

Broome Co. Peace Action
Minutes of the meeting on Tue., April 14, 2009
Unitarian Universalist Congregation , Binghamton NY

Present: Board Members: Tarik Abdelazim, Herb Bix, Len Bjorkman, Ann Clune, Jim Clune, Pat Creighton, Michelle Dingler, William Donohue, Dave Duncan, Lorenz Firsching, Jack Gilroy, George Haeseler, Alan Jones, Heda Libby, Stan Master, Susan McAnanama, Larry Roberts, Doris Reed

President Tarik Abdelazim called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

The **agenda** was approved with several additions.

The **minutes** of the March 3 meeting were approved.

Pat distributed the **treasurer's report**; it was accepted as presented. The balances are: BCPA – \$3,468.87; BCNWRC – \$803.87; STPMF -- \$8,371.24; BC War Tax Resistance -- \$200.00.

Since there have been some problems with the Quicken program, it was **decided by consensus** to continue just with Excel.

Letter to the Editor Committee

Sue reported that there have not been many letters by others; appreciation was expressed for George's feature column and Jack's letter.

It was also noted that we should all feel free to add along with our names that we are members of BCPA.

Membership Committee

Sue reported that PANYS has sent us an invoice, based upon 132 members in '08 @ \$5, for a total of \$660 for 2009. Since our actual membership on 1/1/09 was 125, it was MSP to pay \$625 to PANYS.

George reported that currently of the 125 members, 71 are yet to renew for 2009; of the 125 we have e-mail addresses for 88. The Update mailing list is 856, of which we have 322 e-mail addresses.

UPDATE committee

Alan reported that the next issue will be in early June, and people should get articles to him by late May. One matter to be stressed in this issue is our commitment to the State and National PA organizations.

STPMF Committee

Jim reported that Judy and George Homanich each received \$300 toward their nonviolent peace witness in Nevada, relating to the U.S. use of drones that kill people in Pakistan and nuclear weapons.

\$140 was given two activists to attend a conference in Albany.

Reports on these events should go into the next Update.

The committee is working on a request from the BU students' Social Justice Collective to attend the IMF meeting; the nature of the peaceful protest is being worked out, along with the amount of money requested.

Further thoughts about the memorial have been postponed due to the April 3 massacre at the American Civic Association.

Broome County War Tax Resistance Fund Committee (BCWTRF)

George reported that he would be meeting later in the evening with the Susquehanna Sierra Club, and later with the local Clergy for Peace group.

Working Committee on Israel/Palestine

Jim reported that the speaker this evening, as previously announced via email, would be Neal Wecker, who took part last Oct. in the Olive Harvest in Palestine.

The committee is continuing to try to change the community public dialogue, especially in light of Israel's use of white phosphorus and the international campaign for Boycotts, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS).

Ann Wright's being a special speaker on May 5 about Gaza is part of this educational effort.

The committee is continuing to work with Hinchey's office.

The recent Izzy Award, given to Amy Goodman and Glen Greenwald on March 31 in Ithaca, fits in with the effort to increase pressure on Obama, in the spirit of what FDR meant when he asked supporters "Make me do it." (For info on the award, go to www.ithaca.edu/rhp/independentmedia/izzy.)

Nominating Committee report

Sue reported that they have a complete slate to be presented at the annual meeting on May 14. Officers to be nominated are: Tarik continuing as president, Ann continuing as vice-president, Alan as secretary, and Pat continuing as treasurer. New board members to be nominated are: George Damesevitz, Jane DeHawkhurst, and Joyce Donohue

Health Care for America

The request to join this effort sponsored by Citizen Action will be discussed at the June meeting. Tarik will send the statement to the board. For information on "Health Care for America Now" go to <http://healthcareforamericanow.org>.

Veterans for Peace

Sue reported on behalf of George M. that on May 9 at the Courthouse there will be a rally to promote the original anti-war meaning of Mother's Day, focusing on the original proclamation by Julia Ward Howe. VFP requests \$100 toward the expenses. This is part of the campaign to "take back the holidays."

MSP to contribute \$100.

Film about Jimmy Massey

Jack reported that Joe Stillman has completed the film, and reminded us that Jimmy visited here a couple of years ago and that we contributed to the cost of the 67-minute documentary.

They are working on getting a showing to high school and college students, with Jimmy himself coming. But Joe is hoping that HBO will show it; if so, then we may not be able to have our showings. If they do, it will not only help with his finances, but also to get the word out.

WHINSEC/SOA

Jack reported that the sponsor of the bill in the House, Rep. McGovern, thinks that it is not advisable to try to pass the bill this year, but rather to concentrate on having all the names of the graduates made public. Carl Levin and John McCain of the House Foreign Relations Com. are opposed to that. So pressure needs to be put on them and Reps are encouraged to support that effort.

May 5 meeting with Ann Wright

It is all arranged for her to speak in the UU sanctuary on Tue., May 5 at 7 p.m., focusing on Gaza. Her book, "Eyewitness in Gaza" will be available, with a local bookstore handling the sale. Her honorarium will be \$250 (approved at our March meeting.)

MSP to pay \$40± for a special post-card mailing to our membership.

(NOTE: there's an interview at <http://mosquito-blog.blogspot.com/2009/02/interview-with-colonel-ann-wright.html>)

Annual meeting on May 2

The speaker will be Reinhard Bernbeck, Anthropology professor at BU; his topic is “Countering Structural Violence.” He will speak out his experiences in Afghanistan, the Middle East, etc.

June Board Meeting

MSP to ask BU Prof. Jim Petras to focus on the Obama Administration and Latin America.

Announcements

George is inviting everyone to a going-away party for Reinhard Bernbeck and Susan Pollack on Sun. April 26 at 2 p.m. They will be going to Germany. Let George know if you plan to attend!

Herb Bix will have an article on Gaza in a forth-coming issue of “Z Magazine.”

Reflections on the April 3 massacre at the American Civic Association

Various thoughts and concerns were expressed, e.g., concerns for the victim’s families, the shooter’s family, members of the ACA staff, and gun control. It was agreed that we want to have a substantive discussion perhaps at the July meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

The speaker was Neal Wecker from Ithaca, known by many of us for his work with the Puppetistas at the SOA rallies. He spoke and showed a power point presentation about the oppressive conditions imposed upon the Palestinians by the Israeli military and settlers, especially in relation to the olive harvest, and how his group brought some very welcome dramatic humor to the Palestinians, who enthusiastically welcomed them and joined in their activities. They also took part in a Friday demo against the “security barrier/apartheid wall” at the Palestinian village of B’ilin; part of their message was responding to violence through music, with one of their number who speaks Hebrew singing to soldiers and settlers.

Respectfully submitted,
Len Bjorkman, Secretary