

# QuakerAction

Formerly the Quaker Service Bulletin

**Project Voice helps U.S. immigrants claim their rights and dignity**

**Kurarama Campaign eases the burden of African HIV/AIDS orphans**

**Classes in two Michigan women's prisons break cycles of abuse**

**Palestinian youth provide new hope in the West Bank**



**American Friends  
Service Committee**

[www.afsc.org](http://www.afsc.org)



## What's new on afsc.org

### Best of the web

Your guide to what's on the web about AFSC and what's new and exciting on AFSC's website.

[www.afsc.org/best](http://www.afsc.org/best)



McDowell/Trottochaud

### Building hope in Iraq

We've retooled our Iraq information page, featuring dispatches from our staff in Baghdad, new fact sheets, and a journal

about the latest developments.

[www.afsc.org/iraq/](http://www.afsc.org/iraq/)

### Voter information

It should come as no surprise that 2004 is an election year. We've found some of the best voter information guides and where you can register to vote online.

[www.afsc.org/vote/](http://www.afsc.org/vote/)



### Cancel Africa's debt

Join the Life Over Debt Campaign, online. Find out why Africa's debt

needs to be canceled and what you can do in your community.

[www.afsc.org/africa-debt/](http://www.afsc.org/africa-debt/)

**And don't forget to sign up for monthly e-mail updates at [www.afsc.org/](http://www.afsc.org/)**

### On the cover:

Two Iraqi sisters in the rural village of Bodija, where AFSC funded the rehabilitation of a water treatment plant. More recently, AFSC sent hygiene kits and other relief supplies to Iraq. (See story on page nine.) **Cover photo by Joanne Comerford**

# QuakerAction

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[www.afsc.org](http://www.afsc.org)

### Who we are

The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) is a Quaker organization that includes people of various faiths who are committed to social justice, peace, and humanitarian service. Its work is based on the belief in the worth of every person and faith in the power of love to overcome violence and injustice.

**Editor:** Willie Colón Reyes

**Consulting Editors:** M'Annette Ruddell, John Treat, Tony Heriza

**Design:** Gerry Henry

**Design Consultant:** David Gerratt/NonprofitDesign.com

**Photography:** Terry Foss

**E-mail address:** [quakeraction@afsc.org](mailto:quakeraction@afsc.org)

### National Office

1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102-1403, Tel: (215) 241-7000

**Southeast Region**  
92 Piedmont Ave., N.E.  
Atlanta, GA 30303

**Great Lakes Region**  
637 S. Dearborn, 3rd Fl.  
Chicago, IL 60605

**Pacific Mountain Region**  
65 Ninth Street  
San Francisco, CA 94103

**Middle Atlantic Region**  
4806 York Road  
Baltimore, MD 21212

**Central Region**  
15 Rutherford Place  
Des Moines, IA 50312

**Pacific Northwest Region**  
814 N.E. 40th Street  
Seattle, WA 98105

**New England Region**  
2161 Mass. Ave.  
Cambridge, MA 02140

**NY Metropolitan Region**  
15 Rutherford Place  
New York, NY 10003

**Pacific Southwest Region**  
980 N. Fair Oaks Avenue  
Pasadena, CA 91103

# Welcome to our evolution

## *Quaker Service Bulletin comes of age... again*

**W**HEN GERRY HENRY, our graphic designer, suggested illustrating this page with the front covers of past AFSC newsletters, I knew I'd found the hook to introduce *Quaker Action*, formerly *Quaker Service Bulletin*. So, back to the beginning we went.

In 1919, AFSC published *Service*, the first newsletter for the organization's supporters. Filled with accounts of AFSC's relief efforts in post-war Europe, *Service* also reflected the evolution of a new organization. One letter to the editor read, "I am very much pleased to find that an effort is being made to make the Service Committee permanent." Eighty-five years later, so are we.

Changes in this publication's format and frequency were accompanied by changes in what was reported and how. Detailed notes about the comings and goings of AFSC staff and volunteers gave way to more accounts of the organization's rapidly expanding list of programs. In addition, technical reports morphed into evocative stories that conveyed the passion behind the work.

Our look back also revealed that the "radical" redesign you now hold contains echoes of the past. For example, in the mid-1950s, AFSC published *Bulletin*, a magazine-style publication that used pages of photos to tell the AFSC story. And our "new" section with reviews of books and other media that might interest you (see page thirteen) was done at least once before—in 1929.

Through all the changes, this publication's mission has never wavered: To keep you informed about and engaged with AFSC's ongoing work for peace, justice, and human dignity. If you've been inspired to take action on a particular issue, then we've done our job especially well.

So what are you getting out of this new format? For one thing, sixteen pages means there's more room to tell you about AFSC's programs. *Quaker Action* is also less awkward to handle, easy on the eye, and contains an expanded set of regular features that you can quickly flip to every time.

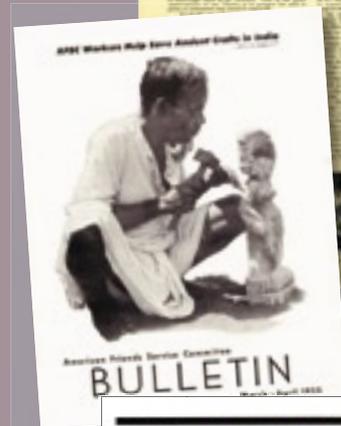
Our new name, too, more closely reflects the spirit of AFSC's approach to the many issues we address.

*Quaker Action's* consulting editors, designers, and I are excited about the creative possibilities this new format allows for presenting AFSC's rich tapestry of work.

I welcome your comments and suggestions. Please write to me via e-mail at [QuakerAction@afsc.org](mailto:QuakerAction@afsc.org), or by regular mail at 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102.

Peace.

Willie Colón Reyes  
Editor, *Quaker Action*





Photos on these pages — Images from recent events and rallies for immigrants' rights.

# Sounding the call

**Project Voice** helps U.S. immigrants claim their rights and dignity

**P**edro Sosa understands the importance of immigrant solidarity. A community organizer, Pedro helped day laborers who felt powerless to counter the abuses of their employers—until they began organizing alongside other day laborers. Strength, it was clear, came in numbers and from knowing one's rights.

The collective leverage that Pedro and other immigrants have achieved is now getting a boost from AFSC's Project Voice, which is helping to build the nationwide immigrants' rights movement.

Christian Ramírez, director of AFSC's U.S.-Mexico Border Program in San Diego, California, articulated the project's central vision during the official launch this past November: "We are supporting immigrants to move from being victims to active promoters of their own human rights." Christian's program has helped organize five immigrant-led human rights committees that defend the rights of immigrants living along the Mexico-U.S. border.

## Bush proposals 'fall short'

Project Voice works with immigrant-led organizations and their allies to influence the national agenda for immigration



policy and immigrants' rights. The initiative combines local and national organizing, education, and outreach on key immigration issues, including broad-based legalization, treatment of immigrants by law enforcement, and the protection of basic immigrants' rights.

Such a comprehensive approach to changes in U.S. immigration policies and practices is missing from the Bush administration's recent guest worker proposal.

Even within the narrow scope of dealing with the eight-to-twelve million undocumented workers in the United

## Pedro's story

**B**orn in Guatemala, Pedro Sosa worked for years with community organizations in his home country and Mexico. When he moved to Los Angeles in 1991, he felt disconnected and he struggled to adjust to life in his adopted home.

He worked for a year in a clothing factory before moving to Portland, Oregon, where he held a variety of low-paying jobs. Then, in 1998, he made the connection he'd been hoping for: A local group hired him to organize day laborers so they could better defend their rights. The laborers were sometimes taken to sites where dangerous work was performed without proper safety equipment. Other times, employers did not pay as agreed at the end of the day and workers had little recourse to complain or collect their money.



Top: Jonathan Blazer. Middle: Maya Anderson. Box: Terry Fross

States, the administration does not offer any true solution. Instead, the president proposes a new guest worker program that provides only temporary legal status.

“The few specific proposals outlined in the president’s announcement fall well short of the evolving demands of global ethics and international law,” says Camilo Perez-Bustillo, director of Project Voice. “Moreover, immigration reform must provide a safe and sure path to permanent legal status, and ultimately citizenship, for all undocumented immigrants in the United States.”

### An infusion of resources

The reforms that Project Voice is working toward are not new issues for AFSC; the organization has promoted the rights of migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and other displaced persons throughout its history. However, Project Voice provides an important infusion of resources into AFSC’s existing work.

AFSC now has nearly fifty staff working on immigrants’ rights issues throughout the United States, making immigration one of the most extensive and well-established programmatic areas



within AFSC. And although Project Voice is relatively new, AFSC’s well-rooted history of immigration work has enabled a number of new regional initiatives to develop.

Nationwide organizing also took off this past fall when Project Voice participated in events surrounding the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride, a historic mobilization of immigrants and their supporters. (See story on page eight.) The Freedom Ride campaign was a microcosm of many of Project Voice’s objectives. It helped foster solidarity among diverse immigrant communities and forged alliances among the labor movement, faith-based organizations, and immigrant groups.

In the words of Danielle Short, an AFSC staff member who welcomed a busload of freedom riders to Denver, “I felt overcome by both the risks that the riders had taken and the reminder that we are part of a movement that has justice on its side.”

**More information about Project Voice and AFSC’s work for immigrants’ rights is available online at [www.afsc.org/immigrants-rights](http://www.afsc.org/immigrants-rights).**

Pedro’s organizing efforts soon expanded to include other immigrant groups, and he turned to AFSC’s Portland office for support. “AFSC has been a trusted partner in solidarity,” he explains.

Together with AFSC, Pedro has trained immigrants as *promotores*, persons who promote human rights by educating and organizing others. Specifically, AFSC has helped the *promotores* by hosting their meetings, purchasing popular education materials, and organizing educational workshops offered by the Border Network for Human Rights.

The *promotores*’ activism is part of the nationwide, immigrant-led movement that Project Voice is fueling. And Pedro is now the Project Voice coordinator for AFSC’s Northwest Region, continuing his efforts to help other immigrants stand up for their rights.



### SNAPSHOT: Newark, New Jersey

AFSC provides training and technical assistance to two “asylee\* associations”—human rights committees with participants from nearly forty countries. The Action Network for Refugees and Asylum-seekers and QuIR: Queer Immigrant Rights, an association of LGBT asylees, meet monthly to share information about jobs, housing, and strategies for living in the United States. Participants are planning an advocacy campaign to bring attention to the hardships caused by the ten-to-twelve year delay for asylees waiting to receive “green cards” (permanent residency).

*\* An asylee is a person already in the United States. Like refugees, asylees are granted legal status based on a claim of persecution or feared persecution in their home countries.*

### SNAPSHOT: Cambridge, Mass.

Project Voice works with immigrant-led human rights committees at the neighborhood and regional level to build alliances, document human rights abuses, foster leadership development, and organize among immigrants. In partnership with local legal, ethnic, and civil rights groups, Project Voice confronted the government’s “Special Registration” program by training community volunteers to conduct human rights monitoring among Arab, Muslim, and South Asian immigrants targeted by this initiative.

### SNAPSHOT: Visalia, California

Project Voice is working with college students and other immigrant youth who are organizing to garner support for the DREAM Act, a bill pending in the U.S. Congress that would allow undocumented students who graduate from a U.S. high school to go to college, qualify for in-state tuition, and, eventually, obtain legal status. The young people are collecting signatures in support of the legislation and speaking at local high schools and to parents’ groups to encourage others to get involved. Project Voice has publicized these efforts on *Radio Grito* (Shout Radio), a Spanish language community radio program.

# Kurarama/To Live

A new campaign to ease the burden of **African HIV/AIDS** orphans

“When I grow up I would want to be either a teacher or a nurse. As a teacher, I would want to teach orphans especially. I could give them hope since I can understand what they’re going through.”

— Amelia, twelve years old, an HIV/AIDS orphan in Mozambique who acts as a mother to her three siblings

Throughout southern Africa, millions of children like Amelia have been orphaned as a result of HIV/AIDS. In Mozambique alone, about 420,000 children have lost one or both parents to HIV/AIDS. The children are either homeless or depend on members of the extended family to survive.

AFSC has launched the Kurarama Campaign to provide material assistance and support to HIV/AIDS orphans in Mozambique’s Manica Province, where AFSC has carried out development programs for many years. The campaign, which takes its name from the Shona word for “to live,” includes a call for hygiene kits that will ease the lives of some orphans. (See “You can help.”)



“My husband died in February 2002 when I was pregnant with our sixth child....

The money I get is really not enough, so I also go out and beg from other people in the community.

I know about AIDS.

It kills.”

Serena (pictured above), widow in her 20s



“It becomes a responsibility for all of us in the developed world to help build an environment that is conducive to the rehabilitation and development of children affected by this dreaded disease,” says Shahina Malik, director of AFSC’s Emergency and Material Assistance Program, which is coordinating the campaign.

The Kurarama Campaign is part of AFSC’s three-year Africa Initiative, which is working in Africa and the United States on urgent issues affecting the continent, such as economic security, peace, and HIV/AIDS relief. Therefore, in addition to material assistance for HIV/AIDS orphans in Mozambique, organizers want to make a long-term impact through policy changes and education.

For example, the connection between HIV/AIDS and Africa’s debt is one topic addressed in the triannual Peace with Justice Educational Tour that travels to various U.S. regions, says Imani Countess, coordinator of the Africa Peacebuilding Program.

“Tour speakers call on financial institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund to cancel the continent’s crippling debt,” Imani says. “This debt is illegitimate and it diverts scarce resources from some of Africa’s deepest needs, including the needs of people with HIV/AIDS.”



Photos: Terry Foss. Opposite: Illustration by Paris Stancil.

## You can help

**H**ygiene kits for children orphaned by HIV/AIDS will provide a few essentials to ease the day-to-day burdens that these young people experience. Each kit should be assembled in a large (two gallon) zip lock bag and must contain the following:

- Medium-sized toothbrush
- Six-ounce tube of toothpaste
- Washcloth
- Bar of bath-size soap
- Three-ounce tube of petroleum jelly
- Wide-tooth comb

In addition, please include \$10 per kit to cover shipping expenses and the regional purchase of items such as blankets, food, medicine, and to pay for mandatory school fees and uniforms.

The deadline for getting completed kits to AFSC is April 30. Mail kits to AFSC/EMAP, 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102.

**Contribution forms, instructions for sending your kit(s) to AFSC/EMAP, and other ways you can help build the future for children orphaned by HIV/AIDS are online at [www.afsc.org/emap](http://www.afsc.org/emap).**



## Toward a new Africa

In Africa—as in many other parts of the world—women and youth have been largely left out of decision-making processes that directly affect their lives.

As part of AFSC's Africa Initiative, women and youth across the continent are organizing and making connections with their U.S. counterparts. Their goals include promoting peace, economic justice, African unity, and addressing the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Initial accomplishments include:

- The establishment of the Africa Youth Initiative Network, which is mobilizing African youth and providing training and outreach activities on development issues.
- Several groundbreaking gatherings of women leaders that have set the stage for African women to have a greater voice in setting the political, economic, and cultural agenda.
- The first cross-continental Youth Exchange this past summer, in which twelve young U.S. activists interned with African nongovernmental organizations and came home to educate and mobilize U.S. audiences around African concerns.

**To find out how you can get involved with these and other Africa Initiative projects, please check online at [www.afsc.org/africa/new-africa/activism](http://www.afsc.org/africa/new-africa/activism).**

## News from around AFSC

### ► CRIMINAL JUSTICE

#### AFSC supports Journey of Hope

For seventeen days in September and October, audiences at more than 150 events in Ohio and northern Kentucky heard the family members of murder victims tell the public why they oppose the death penalty. The tour was organized by Jana Schroeder of AFSC's Dayton office and Ohioans to Stop Executions in conjunction with "Journey of Hope...From Violence to Healing," an organization led by murder victims' family members. This year's journey gave audiences a chance to hear murder victims' family members, friends, and family members of those on death row, exonerated death row inmates, and activists share their personal stories of healing, forgiveness, and love, culminating with a rally outside the Ohio State House.

### ► ECONOMIC JUSTICE

#### Earned income tax credit keeps West Virginia families afloat

Several years ago, AFSC's West Virginia Economic Justice Project (WVEJ) initiated a statewide outreach campaign to promote the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) for working families. The EITC, a tax credit for low- and moderate-income workers, is the federal government's most effective anti-poverty program. Last year, the campaign produced rich results. In tax year 2002, 139,317 individuals and families claimed the credit, an increase of 6,446 people over the previous year. The average recipient received \$1,670.

According to WVEJ director Rick Wilson, "This tax credit can be the difference between getting by and going under. Outreach is important since it is estimated that 15 to 25 percent of those eligible for the credit don't claim it."



**Gimme Shelter sleep-out in New Hampshire**

### ► MIGRATION & MOBILITY

#### Immigrant Workers' Freedom Ride

AFSC staff and committee members across the country participated in the Immigrant Workers' Freedom Ride, a historic nationwide mobilization that drew its inspiration from the original Freedom Riders of the 1960s. From September to October, nearly 1,000 immigrants and their allies traveled across the country by bus, stopping in more than 100 cities and towns along the way. The campaign highlighted the need for comprehensive immigration reform, including legislation enabling immigrants living in the United States to legalize their status.

**For more information about AFSC's work for immigrant rights, visit [www.afsc.org/immigrants-rights](http://www.afsc.org/immigrants-rights).**

### ► YOUTH

#### New Hampshire youth sleep out for the homeless

On October 17, about seventy-five people gathered in front of the State House in Concord, New Hampshire, for the annual "Gimme Shelter" sleep-out to call attention to homelessness. People who had been homeless talked about their experiences and urged students from area high schools and colleges to vote for candidates who support a strong social safety net. One young man brought several members of his fraternity along with him to sleep out in the cold. "I was really moved by it last year and I wanted my brothers to have the experience this year," he said. Some of the high school students later raised \$230 to help with emergency shelter. Others are collecting school supplies for homeless children.

### ► PEACE

#### Native Hawaiians oppose militarization

Building on its work with the Native Hawaiian community to protect the land in Hawai'i, AFSC's Hawai'i Program has focused its work on the U.S. military's continual efforts to use Hawai'i for training and tests. Staff and volunteers have used television, radio, and print media to spread the message of peace and coordinated a workshop called "Building Resistance to *Endless War*," which addresses military expansion and increasing military recruitment in the schools.



Combat boots, in Chicago's Federal Plaza, represent soldiers killed in Iraq

► HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

**Hygiene and infant kits shipped to Iraq**

With the help of its network of schools, community groups, and religious organizations, AFSC's Emergency and Material Assistance Program has shipped more than 2,000 infant kits to Iraq to be distributed to new mothers. Each kit contains two receiving blankets, one

pack of baby washcloths, one bar of baby soap, and a baby hair brush. As winter approached, AFSC also distributed bucket-sized hygiene kits to 840 Iraqi families living in the squatters' camps of Al Salam, Al Gazalia, and Al Huda in Baghdad. These are but two of the ways that AFSC is making a difference in postwar Iraq.

**To learn more, visit [www.afsc.org/human-face](http://www.afsc.org/human-face).**



Shoe distribution in the Al Huda squatter's camp (Iraq)

Top: Brian Kersey/AP. Bottom: McDowell/Trotchaud

► PEACE

**Empty combat boots honor U.S. soldiers killed in Iraq**

On January 21, AFSC staff placed more than 500 pairs of empty combat boots in Chicago's Federal Plaza to honor U.S. soldiers killed in Iraq. Next to the boots stood large foam placards with the names of soldiers who have been killed.

The 500th death of a U.S. soldier occurred days after the U.S. withdrew the main task force that was in Iraq searching for weapons of mass destruction. Even though a major justification for invading Iraq was the belief that the country was hiding weapons of mass destruction, the task force left empty-handed.

AFSC sponsored the event to commemorate the loss of life in Iraq under U.S. occupation. The total number of U.S. casualties—dead and wounded—is almost 3,400. Furthermore, 8,000 Iraqi civilians have been killed so far, according to conservative estimates.

"These young men and women will not have died in vain if truth triumphs," notes Michael McConnell, AFSC's Great Lakes Regional Director.

**TAKE ACTION**

**Support immigrants' education rights**

Every year, tens of thousands of high school graduates face limited prospects for completing their education and working in the United States because they were brought here as children and don't have immigration papers. The DREAM Act (S.1545) and the Student Adjustment Act (H.R. 1684) would provide legal status to high school students who have grown up in the United States and want to continue their education. An estimated 65,000 high school graduates per year stand to benefit. A national campaign aims to deliver 65,000 signatures supporting this important legislation to President Bush by the end of March 2004. To sign the petition, visit AFSC's immigrants' rights web page at [www.afsc.org/immigrants-rights](http://www.afsc.org/immigrants-rights).



## Lakota reverie

Memoirs of a “little white girl” from Dayton

*In the summer of 2003, nearly fifty volunteers from across the nation participated in the AFSC/Intermountain Yearly Meeting Joint Service Project on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. Projects included sanding and painting in several homes, installing plumbing and refurbishing bathrooms, and digging foundations for the next set of houses. Eighteen-year-old **Stephanie Yarger** was one of the workers. What follows are some of her reflections on her meaningful experience.*



Looking closely, you can still see the strip of sunburn on my skin. I got it this summer at Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota, wood varnish beneath my fingernails and inside my brain, bending over to paint Gerald One Feather’s new log cabin, my back exposed. By three o’clock, I was red. After five months, it still hasn’t gone away.

There are no clouds in the South Dakota sky, and when there are the clouds are thin and stretched, cirrus I think, evaporated milk. There are no clouds, but at Gerald’s house there are horses, and rusted cars, and rattlesnakes. I remember one day looking over my shoulder to see Jasmine, trash-talking and thirteen, kneeling in the field with her hand outstretched, gentle now, quiet, beckoning the semi-wild horses that roamed around the yard. Her reverie was interrupted by Candy: “Lunch!” she called, and we all trooped inside ready to devour peanut butter or tofu or the stir-fry of the day.

The house we were painting was at least a year overdue and the plumbing had yet to be installed. If you had to “go,” you leapt the rickety wooden fence and clambered down the hill, prairie grass scratching your ankles and the ground giving way to puffs of dust as you walked. “Be careful of rattlesnakes,” my leader Mike said to me the

first time I ventured into the great unknown.

“What?”

“The rattlesnakes. But don’t worry. You’ll hear them coming.”

And then there was the Astrovan, big and red and dirty but working, unlike the scores of rusty cars that littered people’s yards. I maniacally cleaned it



before we went to Denver. “This is disgusting,” I said, kicking bad teen magazines and almost empty Coke cans.

The flies buzzed around my head. “This is disgusting, this has to go.” (They wouldn’t let me clear the dash-

board though, McDonald’s wrappers and bundles of sage. “Sacred space,” they told me. “Leave it alone.”)

Yet as strange as the physical environment was for me, little white girl born and raised in Dayton, Ohio, the spiritual environment was even stranger.

An atheist since I was fifteen, a Presbyterian before, I didn’t think I would appreciate worship sharing in the Badlands, a Quaker meeting in Denver where we all sat silent, sated, and still. I didn’t think anything would prepare me for the sweat lodge, half-naked Indians in a tent shaped like a womb, my long skirt and short sleeves, the rocks, the steam, the unbearable, damp, almost suffocating heat. I remember bursting out of there after almost two hours, the stars seemed so bright, the night seemed so cold. I did it, I did it, my body was crowing.

“Still don’t believe in God?” Mike asked me. What do you say to that? I smiled sadly. “No.”

And it’s true. As much as I love the Lakota, as much as I want to learn from them and help them and sometimes even be them, these people are not my people, their religion could never be my own. But I can build log cabins in the thick of summer. Bit by bit, maybe we can redeem our history with our sweat.



# To free the spirit and intellect

AFSC classes in two women's prisons help break cycles of abuse and violence

by CAROL TASHJIAN and  
NATALIE HOLBROOK

*“My brain was awakened to more ideas, beliefs, and reasons for the things that I didn't understand.”*

*“Prison is no joke, but somehow coming here has helped me change.”*

**S**o write the women of Camp Brighton, a correctional facility in Pinckney, Michigan, about an AFSC-sponsored class they recently completed.

These are voices never heard, and rarely considered, by most of us who live on the outside. That's a shame, because they have much to say and share with the world about their lives.

In 2003, AFSC launched a series of classes for women in Michigan's state correctional facilities. Supported by the Nokoma Foundation and Lydia B. Stokes Foundation, the classes challenge the intellect, nurture the spirit, and impel individual and collective change.

There currently are two classes in session: “Understanding Women,” a twelve-month, university-level women's studies class at Scott Correctional Facility, and “Communications and Personal History,” a six-month writing and personal memoir class at Camp Brighton. Implementing partners for the program are the University of Michigan at Dearborn Women's Studies Department, and Michigan Department of Corrections staff in charge of educational programs.

## Breaking patterns of abuse

AFSC's focus on women's correctional facilities follows a disturbing trend in the United States.

Women are the fastest growing inmate population in the United States. In Michigan, the number of women prisoners grew from 545 in 1986 to 2,245 in 2003. Many of these women have been caught in cycles of abuse and violence that they feel incapable of changing. Incarceration can compound such feelings of futility and exacerbate the notion of disempowerment, when in reality all humans are capable of creating action and change.

At the same time, these women have great potential to expand their thinking and analytical skills. When they are given the tools to consider the historical patterns of race, class, and gender, they are better equipped to break free of their own patterns of abusive relationships, violent family cycles, and substance abuse.

## Students learn—and teach

The students say that the AFSC-sponsored courses are helping them change their lives. However, professors and

AFSC staff have learned a great deal, too—from the students.

AFSC staff Kristen Cuhran calls her experience in the classroom at Scott Correctional Facility “life changing.” Instructors find the energy level and participation in the classes inspiring.

For those of us who take for granted our easy access to books, cultural resources, and even basic writing tools, being in the presence of these women—confined in body but not in curiosity and intellect—can only be described as humbling.

**More information is available online at [www.prisoneradvocacy.org](http://www.prisoneradvocacy.org) or by contacting Natalie Holbrook at (734) 761-8283, ext. 5 (phone), or [nholbrook@afsc.org](mailto:nholbrook@afsc.org) (e-mail).**

CAROL TASHJIAN, an AFSC grant officer, visited the Scott Correctional Facility in October 2003. NATALIE HOLBROOK, the Criminal Justice Program Associate in AFSC's Ann Arbor, Michigan, office teaches at Camp Brighton.

## ‘Thanks for everything’

**T**he students at Camp Brighton were excited to learn they would be featured in *Quaker Action*. To know that someone—anyone—on the “outside” is listening means a great deal. More than a dozen of them wrote letters or short notes that explain their feelings about the AFSC-sponsored course they took. Here's what two had to say:

*“The American Friends communications class gave me something to look forward to every month!... The instructors were passionate about the class and treated us like human beings.... It was the most beneficial thing I've done and been a part of since my incarceration.”*

*“Classes that are usually offered here are predictable and require no thinking whatsoever and very little participation. The AFSC girls are the best, as are the other ladies that instruct us.”*

# Claiming their voices

Palestinian youths provide new hope in the West Bank

When a group of Palestinian teenagers candidly assessed the problems in their West Bank village of Kufor Ni'emah, person-



Huda Ma'ali

al safety was a primary concern. They noted that the problem was exacerbated by the absence of electric street lights at night.

Because of the closure in the West Bank, the road through Kufor Ni'emah has become the only route to twenty other villages. Lights would minimize the number of car accidents involving people from other villages and encourage local shops to stay open. The lights would also reduce the number of people and farm animals who stumble and fall on the village's unpaved streets.

These young people, brought together by AFSC's Popular Achievement (PA) Program, developed a plan of action and paid a visit to those responsible for community safety. The teenagers, ages fourteen to sixteen, asked for the lights. While they're still working out a solution, the young people already have benefited from their efforts.

"Through participation in this program, these young people have learned they can do something to improve their lives," says Huda Ma'ali, a coach with the PA program. Huda, who lives in Kufor Ni'emah, meets regularly with the twelve young men and women to talk about problems in the village.

"Too often in our society, young people at this age are considered useless—they are neither children nor adults," Huda says. "Now, they can demonstrate that they have a purpose

and new skills that can benefit the entire community."

## Broad appeal

The PA program is based on a model developed at the University of Minnesota and focuses on problems whose solutions can be found in the immediate community. This allows the young people to develop organizing and leadership skills while achieving some successes.

Each team is formed with an equal number of male and female participants and led by a male and female coach. Currently, there are forty-five teams working in villages and refugee camps throughout the West Bank. One team arranged for trash removal in an area where services had stopped; another requested a meeting with President Yasser Arafat to discuss the need for electricity in their refugee camp.

The program's success is due in large part to its integration of local commu-

nity partners. Ureib Andel Samad, project officer, recruits partners, while Khaled Jahjouh provides them with training and follow-up support. Local teachers identify students who demonstrate the potential to contribute to their community. The coaches are identified primarily by Bir Zeit University staff.

## A democratic transformation

The Popular Achievement approach is new to traditional community leaders, who are celebrating the fruits of practicing true citizenship with their communities.

"The program is very well received because it allows youth to take power when many feel powerless in the face of occupation and local authority systems," says Tareq el-Bakri. He and his wife, Suzanne Hammad, are AFSC's Middle East Regional Coordinators. "The youth are leading a democratic transformation within our society."

## Israelis defy the draft

For decades, it has been a given in Israel that citizens over the age of eighteen must serve in the military.

This past December, in a sign of growing dissatisfaction with the Sharon government's treatment of Palestinians inside the West Bank and Gaza, fifteen reservists in the Israeli army's top commando unit announced their refusal to serve in the Occupied Territories.

While many young people quietly avoid military service, a growing number of younger Israelis are openly resisting conscription. In January, five of these young resisters were given one year jail sentences for refusing to serve. Others have been sentenced to



International training on nonviolence and conscientious objection (Israel, 2002)

consecutive one-month punishments.

Together with the Israeli organization New Profile, AFSC's Jerusalem Quaker International Affairs (QIAR) Program is working to change the harsh reality that faces Israeli conscientious objectors (COs) and military resisters. Through a variety of projects, New Profile supports Israeli COs and military resisters, raises awareness about the dangers of mili-

# New works about war, peace and immigration

There was a moment in time, shortly after the invention of movable type, when an educated person could read every word that was printed. That time has long passed. So how to choose from the glut of options? Most of us rely on recommendations, from friends or other trusted sources, about which books, magazines, web sites, music, films, and television programs are worth our attention.

This column hopes to become just such a trusted source. In each issue of *Quaker Action*, you'll find suggestions from AFSC staff and others in the AFSC community for books and media to inform and motivate you.

If you have recommendations you would like to share, please send the title of the item and a short paragraph about what makes it commendable to: [recommendations@afsc.org](mailto:recommendations@afsc.org).

tarism, and counters militarism in Israel.

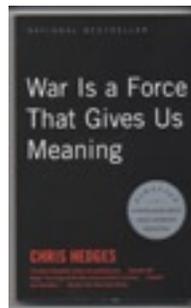
In 2003, joint AFSC–New Profile activities included:

- A week-long international seminar titled “Militarism and Draft Resistance and Refusal in Israel” was organized with War Resisters International. AFSC helped activists promoting conscientious objection in Spain, Chile, Turkey, and South Korea, as well as two trainers, attend the seminar.
- A visit by two New Profile members to Geneva, Switzerland was coordinated by the Quaker United Nations Office. The Israelis attended a Human Rights Commission meeting and met with interested organizations.

More information is available online at [www.afsc.org/middleeast/int/meiar.htm](http://www.afsc.org/middleeast/int/meiar.htm).

## BOOKS

In the past year, mass media stories and images of war have been difficult to escape. But thoughtful examinations of the urge to war must be actively sought out. These books are a welcome counterpoint to the media drumbeat.

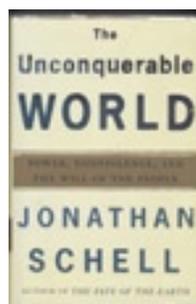


### War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning

(Chris Hedges, Anchor Books, 2003, 211 pp., \$12.95 paperback)

In covering combat for more than a decade, correspon-

dent Chris Hedges has felt the adrenalin rush and super-real intensity of life and death moments. In this brilliant, unsettling book, he reaches back to Homer, Shakespeare, and other great literature to show why humans are drawn to the myth of glorious, noble war—and then he pulls away the curtain to reveal the corruption and stench of the real motivations and events of war. *Nominated for the 2002 National Book Critics Circle Award, General Nonfiction.*

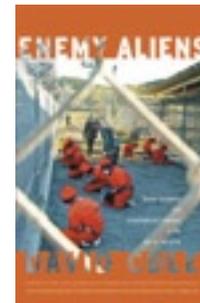


### The Unconquerable World: Power, Non-violence, and the Will of the People

(Jonathan Schell, Henry Holt, 2003, 443 pp., \$27.50 hardback)

Will war be always with us? As he traces the expansion of man's destructive capacity to its present point, Jonathan Schell argues convincingly that the answer is “no.” In a time of nuclear

weapons, warfare simply no longer works to resolve differences. But what can replace it? Schell outlines the historical growth and potential of popular power, and offers this growing force, particularly as expressed in nonviolent movements, as a hopeful alternative.



### Enemy Aliens: Double Standards and Constitutional Freedoms in the War on Terrorism

(David Cole, New Press, 2003, 256 pp., \$24.95 hardback)

If you are concerned about the arbitrary detentions, ethnic and religious profiling, and other repressive measures taken against immigrants since September 11, Georgetown law professor David Cole has a message for you: Be worried. Cole argues that the policies are wrong as a matter of justice and counter-productive as a matter of national security. As Cole reminds us, throughout history the abuse of noncitizens has been a prelude to the abuse of citizens.

## TELEVISION

### The New Americans

PBS—March 29, 30 & 31, 2004

This powerful seven-hour series traces the journeys, aspirations, and daily struggles of immigrants and refugee families as they pursue their notion of an “American Dream.” A rare window into the courageous but beleaguered lives of those who actively choose a life in America. Local discussions are being held across the country. For more information, visit [www.itvs.org/outreach/newamericans](http://www.itvs.org/outreach/newamericans).



# Where courage comes from

A message from AFSC General Secretary Mary Ellen McNish

It was Sunday morning, on my way to Byberry Friends Meeting's annual holiday harp concert, when I heard the news that Saddam Hussein had been captured in Iraq.

Perhaps like you, I struggled with conflicting feelings. I realized that I was full of dread that the days to come would be filled with back-slapping congratulations to the military on a job well done, and feared yet another round of praise for a unilateral, so-called preemptive attack on a country that had not attacked the United States.

As I settled into my place in the 200-year-old meeting house, I felt the embrace of my community of faith whose history stretches back to 1683. Outside the window snow fell, and I knew that afterwards there would be



warm fellowship and an ample lunch shared among those present. As the harpist played, I realized that my dread was gone. I was able to breathe and to listen deeply. The world outside that place and that particular moment was far away and I was able to see past news cycles and talking heads and press strategies.

In that moment, I understood with a clarity I rarely experience that moments such as this are where courage comes from—the courage to know that in spite of my dread and outrage and anger, I was meant to act from *Love*.

The eighteenth-century Friend, John Woolman, tells us that, “Love was the first motion,” and that’s what led him to go out among the Native peoples. I know that AFSC’s own first

motion must be the same. We do many things that other organizations do, but it is our unfailing belief that Love transforms real-world situations that sets us apart.

These are hard days to Love. Righteous indignation is so much more satisfying in the short-term. It is always tempting to give way to anger when we are afraid or discouraged. But I believe we must always return to Love if we are to remain grounded.

I hear from many of you who tell me that you support the Service Committee because of our commitment to loving those who are hard to love and looking for the possibility of redemption in even the darkest situations. Please continue to hold us in the Light and know we remain strong in our resolve to do the right—not the easy—thing.

*Mary Ellen McNish*

## REFLECTIONS

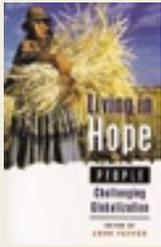
### The Scattergood Hostel

AFSC's first program for U.S. immigrants

From 1939 to 1943, nearly 200 Europeans fleeing the war in their home countries found refuge at Scattergood, a temporary hostel near West Branch, Iowa. Sponsored by AFSC, the hostel's goal was straightforward: to help the newcomers join American society and thereby avoid isolation. Staff provided instruction in American life and institutions as well as the English language. Their efforts were as successful as they were innovative at the time. As Michael Luick-Thrams, author of *Out of Hitler's Reach: The Scattergood Hostel for European Refugees 1939-43*, notes, “...one should keep in mind what a truly unusual phenomenon it was, taking in large numbers of strangers who had recently escaped exceptionally traumatic experiences.”



**Living in Hope:  
People Challenging Globalization**



The rush to a global economy is having an adverse effect on millions of people worldwide. "Living in Hope: People Challenging Globalization," published by AFSC, reveals what ordinary people around the world are doing in life-affirming

response to the juggernaut of economic globalization. Edited by John Feffer, former AFSC East Asia Quaker International Affairs Representative. Softcover, 172 pages. **\$15.**

**Notecards for any occasion**

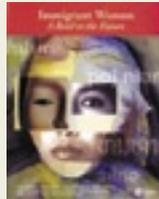


Support AFSC's work and stock up on attractive notecards for holidays, birthdays, or just to say hello. **\$10/pack of eight.** Please visit [www.afsc.org/resources/cards2003.htm](http://www.afsc.org/resources/cards2003.htm) for images of the 2003 cards.

**The Prison Inside the Prison:  
Control Units, Supermax Prisons,  
and Devices of Torture**

This new Justice Visions briefing paper offers a deeper look at the steady proliferation of various types of isolation units throughout the U.S. prison system. **Print copies: \$1 each.** Also available for free download at [www.afsc.org/community/justicevisions.htm](http://www.afsc.org/community/justicevisions.htm).

**Immigrant Women:  
A Road to the Future**



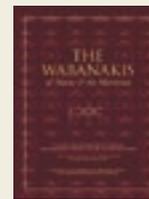
A collective history of immigrant women working together to build just and equitable communities in California's Central Valley. This book is not an academic study. It is the living narration of a collective task and the expression of voices united in purpose. Published by AFSC's Pan Valley Institute. Softcover; English/Spanish; 160 pages. **\$15.**

**We Felt Their Kindliness:  
An American Family's Afghan  
Odyssey 1949-1951**



In 1949, Rebecca and Osborne Cresson and their two children moved to Afghanistan. For two years, while teaching and home-making, they recorded the scene around them in words and pictures. Proceeds benefit the AFSC Afghan Relief Fund. Softcover; 253 pages. **\$20.**

**The Wabanakis of Maine  
and the Maritimes**



This best-selling, recently updated resource book was developed for educators, students, historians, and others interested in Native people. Softcover; 515 pages. **\$30.** Page previews are available online at

[www.afsc.org/resources/items/wabanakis.htm](http://www.afsc.org/resources/items/wabanakis.htm).

**To order, contact AFSC's Literature Resources Unit**

1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102 • Phone: (215) 241-7048 (or toll-free 1-888-588-2372, ext. 2),  
Fax: (215) 241-7275 or order online at [www.afsc.org/resources](http://www.afsc.org/resources)

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# Be a Friend for their Future



Last year, 158 people made a bequest to the AFSC. In the last five years, another 794 people from all walks of life have become “Friends for the Future” by telling us that they have remembered AFSC in their estate plans.

AFSC values all bequests, whether large or small. Together, these gifts ensure the stability of AFSC’s ongoing witness for peace, justice, and human dignity.

By remembering AFSC in your estate plan, you can reduce estate taxes and continue your commitment to Quaker service. Best of all, it’s quite easy.

## Ways to include AFSC in your estate plan

- Include AFSC as a beneficiary in your will.
- Include AFSC as a beneficiary in your living trust.
- Name AFSC as the beneficiary of your IRA or other retirement plan.
- Name AFSC as the beneficiary of your life insurance policy.

PHOTOS: Top (from left to right): McDowell/Trotochaud; McDowell/Trotochaud; Denise Davis; Jim Wasserman  
Top right: Doug Hostetter. Bottom right: M’Annette Ruddell



*“This is a very small bequest. Other people with more dollars and cents (and sense !?!) may be able to fund the grand thing. I have to think small. Most people want to give something more permanent or obvious. But I’m thinking of stamps or scotch tape or some grease for wheels to ease things in the effort.”*

JO-MARIE RUDDELL  
1917-2000



To learn more about becoming a “Friend for the Future” call Mike Valoris or Patrick Manion of our Gift Planning office at 1-888-588-2372, ext. 3, send an e-mail to [GiftPlanning@afsc.org](mailto:GiftPlanning@afsc.org), or check the box on the enclosed reply envelope.



**American Friends  
Service Committee**

*QuakerAction*

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