

We're All Community Organizers

Welcome to 20 days of peace & justice

By Gail Koehler

The soaring quotation of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s that sets the stage for 20 Days of Peace and Justice—"Let us realize that the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice"—came near the end of his impassioned call in 1967 for his brothers and sisters in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference to continue their struggle because "the plant of freedom has grown only a bud and not yet a flower."

In this election year when the clarion call of both political parties is "change," we are reminded that Dr. King didn't think the moral universe bent by itself. Instead, he emphasized all social change rests on "the solid foundation of adult education and community organization."

Kentucky author, Wendell Berry, recently noted that we have a multitude of "organizations devoted to protecting or saving things of value that are endangered: peace, kindness, freedom, childhood, health, wilderness areas, rivers, species of plants and animals, cultures, languages, farmlands, family farms, farm families, families, the atmosphere, scenic roads, fine old buildings, historic places, holy places, quietness..." Yet these concerns don't "have a significant political presence."

For 25 years, The Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice has worked to create a political presence for these concerns essential to humanity and the web of life on this fragile planet. The Council's goals have been to speak out for peace even against the tide of popular opinion; to educate and advocate for local, regional, and national progressive ideas; to voice concern for the voiceless.

In celebration of its quarter century of social justice work, the Council's 20 Days for Peace and Justice involves over 35 organizations in Central Kentucky and beyond. The celebrations, which run through October 24, bring together religious and secular organizations, groups both long-established and new, Kentuckians both young and old. Through art, music, film, presentations and discussions, 20 Days for Peace and Justice events will inform, entertain, and serve as catalysts for social change to help bend the moral universe a little closer toward justice. ■

For Updated Info: twentydaysforpeaceandjustice.org.

October 4, Saturday 9am-3pm: Rain Garden Workshop. Community Action Neighborhood Center, 1169 Winburn Drive, Lexington. Details: Brittany Zwicker, Bluegrass Raingarden Project 502.836.1985.

October 4, Saturday 7pm-9:30pm: Kick-off Concert UK's Student Center Patio (in case of rain, UK small ballroom).

October 5, Sunday 2:30pm-5:30pm: FrancisFest: Making Peace, Mending Seams. ArtsPlace, 161 N. Mill St, Lexington. An active, peace education event for all ages.

October 6, Monday 7pm: film screening: Made in L.A. Three Latina immigrants working in Los Angeles garment sweatshops attempt to win basic labor protections. Discussion led by Cristina Alcalde, Assistant Professor in Gender and Women's Studies. Gaines Center, Bingham Davis House, University of Kentucky, 218 E. Maxwell Street.

October 8, Wednesday: Bluegrass Community and Technical College's Peace Teach-in: Empowering Students to Contribute to World Peace and Justice. AT Building, BCTC, 470 Cooper Drive, Lexington.

October 10, Friday 6:30pm: Affrilachian Poets Reading Writing Peace and Justice featuring Nikky Finney, Frank X Walker, Bianca Spriggs, Mitchell L. H. Douglas, Jude McPherson, Ricardo Nazario Colon, and Marta Miranda (emcee). Carnegie Center, 251 W. 2nd, Lexington. Followed by reception.

October 11, Saturday 10am-3pm: Cardinal Crossing Community Center & Fall Festival, Cardinal Crossings Apartment Homes, 1346 Village Dr., Lexington.

October 11, Saturday 9:30am-2:30pm: Mountaintop Removal Teach-in. Newman Center, 320 Rose Lane, Lexington.

October 11, Saturday: 7pm: The Boys from Baghdad High. Film also shown October 12, Sunday, at 2pm and 4:30pm. A 90-minute documentary brought to you by One World Films. Followed by reception sponsored by

the Islamic Society of Central Kentucky. Downtown Lexington Library Theater, 140 East Main St.

October 12, Sunday 2pm: Classical Guitar Concert by guitarist Michael Fogler. Maxwell Street Presbyterian, 180 E. Maxwell, Lexington. Benefit for Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice.

October 13, Monday—Indigenous Peoples Day: 12 noon: Columbus Day from a Native Perspective. 12 noon Golden Corral Restaurant 185 E New Circle Rd, Lexington.

October 13, Monday 6pm-8pm: Human Rights Human Differences: We All Belong. Downtown Lexington Library Theater, 140 East Main Street, LFUCG Human Rights Commission.

October 14, Tuesday 7pm: Latin America Eyewitness Account Newman Center, 320 Rose Lane, Lexington. Reports and perspectives on recent trips to Colombia, Central America and Mexico.

October 15, Wednesday 7pm-8:30pm: Fair Trade: Peace and Justice in Your Cup and Candy Bar. Oct. 22: Buddhism and Creating Peace. evening adult education sessions at Unitarian Universalist Church, 3564 Clays Mill Rd.

October 16, Thursday World Food Day: from 1pm-4pm: Food collection and distribution event, to benefit God's Pantry. Al's Bar parking lot, 6th and Lime.

October 16 through 18: Closing the Food Gap Conference. UK Extension Office, 1140 Red Mile Place, Lexington. Details: www.sustain-lex.org

October 17 through 19 :Witness for Peace, Mexican sociologist Marco Narvarete speaks on Forces Driving Immigration at several venues. Details: Kerby Neill 859.293.2265.

October 18, Saturday: 9am-5pm: Field trip to Mountaintop Removal Sites: departure: Lexington, will stop for lunch.

October 18, Saturday 3pm: film screening: U People at Pride Center, 389 Waller Avenue, Suite 100. Details Mary Crone 859.266.5904

October 18, Saturday: Sophia Danielle Arnold Empowerment Scholarship Fund Benefit memorializing domestic violence victims. Event begins at 6pm with appetizers; a black tie event at Mia's Restaurant, 120 S Upper St, Lexington; Cost of the dinner: \$25 per person

October 19, Sunday: 2pm- 4:45pm: Israeli-Palestinian Discussion. Downtown Lexington Library Theater, 140 East Main Street. With Mark Isaacs and Bashar Masri, from Louisville's Two State Solution. Reception to follow.

October 19, Sunday 7pm-9pm: What Does Your Faith Call You to Do for the Environment? Fellowship Hall, Lexington Theological Seminary, Lexington: Multi-faith discussion.

October 20, Monday 1pm-5pm: Veterans' Resources. Downtown Lexington Library, 140 East Main Street. Details: Howard Myers 859.268.9225; Billie Mallory 859.285.5211.

October 20, Monday 7pm-9pm: The Promise of World Peace. Tates Creek Library conference room.

October 21, Tuesday 6:30pm film screening and discussion with film's producer: Soul Searching. Room 112 of the Asher Science Center, Georgetown College campus, 400 East College Street a documentary of the life of author, Trappist monk and social critic Thomas Merton.

October 23, Thursday 8am-5:30pm: Esperanza: Conference for Uniting, Dreaming, and Making it Happen. Georgetown College

October 23, Thursday 7pm: Benefit concert for CKCPJ. Kentucky Theater 214 E Main St. George Ella and Steve Lyons (folk), Alma Gitana (Flamenco fusion), Reel World String Band. Tickets: \$20; \$15 with student ID.

October 24 and 25, 11am-6pm, Fall Celebration at Woodland Triangle Shops.



Writing

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PEACE JUSTICE

By Gail Koehler

Because art has the power to engage us in truth and move us to empathy and compassion, the evening event "Writing Peace and Justice: A Reading by the Affrilachian Poets" on October 10th is an essential part of the 20 Days celebrations. Featured poets are Nikky Finney, Frank X Walker, Ricardo Nazario Colon, Mitchell L.H. Douglas, Jude McPherson, Bianca Spriggs. Poet Marta Miranda serves as emcee.

The term "Affrilachian" was famously coined by Frank X Walker in 1991 when he learned that according to official reference texts the word Appalachian only referred to the white residents of the region. Fifteen years later, writes Mitchell L.H. Davis, matters had come "full circle," and "Walker has found vindication in black and white" as "Affrilachian is now an entry in the Oxford American Dictionary, second edition. The word is also referenced in The Encyclopedia of Appalachia, a sign that Walker's gift to the English language is serving its intended purpose."

To call someone an "Affrilachian" instead of an "Appalachian" poet, says Paul C. Taylor "is a political step, and that first political step informs everything that happens after it, so that all of us write very personal things, all of us write about family, about eating, about sex, about love, about dying, and none of that is ever very far away from the political circumstances under which all of those human experiences take place."

Like justice itself which requires growth and change to remain vibrant, the Poets continue to welcome new generations of writers committed to writing the truths of their lives and transforming their worlds.



For Bianca Spriggs, one of the featured poets, "The first generation Affrilachian Poets have been very generous with their time, attention, resources...the second and subsequent generations of members are being groomed to maintain the caliber of work and work ethic of our mentors.

Like any parent-type, they've done a lot of legwork to ensure we have access to opportunities that they had to create for themselves."

She says the Poets "really demystified what the Poet is 'supposed' to be. Poets can laugh in their writing. They can weep. They can accomplish a myriad of emotions on the page and at the microphone and I've learned some very important lessons on everything from how to conduct oneself whether I'm leading a workshop or giving a reading."



Nikky Finney



Mitchell L.H. Douglas

About the Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice (CKCPJ)

The CKCPJ is a coalition of peacemaking groups and individuals, formed in 1983.

It is a unique association of groups which addresses the whole fabric of peace and justice issues. Some groups are associated with religious denominations—others are secular. Some concentrate on peace with the individual, family, and community—others emphasize issues of international peace. But all of its member individuals and groups believe that peace and justice can best be advanced by working together.

Primary Objectives

- To provide members and the community with resources and information about peace and justice issues.
- To mobilize, coordinate, and support activities and actions focused on peace and justice issues.
- To facilitate and encourage communication and interchange of ideas among our members and within the community.

Council Programs

DIRECT ACTION — rallies, workshops, seminars, nonviolence and conflict resolution trainings, our Annual Dinner & Resource Dinner - all sorts of events to educate and raise awareness about peace and justice issues.

LEGISLATIVE MOBILIZATION — Through an email alert list, website, and presence in Frankfort, CKCPJ mobilizes a voice for a progressive peace and justice point of view both here in Kentucky and in Washington.

SUPPORT FOR LOCAL PEACE & JUSTICE GROUPS AND EFFORTS — The Council helps with funding and publicity for events organized by member organizations or any other local group whose event is consistent with council principles. The Council participates in building coalitions by co-sponsoring many events and efforts with other kindred spirit organizations in the Central Kentucky area.

PUBLICATION OF NEWSLETTER — Ten times a year, Peaceways reaches thousands of local citizens with a calendar of events and articles and views on peace and justice issues that are not commonly found elsewhere. ■

Mitchell L.H. Douglas says: "The Affrilachian Poets lead by example. When you see your fellow poets' work appear in important literary journals and anthologies, it makes you want to achieve more as a writer. I have been blessed to be involved in this group as a cofounder and an active member for the past 17 years. I know that my success as an artist is a direct result of having been mentored by great poets like Frank X Walker, Kelly Norman Ellis, and Nikky Finney. These are my friends and teachers. Passing on a love and honor of the word is their way. When you are raised with that kind of reverence for poetry, you can't help but be inspired." ■

The reading is free and all are welcome. It takes place Friday, October 10th at 6:30pm at The Carnegie Center, 251 West Second St. Reception by Stella's Deli follows. The event is sponsored by The Carnegie Center, Dupree Financial Group, Jim Gray, Roberts & Kay, Inc., and University of Kentucky Appalachian Studies Program.