for independence,

Rosa, born a slave and a healer, responds to bloodshed by healing compatriots and enemies alike. Moving from cave to cave in the mountains, Rosa, her husband Jose and Silvia, a child they heal and nurture, commit to peace with each herb they gather, each wound they dress, each spirit they soothe. Free verse poems in four distinct voices intertwine Cuban history, Engle's own family story, and historical fiction to create a searing, evocative portrait of healers who worked for peace so young people could "... have their chance/to dream/of new ways/to feel free..." ♦



Announcing the Ann Chalmers Pendell Planned Giving Fund

In October 2009, after 10 years on the Jane Addams Peace Association Board (including six as president), Ann Pendell will be ending her term of office. During her years as JAPA president, Ann attended six International WILPF meetings, 12 U.S. WILPF Board meetings, and facilitated 12 JAPA Board meetings. She actively participated on the International Standing Finance Committee and on the Finance and Development Committees of the U.S. Section board. Ann has been an important voice locally, nationally and internationally for WILPF.

In her honor the JAPA Board has opened the Ann Chalmers Pendell Planned Giving Fund. JAPA can help you plan a tax-deductible bequest or other deferred gift to further WILPF's work for a peaceful world. Confidential assistance with your planned giving is available from Linda Belle at japa@igc.org or 212-682-8830. For more information on planned giving to WILPF visit www.janeaddamspeace.org.

This Peace Education section is funded by the Jane Addams Peace Association.

Cultural Competency and White Privilege: A report from the White Privilege Conference

By Helen Helfer

For the past decade, the annual White Privilege Conference (WPC) has served as an opportunity to examine and explore difficult issues of white privilege and related oppressions. As stated in their materials, “WPC provides a forum for critical discussions about diversity, multicultural education and leadership, social justice, race/racism, sexual orientation, gender relations, religion and other systems of privilege or oppression, while also providing practical tips and strategies for combating inequality.” In April, more than 900 very diverse participants came from across the country to Memphis to attend the 10th annual conference.

I was able to take nine extraordinary students, thanks to the financial support of the Santa Fe Community College Student Government Association. They were a very diverse racial, ethnic, and gender group: a white heterosexual man, three Hispanic/Mexicano men, an African American man, an African woman from Camaroon, two Hispanic women, and one white lesbian. All came from very different backgrounds but shared a thirst to expand their understanding of institutional oppressions and how best to address them. Each was actively engaged in the conference as well as seeing the city of Memphis, with all its fascinating history and racial flaws.

With over 80 different workshops at the conference, it was difficult to decide which ones to attend. Here are a few of the broad range of topics included:

- Creating Social Justice in Organizations: Sharing Best Practices and Lessons Learned
- Green Privilege: Race, Class, and the Climate Crisis
- Teachers are Either Liberators or Oppressors: Which are You?
- The Role of Youth in Ending Racism
- Straightlaced: How Gender has Got Us All Tied Up
- Cultural Competency: A Band-aid That Protects White Supremacy or a Tool for Social Change?
- Complicating White Privilege: White Supremacy as a Function of Economic Exploitation

There were brilliant speakers, including Tim Wise, whose latest compelling book is *Racism and White Denial in the Age of Obama*, and Paul Kivel, author of two pow-



The author, second from left, in Memphis with the nine Santa Fe Community College students.

erful books, *Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Racial Justice*, and *You Call This a Democracy? Who Benefits, Who Pays, and Who Really Decides*. Diverse films were also shown every night including *Traces of the Trade: A Story of the Deep North*, the story of the largest slave trading family in America – from Rhode Island.

All the students visited the National Civil Rights Museum, (which I still call the Lorraine Motel) where Dr. Martin Luther King was assassinated 41 years ago the weekend we were there. I was arrested that 1968 weekend, in Philadelphia with a small, peaceful demonstration supporting Dr. King’s Poor People’s March and the legislation they put forth to Congress to address the great chasm between rich and poor in our country.

What gives me great hope about the nine students I traveled with is what they’ve done since the conference. They were some of the key planners in a powerful youth-sponsored Leadership Conference back at Santa Fe Community College, with college students from all over New Mexico. Seven of the WPC students co-facilitated workshops on “White Privilege,” “The Role of Youth in Ending Racism,” and “Living in Harmony.”

The seeds were planted in Memphis, but they’re sprouting all over our state, and I couldn’t be more proud or hopeful.

Helen Helfer is a Jane Addams Peace Association board member and was an active member of WILPF’s Cape Cod Branch from 2000–2005, co chairing their Anti Racism Task Force. Currently she is a part time Sociology professor at the Santa Fe Community College in New Mexico. In 2010 WPC will be in LaCrosse, Wisconsin, and in 2011 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Helfer can be reached at: hhhelfer@gmail.com.

► HUMAN RIGHTS *continued from page 3*

in the context of full economic, social and cultural rights. These rights are supported by state responsibilities to ensure accessible and appropriate health care and nutrition throughout pregnancy and lactation, and equal access to healthcare even without regard to pregnancy (art. 12.1 and 12.2).

In considering economic rights, CEDAW is quite specific. For example, it obligates states to introduce maternity leave with pay or with comparable social benefits and without the loss of former employment (art. 11.2.b). It also stakes a claim for comparable worth—i.e., equal remuneration for work of equal social value—recognizing that the unremunerated domestic activities of women contribute to development in every country and that once a job category becomes feminized wages for that field typically fall.

WILPF has worked for CEDAW ratification since its inception. In 1974, WILPF formally instructed its sections in various countries to engage their governments in crafting an international human rights convention which would “bring together the various aspects of women’s rights to form international law,” because our organization understood that “only through the intensive participation of women can best possible development in each country. . . and world peace be achieved.”

The CEDAW convention, in integrating the provisions of key international human rights instruments, recognizes that freedom of thought and expression can be repressed not just by police or military action but by social isolation and lack of access to the basic goods necessary to sustain

human life. We therefore assert our understanding of and support for CEDAW as the most comprehensive and integrated codification of the full range of women’s human rights, including the rights to bodily integrity, to

sexual autonomy, to form families of one’s own choosing without coercion, and to an environment clean enough to support healthy lives, not just for ourselves but for all the generations to which we might give birth. The right to define one’s own identity and aspirations lies at the very heart of the quest for freedom, and for world peace.

This fall, we urge all of our members to engage their senators on the issue of CEDAW ratification. We’ll be circulating our own statement on ratification through e-mail and Facebook and offering our supporters opportunities to take action online. We’ll also be working with WILPF sections around the world to build international pressure for U.S. ratification. We hope that each of you will carry this work into your local communities, social and spiritual networks, and workplaces to re-awaken broad public awareness and citizen advocacy in support of ratification now. ❖



Former WILPF Presidents Mary Zepernick and Betty Burkes ham it up with the Prez at Cape Cod's Inaugural Ball Fundraiser.

Interns Make a Difference

Kristina Sandfoss completed an Administrative Internship at the WILPF National Office in Boston during the spring. While working in the Boston office, she helped to create and coordinate materials for several events, including the U.N. Practicum in Advocacy and the opening reception for the Boston office. She also provided many hours of administrative support. Kristina is a Master’s student in the Women’s Health Program at Suffolk University.

Jessica Bombasaro-Brady was introduced to activism at age 11 when she joined a demonstration protesting the invasion of Afghanistan. Since then, she has been involved in many anti-war demonstrations and campaigns, as well as becoming an activist in the LGBT-rights movement.

Jessica joined the Boston WILPF Branch in the summer of 2007 after writing about WILPF’s extensive involvement in abolishing poison gas after World War I for a high school history paper. In the last issue of *Peace & Freedom*, Jessica wrote an article on LGBT rights and Jane Addams.

This summer Jessica served as the Y-WILPF intern at the Boston office, where she worked on organizing and developing a Boston Y-WILPF group. In addition, she performed other necessary tasks, such as updating the Y-WILPF blog, developing a Y-WILPF webpage, revising the Y-WILPF handbook, and coordinating with other Core Committee members.

Jessica returns to Connecticut College this fall, where she will be a sophomore History major. She plans to continue her WILPF activism as a “seasonally” at-large member. ❖



Jessica Bombasaro-Brady

**We're 94 . . . going on 100!
And, there's never
been a
better
time to
give to
WILPF.**



HELP US:

Shift our corporatized and militarized death economy to one that supports all life on Earth

Participate and advocate at the UN in 2010

- For full voice and rights for women at the 15 year review of the Beijing Platform of Action; and
- For a Nuclear Free Future at the review of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

Convince Congress to end the occupation of Afghanistan

Combat apartheid wherever it exists; particularly to bring peace and justice to all peoples of Israel and Palestine.

Yes, I want to see WILPF continue working for peace!
Join or Pledge online at www.wilpf.org or use this form.

Enclosed is my gift of

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other

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Yes, I would like my gift of \$50 or more to be tax deductible. If you are sending a check, please make it out to Jane Addams Peace Association, our affiliated 501c(3).

I prefer that my gift remain anonymous and that my name not be included in any public list of donors.

Use the envelope enclosed in this issue to return this form and mail to:

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom,
U.S. Section
Second Floor
565 Boylston Street
Boston, MA 02116

Y-WILPF NETWORK STRUCTURE MOVES FORWARD

The Young Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (Y-WILPF) met in St. Louis, Missouri this past spring to develop a structure and foundation for the development of the Y-WILPF network. We have agreed on the following points:

- Y-WILPF U.S. will constitute a separate organizing space for young members of the WILPF U.S. Section.
- All members of Y-WILPF U.S. will be dues-paying members of the WILPF U.S. Section.
- Y-WILPF U.S. branches will be subject to the same guidelines as other U.S. WILPF branches.

Nationally, we have a core committee. The core committee will hold monthly conference calls. Each member of the core committee agrees to mutual accountability, recruiting at least two, new dues-paying WILPF members annually.

In addition to at-large members the core committee includes four defined positions: Intern, Grassroots Coordinator, International Y-WILPF Coordinator, and Communications Coordinator

Y-WILPF will translate WILPF's foundational documents into everyday language, and use them as a visible unifying point.

Y-WILPF has also developed several modes of communication, including a blog, email address, and website.

Our blog can be read at ywilpf.blogspot.com where you will find opinions on political and social events from Y-WILPFers, updates from the Y-WILPF intern, organizing strategies, and other Y-WILPF-related information.

Y-WILPF's email address is Gertrude@wilpf.org. Use it for all inquiries and information regarding Y-WILPF. Messages sent to this address will be answered by the current Y-WILPF intern or a member of the core committee.

Y-WILPF is in the process of designing a webpage on the WILPF website.

We encourage all WILPF members to join Y-WILPF if they are under the age of 35.

Please select "Y-WILPF" from the drop-down options on the DIA web-



Taking an ice cream break at a Y-WILPF meeting.

site if you're under 35 years of age. You may select more than one option. Also, encourage family and friends who are under the age of 35 to join Y-WILPF. They can join WILPF by clicking "Join WILPF" at the WILPF webpage www.wilpf.org, filling out the required information, and choosing "Y-WILPF" from the drop-down options.

If you have any questions, please email the Y-WILPF intern at Gertrude@wilpf.org. ♦



The Curse of the Prophetess

By Ursula K. Le Guin

Hear my curse on the nation of Israel and the nation
of Palestine.

May the generals of your armies
be little, heavy-burdened donkeys,
and your leaders be patient, old sheep.
May you listen discriminately to your God,
testing the validity of the transmissions,
and heeding not His calls to vengeance.
May your women go bareheaded in His presence
and dance in His temples,
may their wombs be fruitful in girl children.
May your young men take no joy in combat
and your old men be fearful for them, saying,
"Is it right that my son give his life for me?
Am I a better man than he is?
Nay, let him live to be a shepherd
or garage mechanic or professor of ancient languages."

Let the child set down the stone in his hand
and be allowed to learn to make bricks for the
building of houses.

Let the mouths that spit forth missiles be stopped with earth.
Let those who give their lives to destroy other lives
be called not martyrs but murderers, the disgrace of
their people.

Let the day come, let it come now,
when the name warrior will be a name of folly
and the word victory mean a vain thing.

Let the day come, let it come now,
when the wine of intolerant belief is poured out on the sand
so that all may drink from the well they share with
their neighbor.

The wine of belief is strong,
driving mad those who drink it:
the wine of hatred is like wormwood:
they who drink it cannot cease drinking.
May the grapes of those vineyards rot on the vines,
may the casks of the vintners burst asunder,
may the vintners be ashamed of their folly.
Then may your peoples go to the well in the market place
and draw water together, and out into the desert
seeking the wellsprings, conversing together,
forgetful of old wrongs, remembering kinship.

Let them speak long together of justice
and kneel down then to drink
from the wells and springs that are life in that desert,
praising the giver of the holy waters.
And may this curse be upon you
and your sons and your daughters
to the ninth generation. ❖



Author Le Guin has been
a WILPF member since
1982. Photo: Marian Wood Kolisch



Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

565 Boylston Street, Second Floor

Boston, MA 02116

Time Value – Do Not Delay



Gaza woman celebrating International Women's Day at the Malwasi Agricultural Region, Rafah.

Photo: Felice Gilman

To continue receiving Peace and Freedom, keep your membership current. If you haven't renewed since 2007, this is your last issue.

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See page 4

We're 94 . . . going on 100!

Excitement is building toward WILPF's Centennial, in April 2015. Your gift today continues WILPF's legacy of struggle to overcome the root causes of armed conflict the world over. WILPF members are active in their local communities, in Washington D.C., and at the United Nations, supporting policy that advances universal disarmament and human rights, confronts militarism and corporate greed, and protects the earth. WILPF activists need the support of a strong national network and thriving international organization, and your gift to WILPF's U.S. Section is the foundation of both.



WILPF's on-going actions are shared through *Peace & Freedom*, monthly e-news, and periodic action alerts. If you haven't already, join us online at www.wilpf.org. Then, use the envelope inserted in this issue to give generously in support of the oldest continually active women's peace organization on Earth. Your gift in any amount will help WILPF continue into its second century.