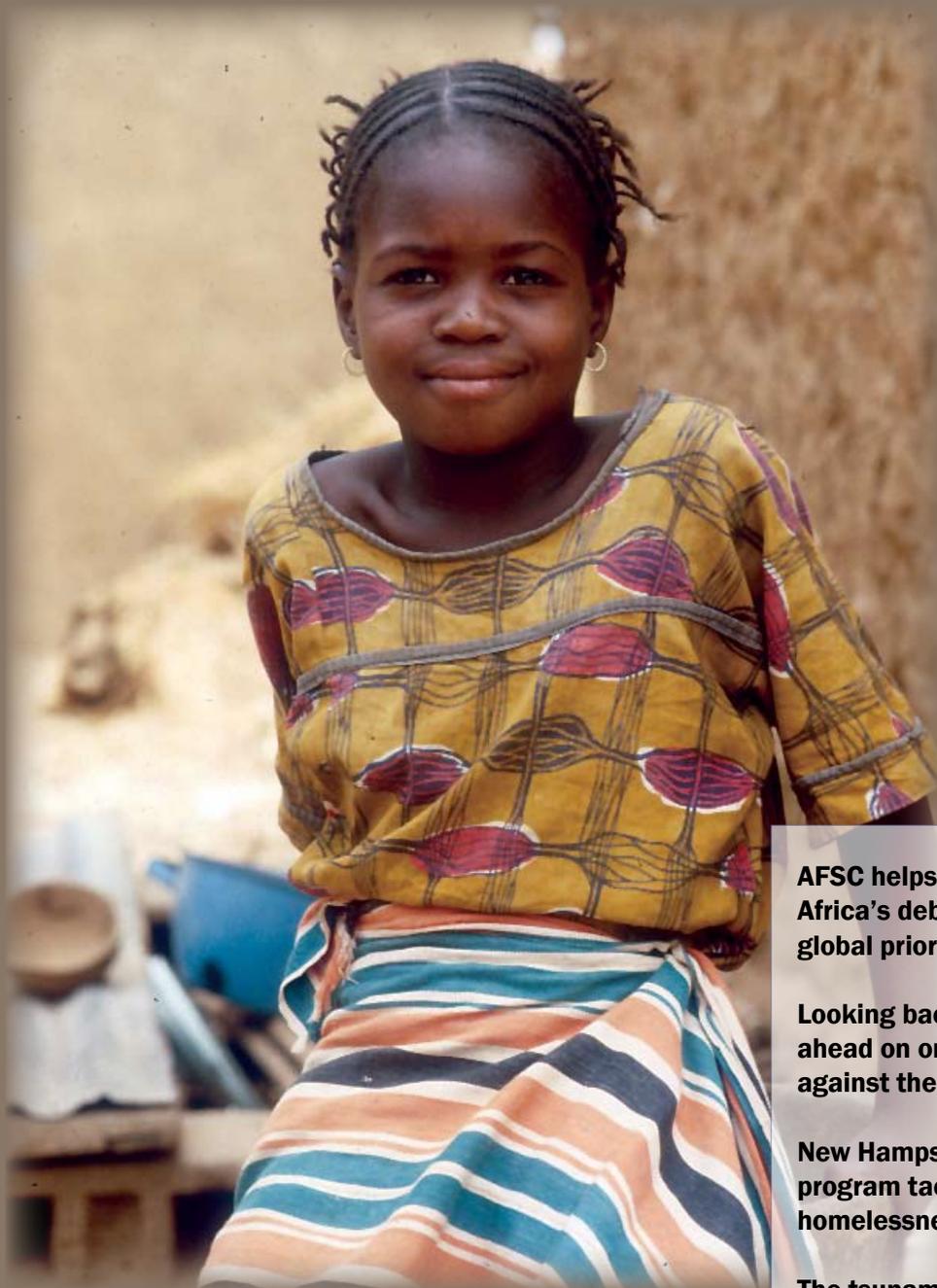


QuakerAction



**AFSC helps make
Africa's debt crisis a
global priority**

**Looking back, planning
ahead on organizing
against the Iraq war**

**New Hampshire
program tackles
homelessness**

**The tsunami:
One year later**



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Local peace activism guide

Our Wage Peace Campaign has fact sheets, petitions, and helpful tips to support your local peace organizing efforts.
www.afsc.org/wagepeace



Terry Foss

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On the cover

AFSC's Life Over Debt campaign highlights the need to cancel the international debt of all African nations. (See story on page three.)

Cover photo by Terry Foss

QuakerAction

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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.

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'Born with a burden'

AFSC helps make Africa's debt crisis a global priority

BY ROXANNE LAWSON

Every child on the African continent is born with a burden that one lifetime of work cannot repay. This burden is a new form of slavery, as vicious as the slave trade.

The All-Africa Conference
of Churches

Millions of people around the world recognize that the burden of international debt is one of the major barriers to peace on the African continent. As part of a worldwide call to drop the debt, AFSC launched the "Life Over Debt" campaign in 2004.

Those involved in the global debt cancellation movement rejoiced when, in June 2005, the world's richest (G-8) countries promised to cancel the debt for 14 African countries.

Unfortunately, our work is not over.

In the seven months since the G-8 agreed to this historic cancellation, more than 1 million Africans have died from the combined forces of AIDS, famine, and poverty-related illness. Meanwhile, their governments have paid almost \$7 billion to rich countries and institutions servicing their debts.

With the implementation of this historic cancellation not scheduled until

the summer of 2006, its inadequacy is becoming increasingly evident.

The G-8 deal was a precedent-setting first step that fell short of what is needed to end Africa's debt crisis. By deeming only 14 Africa countries eligible for cancellation, 33 African nations will continue to pay billions of dollars annually to service debts largely incurred by illegitimate regimes.

This deal also may set a precedent for a future where the only countries eligible for debt cancellation are those that agree to complete a program of controversial, rigid, and damaging economic reforms.

This year, AFSC's Life Over Debt campaign will continue to engage with members of Congress on the need to cancel the debt for all indebted nations.

We will continue to build relationships with global campaigners, support vital research and engage in public education and advocacy trainings in Southern and Central Africa.

Working with civil society groups worldwide, we will pressure the U.S. Department of Treasury, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank to establish new criteria for debt cancellation eligibility.

To get involved with the Life Over Debt campaign, log onto www.afsc.org/lifeoverdebt or send an email to lifeoverdebt@afsc.org.

Roxanne Lawson is the Program Associate for the Africa Peacebuilding Program based in Philadelphia, Pa.

Photo: (left to right) Roxanne Lawson, Allison Budschalow, and Mica Root organize for Life Over Debt at the Live 8 concert in Philadelphia (2005).



Desmond Tutu endorses Life Over Debt

Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa recently endorsed AFSC's Life Over Debt campaign, which highlights the need for immediate cancellation of Africa's debt. Below is the text of his endorsement letter.

Friends,

During the dark days of apartheid we were prayed for. People were prepared to go to prison on our behalf. People were ready to boycott South African goods on our behalf. And when we overcame apartheid, that victory was not just our victory, it was a victory that belonged also to the whole world.

Unjust debt has created a new apartheid: one that is not just political but is economic and cultural. Shall we let Africa's children die of curable or preventable disease; prevent them from going to school; destroy their opportunities for meaningful work — to pay off odious loans made to their forefathers?

No! If we are going to be compassionate, we must be prepared for action! Today, we are called to pray, boycott, and protest the scourge of debt, which has replaced apartheid as a crime against humanity. We must muster the spiritual strength and vigor of the American civil rights movement and South Africa's anti-apartheid movement to remove this crushing burden from the poor.

Join the American Friends Service Committee's Life Over Debt Campaign with people all over the world who call for 100% debt cancellation for ALL African nations, without harmful conditions. Help ensure that Africans are able to use their own resources for their own development.

God bless you,
Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Photo: Mary Ellen McNish



Peace by popular demand



BY MARK GRAHAM

In March, we will commemorate the third anniversary of the war in Iraq. During the anniversary, we will mourn the loss of more than 2,400 U.S. and coalition troops, more than 100,000 Iraqis killed in this war, and extend our sympathy to the thousands of people—soldiers and civilians—who have been wounded or lost a loved one in this conflict.

At the same time, we are hopeful. Signs of peace are getting clearer. Public opinion about the war has shifted in the past year and most people in the United States now say that the war was a mistake.

AFSC's work to make sure that the human cost of war is recognized and mourned—embodied in the traveling Eyes Wide Open exhibit and our work alongside military families—has helped change the conversation about the war. People have gathered in hundreds of communities for vigils and rallies, and developed other creative ways to show that

people throughout the United States want the war to end. Congress is hearing our calls for peace, and several members of Congress have advocated troop withdrawal.

The human cost of war

Eyes Wide Open has visited some 80 U.S. cities, garnering media attention about the cost of war and serving as a community memorial to the fallen in Iraq. The exhibition represents the human loss with a pair of boots for every U.S. servicemember killed, and a thousand pairs of civilian shoes to represent a part of the civilian loss (pictured on page five). Dozens of military families and veterans have spoken at Eyes Wide Open locations; others have left flowers for their departed relatives and friends.

Five states—Illinois, Ohio, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, and Maryland—have started touring state Eyes Wide Open exhibits that include the boots for that state, making the exhibit more available for smaller communities. According to Mary Zerkel,

the exhibit's tour coordinator, five to ten more states plan to tour state exhibits in 2006.

Mary notes that a tour is planned to take boots representing National Guard fatalities through the South. The National Guard exhibit was displayed in Des Moines, Iowa, last summer at the National Governors Association convention.

If Eyes Wide Open is not coming to your area anytime soon, you can see it in the video of Grammy-winning blues artist Robert Cray's song "Twenty."

Learn more about Eyes Wide Open, see the schedule, and watch the music video at www.afsc.org/eyes.

Community efforts for peace

In addition to Eyes Wide Open, the human cost of war came home to people after the 2,000th U.S. military fatality in Iraq was announced. In response to AFSC's call for people to come together to remember this sad milestone, 60,000 people held more than 600 "Not One More Death, Not One More Dollar" events on



Looking back, planning ahead on organizing against the Iraq war

October 2. Many, even those in so-called red states, found that a majority of their neighbors agreed with their message.

One participant we heard from was Debbie Boen, who organized a vigil in Clarksville, Tennessee: "Pictures of our vigil were on the front page of our local newspaper. The entire 'A' section talked about the real costs of this war. That's a miracle in this conservative army town."

AFSC is going to hold more nationwide events this spring, one for the third anniversary of the war in mid-March, and another in mid-May.

Join AFSC's e-mail list for announcements, or register online at www.afsc.org to attend or organize an event in your community.

Next step, Congress

For the past several months, our strategy has been to show Congress that the pro-peace majority in this country is not complacent. Our winter-spring campaign will take our message to Congress with new vigor.

Using e-mail and websites, AFSC's

constituents have collectively sent 70,000 e-mails to Congress supporting legislation to end the war. Through the website, 40,000 people have signed AFSC's letter asking members of Congress to stop the war by stopping the funding. Hundreds continue to sign the letter every day.

This campaign will culminate in May when we will deliver the letter and signatures to Congress. At the same time, the

Eyes Wide Open exhibit will be displayed on the National Mall, and we will sponsor a silent march of military families, veterans, and peace supporters on Mother's Day weekend.

To sign the letter or learn about how you can get involved in lobbying Congress, please visit AFSC's website at www.afsc.org/iraq.

Mark Graham is a contributing editor to Quaker Action.



Photos: Scenes from AFSC's Eyes Wide Open exhibit.

Tan Cerca de la Frontera

(So close to the border)



Resisting globalization from the bottom up

BY WILLIE COLÓN REYES

“*Entren. Que bueno que se acuerdan de nosotros.*” (Come in. It’s so nice that you remember us.) With this heartfelt welcome, Ángela Fernández invited us into her hillside home in one of the poor *colonias*, or neighborhoods, outside of Ciudad Acuña, Mexico.

It was a sunny and warm Saturday in October, the second day of my visit to several Mexican border towns. Eleven of us from different parts of the United States had come to learn about the day-to-day reality of those who work in the maquiladora industry. (Maquiladoras are foreign-owned factories along the Mexico-U.S. border. Most are subsidiaries of U.S. companies.)

Ángela’s one-room cinderblock home—crammed with tall dressers, a large china cabinet, beds, and other pieces of furniture—could barely contain us. But she didn’t hesitate to interrupt her plans for the day, to accommodate us as best she could, and to tell us her story.

Seven years earlier, she’d arrived in Acuña from Nachital, a small town in the southern Mexican state of Veracruz. She’d come looking for work and found a job at a car parts factory, where she now worked the night shift, 7 p.m. to 6 a.m., for \$75 a week. Although her factory paid the most

in the area, she still needed to pool her salary with that of her grown children in order to cover living expenses.

Ángela met with us for 45 minutes, graciously answering all our questions. We’d arrived unannounced, but that seemed to make no difference to her.

Extrême poverty along the border is increasingly common, partly the result of international trade policies and corporate globalization. Visiting a poor *colonia* is a sobering experience.

However, the organizers of Austin Tan

Cerca de la Frontera, the group that arranged my visit, want participants to leave feeling inspired, not depressed.

A project of the AFSC Austin Area Program, Tan Cerca de la Frontera organizes four delegations a year to the Mexico-U.S. border. The delegations promote solidarity with maquiladora workers and, within the limits of a two-and-a-half day trip, participants learn how globalization is accelerating a “race to the bottom” for many workers around the world.

The project started in 1999 after a visit to Austin by organizers from the Comité Fronterizo de Obrer@s (CFO, or Border Committee of Women Workers). Based in Piedras Negras, Mexico, the CFO, founded by AFSC, and a long-time partner in Mexico, helps maquiladora workers learn about and stand up for their rights. The group also hosts every Tan Cerca de la Frontera delegation.

“My feeling is that this [the CFO’s work] is just a grain of sand, but we’re laying the foundation for future generations,” said Julia Quiñonez, the CFO’s lively, energetic coordinator.

Julia’s modesty belies the impact of the CFO. In the seven border cities where it organizes, the CFO has helped thousands of maquiladora workers win significant victories, including substantial wage hikes and improvements in working conditions.



Photos: (top) The Dignity & Justice Maquiladora Company, (above) Maria Elena Robles, at right, during a “market basket” exercise.

In 2004, the CFO also helped start the aptly named Maquiladora Dignidad y Justicia (Dignity & Justice Maquiladora Company), a small-scale, worker-owned clothing production business that shares office space with the CFO.

“Knowledge is power,” Julia said. “Through our work, we see workers becoming more conscious of their rights and power. And it’s not the CFO confronting factory bosses; it’s the workers representing themselves.”

The CFO is rooted in equality. Everyone is considered a leader. That underlying principle played out again and again during our visit.

As the CFO’s coordinator, Julia is outspoken and in charge, but she readily cedes the spotlight to others. For example, it was Juanita López Torres who came with us on our day trip from Piedras Negras to Acuña. She told us how the CFO helped transform her from a mousy factory worker into a self-assured organizer.

In Acuña, we met in the home of

Maria Elena Robles. She, along with other CFO organizers, guided us through an enlightening “market basket” exercise that showed in detail the difficult economic choices maquiladora workers have to make in order to survive. (Milk, chicken, cheese, and fruit, for example, are some of the items that workers cannot afford to buy every week.)

But it was Julia who best summed up what the CFO’s ongoing struggle for justice means to its many volunteers and organizers.

“This fight is part of our lives,” she said. “We don’t go home and forget this work.”

Julia added, “Things are difficult at the border, but the workers are unbowed. We have a sense of pride and dignity.”

There was a second visit to a poor neighborhood during my short stay in Mexico, this one to a *colonia* in Piedras Negras. There, the homes were not made of cinderblock, but wood and corrugated cardboard with tin roofs.

We met with Leticia (Lety) Ramírez, a tiny woman who greeted us warmly and led us into her three-room home. We filled up on tamales, beans, and a very spicy green chili as many of us sat around Lety’s kitchen table and talked about the comings and goings of CFO volunteers. We had a lovely time.

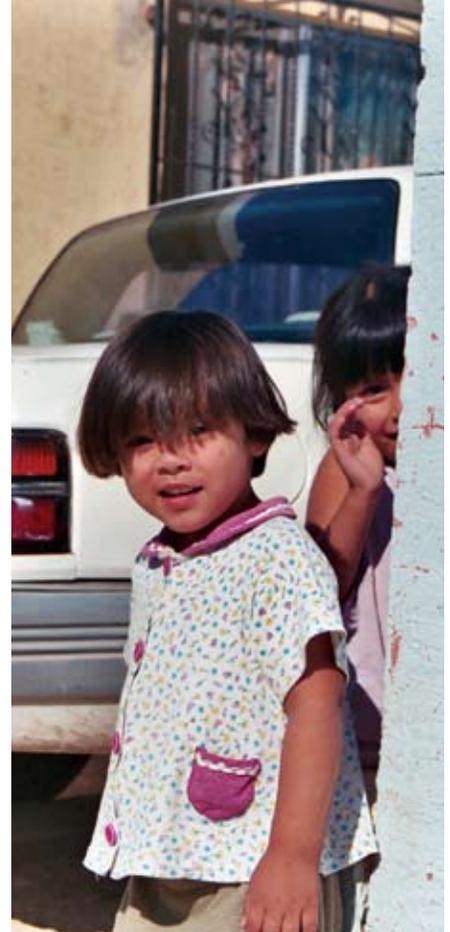
“You look from the outside, and it’s so sad and depressing,” said Mouna Sfeir Evans, another Tan Cerca delegation member, on the drive back to our hotel. “But you go in and it’s a home—there’s furniture, decorations. It’s remarkable.”

Yes, it is.

Willie Colón Reyes is the editor of Quaker Action.



Photo: Julia Quiñonez (standing, center) with delegation members.



Find out more

Read an online story about the Dignity & Justice Maquiladora Company at www.afsc.org/dj

You can find out more about Austin Tan Cerca de la Frontera at www.austintancerca.org and the AFSC Austin office at www.afsc.org/austin, or call (512) 474-2399.

The Comité Fronterizo de Obreras also has a website—www.cfomaquiladoras.org—where you can find out more about their work and how you can help. And you can call AFSC’s Mexico-U.S. Border Program at (215) 241-7132 for information about the CFO and the worker-owned Dignity & Justice Maquiladora Company.

News from around AFSC



Photos: (top) Against a background of destruction, AFSC's Gulf Coast recovery efforts include joint rebuilding efforts with Intermountain Yearly Meeting. (inset) AFSC's Francine Cheeks (left) and Mary Ellen McNish (right) present a check to Tom Joyner for the work of BlackAmericaWeb.com.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

New phase for Gulf Coast recovery

After helping to feed those housed at the Houston Astrodome, AFSC's recovery efforts along the U.S. Gulf Coast have turned to mid- and long-term responses.

A grant of \$250,000 to the Tom Joyner Show's BlackAmericaWeb.Com is helping support the households that opened their

homes to persons who were displaced but received little or no support from traditional agencies. In addition, 13 grants were made to Quaker organizations assisting Katrina's victims. Projects ranged from supporting student clean-up teams to buying shingles and providing trauma workshops. The AFSC/Intermountain Yearly Meeting Joint Services Project also helped rebuild homes in a Native American reservation in Louisiana (pictured above).

For three weeks beginning September 19, a multiracial, multilingual team of AFSC staff traveled the devastated region by camper, visiting the poorest and largely forgotten areas. The team made short-, medium-, and long-term recommendations, focusing on helping communities rebuild and addressing social and economic injustices that have been simmering in the region for years. AFSC's Southeastern Region is putting the final touches on a five-year-plan for work along the Gulf Coast.

Photos: Terry Foss

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

The exonerated tell their stories

AFSC's Criminal Justice Program was the lead community partner for the Philadelphia premiere of *After Innocence*, a new feature length documentary that tells the story of the exonerated—men wrongfully imprisoned for decades and then released after DNA proved their innocence.

Tonya McClary, director of the National Criminal Justice program, hosted opening night ceremonies at the Ritz Theater in December, and moderated a post-film panel discussion that included the filmmakers, people who appeared in the film, and local criminal justice activists. Working with *Active Voice*, a national media strategy company, AFSC also organized nightly talk-back sessions during the two-week run of the film, giving local grassroots organizations an opportunity to discuss compensation for the exonerated, as well as other criminal justice issues.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Fair trade sells in Austin

This past November in Austin, Texas, AFSC sponsored the second annual craft sale and educational activities to promote



“Women and Fair Trade.” Seven vendors sold their wares at the craft sale, including

AFSC's partner Maquiladora Dignidad y Justicia (Dignity & Justice Maquiladora Company), a collective that gives high-quality jobs to those on the Mexico-U.S. border. (See related story on pages 6-7.)

“We had a beautiful venue, so we had a lot of foot traffic,” says Yvonne Montejano, AFSC staff in Austin. “Because of that, we had a very mainstream audience. Many people came in and this was their introduction to fair trade.”

For more information about the Women and Fair Trade sale and educational event, please visit www.afsc.org/austin/ or call (512) 474-2399.

YOUTH

Countering military recruitment in South Dakota

The sacred Black Hills of South Dakota witnessed a unique gathering of native peoples this past October. The Black Hills Action Camp trained mostly Native American activists in the principles of nonviolent direct action. It was organized by AFSC,

the Lakota Action Network, Owe Aku (Bring Back the Way), the Ruckus Society, and the Mennonite Central Committee.

One of the emerging issues on the reservations is the disproportionate numbers of native youth who are enlisting in the military. The Ruckus Society, United for Peace & Justice, and AFSC led the counter-recruitment training and were joined by military veterans from the Lakota Nation. Participants discussed ways for Native people to counter the myths, lies, and misinformation of military recruiters. They also discussed the reasons why the military may seem like a better deal than life on the reservation.

Future gatherings are expected to take place in the Black Hills with more youth involvement in order to strengthen movement building for peace and justice.



Participants in the Black Hills Action Camp.

TAKE ACTION

Support the End the War in Iraq Act (H.R. 4232)

U.S. Representative James McGovern (D-Massachusetts) has introduced a resolution that would prohibit use of taxpayer funds to deploy U.S. troops to Iraq. The bill would allow funds to be used for the safe and orderly withdrawal of our troops, as well as for non-defense spending and eventual reconstruction.

In describing the resolution, Representa-

tive McGovern said, “the Bush Administration ... refused to listen to the words of military and diplomatic leaders who have warned that a continuing U.S. presence in Iraq will not calm the violence or lead to a more stable Iraq. The U.S. presence is now a major part of the problem....”

“We have spent over \$300 billion on the war—with no end in sight. Washington made a mistake in going to war. It is time

for politicians to admit that mistake and fix it before any more lives are lost.”

Use our online Action Center to encourage your U.S. Representatives to co-sponsor the McGovern Resolution: support.afsc.org. You also can call the Congressional switchboard at (202) 224-3121 and ask to be connected with your senators or representatives.



A commitment to those forgotten

Anne Humes' activism multiplies AFSC's impact

BY JACK MALINOWSKI

Like many people who live in the North, long-time AFSC supporter Anne Humes heads south for part of the winter. But in place of beachwear and books for leisure reading, Anne loads her car with children's clothes, textbooks and readers, and as many pencils, crayons, and pads of paper she can gather.

As she has for more than 20 years, she veers from the traffic destined for golf courses and beach resorts to western Alabama where children greet her at the Mowa Choctaw Friends School in McIntosh. The Mowa band of the Choctaw includes approximately 6,000 members, about 2,500 of whom live in and around McIntosh.

"I first heard about the school at New England Yearly Meeting, when a speaker described conditions there," says Anne, formerly of Cambridge, Massachusetts. She's now a member of Kennett (Pennsylvania) Friends Meeting and a resident of Kendal at Longwood, a Quaker retirement community. "It's like a Third World country, with high rates of unemployment, alcoholism, violence, and too often a sense of hopelessness. Kids were dropping out of school as young as second grade and nobody seemed to care—nobody!"

Anne's response was clear: "I wanted to help."

Helping in countless ways

While her husband, Robert, was alive, they traveled and volunteered together at the Choctaw Friends Center, where the school is located. Robert concentrated on carpentry projects while Anne helped the children in countless ways, including seeing that they had good used clothing from



Anne Humes

AFSC's Emergency and Material Assistance Program (EMAP).

Anne gave young people a vision of what higher education could do for them and helped the school connect to sources of funding to underwrite expenses.

"There's more of a sense of community and working together now," Anne says.

Dropout rates have declined, too. "I've been going down so many years that I'm now teaching the children of the first students I had," she says.

Anne's trips to the Choctaw Friends Center are just part of her busy volunteering schedule and a lifetime of adventures that shaped her character.

While still in college, she participated in an AFSC work camp in Virginia at a time when racial segregation reigned largely unchallenged. When she and her friends

of different races were turned away from restaurants and churches, it strengthened her resolve to battle racism.

"Those experiences made us bond together even more," she recalls.

The multiplier effect

Closer to home, Anne is a regular tutor for local Hispanic children, assists at homeless shelters, and is a key promoter of peace activities around Chester County, Pennsylvania.

And in more than one way, Anne helps multiply AFSC's impact. As a member of the Indian Committee of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, she helps connect AFSC's work with native peoples at home and abroad. Through her Kennett Square meeting, Anne helped arrange a successful fundraising festival around Thanksgiving that benefited AFSC. Her role as a community activist in support of migrant workers in the mushroom industry is part of an ongoing concern that Quakers and AFSC share.

'Kids were dropping out of school as young as second grade and nobody seemed to care — nobody! I wanted to help.'

With such volunteer involvement, the Haitian proverb says it well: "Many hands make work light."

Jack Malinowski, a major donor fundraiser in AFSC's Development Unit, is a frequent visitor to Kendal and other Quaker retirement communities.



Shelter from the cold

New Hampshire program tackles homelessness

BY JOHN TREAT

Where do you go on a Friday afternoon in subzero New Hampshire weather when you, your disabled husband, and your two school-aged children are evicted from the shelter you've been living in?

This was just what happened to a family who came to Concord, New Hampshire's Cold Weather Emergency Shelter, a joint project of the AFSC and the city's First Congregational Church.

The family's story is familiar to many who have worked with people who are homeless. The father had a history of mental health issues. The mother had held the family together until her own anxiety became uncontrollable. Soon they found themselves living in a shelter. No longer having a permanent address, they fell between the cracks of the system and lost their benefits.

Most shelters require that a guest start looking for work on his or her second day in the shelter, and many people who are

homeless simply aren't capable of that, says Martha Yager of AFSC's New Hampshire Program.

Growing demand

The Cold Weather Emergency Shelter was started in 2003 as arctic air settled over the region and people in the community worried that those living under bridges and in camps would freeze to death.

The first winter the shelter was open only on the coldest nights and had three to four guests per night. Last winter there were 15 to 28 guests a night, including a family and several couples as well as single adults. This winter the decision has been made to be open every night and up to 32 people have used the shelter. A satellite facility has been opened at Concord's South Church.

However, stopgap measures, no matter how important, aren't the AFSC New Hampshire Program's only approach to housing.

In December, working with the Governor's Interagency Council on Homeless-

ness, Martha and others presented a ten-year plan to the governor to address homelessness in the state.

She says that the 10 percent of the population that is chronically homeless uses 50 percent of the resources because there are so few substance abuse and mental health services available to help them stabilize their lives. Others, including many of the working poor across the state, find themselves homeless because of the state's lack of affordable housing.

The cost-effective ten-year plan urges the state to address these issues, knowing that in the long run this will help more people get off the streets.

A happy ending

The story we began with has a happy ending. During the family's six-week stay, shelter staff and volunteers helped them get their benefits back. When members of the church found that the couple had been in the restaurant business, they hired them to cater church affairs. Today they have their own apartment and the boys are in school.

"I am in awe of the community that has developed, the lives that are changing and the power of treating people with dignity and kindness," Martha says. "Amazing things are happening. It also has been a powerful window into the ways the safety net fails people, which I can use in my policy work both locally and on the state and federal level."

John Treat is a Quaker Action contributing editor.

Photo: Volunteers sign up for overnight shifts at the cold weather shelter.





The tsunami: One year later

AFSC works with Indonesians to rebuild homes, livelihoods

The public's generosity in response to the December 26, 2004 tsunami was extraordinary. AFSC received nearly \$5 million in gifts ranging from children's savings and Christmas money to large foundation grants. This outpouring of aid enabled us to provide immediate relief as well as to support longer-term reconstruction efforts.

In the year following the tsunami, AFSC has sought out and supported local groups, operating on the principle that Indonesians themselves are best suited to identify the needs of their own communities. For example, in partnership with the Indonesian organization SHEEP (the Society for Health, Environment, Education and Peace), AFSC provided medical assistance in some of the most remote regions of Aceh province. AFSC is also working on a variety of economic development projects, creative activities for children, rebuilding homes, reestablishing leprosy testing and treatment in one village, and supporting Burmese migrants in southern Thailand who were being shunned or targeted for attack during relief efforts.

The photo essay on this page offers a look at some of this work. For a more detailed report on our relief and recovery efforts in Southeast Asia, please log onto www.afsc.org/tsunami/update.



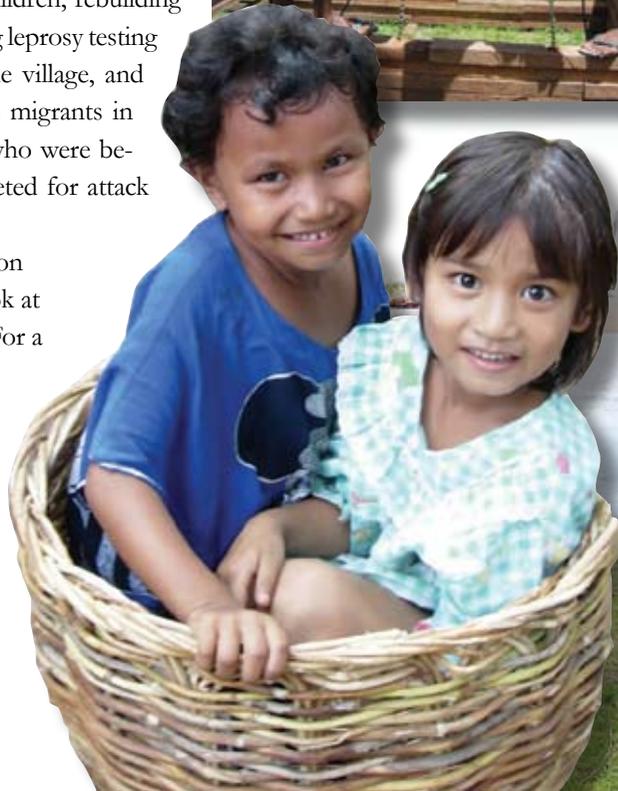
Left: A sanitation engineer constructs a new sanitary system.

Below left: Two carpenters build new housing to replace homes washed away during the tsunami.

Below right: Women sew garments at the new local co-op supported by AFSC.



Below: Man with new fishing net made by a co-op assisted by AFSC staff.



Left: Two children sit in a basket created by a local group encouraging activities for adults and children in the region.



Tools for change

New AFSC resources for defending human rights

AFSC has a long history of working with communities to defend their rights—and of providing effective tools to use in the struggle. Listed below are some of the newest examples of such tools for defending human rights.

A Just Minimum Wage: Good For Workers, Business and Our Future

(Holly Sklar and Rev. Dr. Paul H. Sherry, AFSC, 2005, 69 pages, \$5, paperbound)

This compelling and highly readable report makes both an economic and ethical case for raising the minimum wage—and for moving the United States away from a low road “Wal-Mart-style” economy toward an economy based on fairness and the “golden rule.” The authors effectively counter the arguments against raising the minimum wage and offer fresh insight into why a fair and just minimum wage is so important. In the words of the report: “Wages are a bedrock moral issue. Wages reflect our personal values and our nation’s values.” This is essential reading for all those working for economic justice in the United States.

Putting Dignity & Rights at the Heart of the Global Economy: A Quaker Perspective

(AFSC Working Party on Global Economics, 2004, 118 pages, \$7, paperbound)

Occasionally the AFSC organizes a “working party” to consider issues vital to the Quaker belief that there is that of God in everyone and that we are called to uphold human dignity and justice. The most recent example of that effort is the publication of a report based on the considerations and study of a diverse group of Friends and others: professors of econom-

ics and politics, business people, community activists and AFSC staff.

The publication provides clear facts and charts that help readers analyze and understand the basic barriers to human dignity inherent in the global economy. The concluding “Call for Action” is enhanced by a set of queries and advice that provide an opportunity for reflection by consumers, investors, workers, business owners, managers, citizens and members of Quaker meetings.

*Recommended by Alice Hoffman
Haverford, Pennsylvania*

Rights On The Line: Vigilantes At The Border

Developed as a tool for community education and human rights advocacy, this provocative new video explores the true nature of the vigilante movement along the U.S.-Mexico border. Produced by AFSC, the ACLU, and WITNESS, an international organization that supports video activism to defend human rights.

Available in English and Spanish, and in both VHS and DVD formats. 25 min. \$25.

The video and the previous publications are available from the AFSC online store at www.afscstore.org.



A still photo from “Rights on the Line.”



Photo: Children playing outside mosque school at Dar ul-Islah Masjid in Teaneck, New Jersey.

A Foot in Both Places: Culture and Community at the Crossroads of War

(Produced by Rachael Kamel and Alicia Gudián Fernández, AFSC, 2006, website)

The human experiences and political challenges of 25 Arab and Muslim community activists are brought to life in this online educational toolkit, available on the AFSC website at www.both-places.afsc.org, and also available on CD. Complemented by music and photographs in an engaging interactive presentation, their stories and reflections reveal the true impact of being targeted as “enemies” in the U.S. government’s “war on terror.”

Created with the collaboration of AFSC’s community-based programs in Chicago, Pasadena, and Newark, the toolkit speaks to all who are concerned with the post-September 11 political climate and the attempt to divide the world into an eternally warring “us” and “them.”



Who says God's not watching?

A message from AFSC General Secretary Mary Ellen McNish

On a December Sunday morning I caught a very early Amtrak train out of Penn Station-New York to arrive in Philadelphia in time for Christmas festivities at my Friends Meeting, which were to begin at 9 a.m.

As I got off the train and walked down the platform, I noticed an elderly woman struggling with her bags to get on the same train. Her roller suitcase was turned the wrong way and she had two other big packages which dropped as she tried to run for the train.

I walked back to help, picked up her bags, and asked the conductor to help her onto the train. By this time the train had been in the station six minutes and the conductor at the front of the train was yelling "Move out!"

As I got the woman's bags onto the train, one of those small miracles that restore our faith in providence and humanity happened. My seatmate during the journey from New York to Philadelphia came out of the car holding my purse, which I had left

on the train. I was stunned to think that my purse, with my passport, driver's license, and credit cards, would have been in Newport News, Virginia, by midnight.

I realized that this was a moment of grace for me. As my days are more and more consumed with the Iraq war, Federal budget cuts, and hurricane relief efforts, it often seems as if there's more than could ever be done. It's these little moments, like a stranger going out of his way or the notes of encouragement that so many of you send me, that remind me that there is grace and goodness sufficient to help us through the tasks at hand.

We have a lot to do. And so I try to take a few moments out of every day to give thanks for the knowledge that God does indeed watch over us.

Mary Ellen McNish



REFLECTIONS

Keeper of our yesterdays

AFSC archivist looks back on nearly four decades of service

by Jack Sutters

When I arrived at the AFSC in September 1969 to assume the responsibilities of archivist, I intended to remain for a few years while finishing a master's degree. It never occurred to me that I'd "retire" from the Service Committee.

I have regarded it as a privilege to help those who wanted to research the AFSC's unique records. On many occasions people have inquired about or asked to look through the documents that might contain information about the families they lost in the Second World War. From our records, we have been able to provide them with missing pieces of the puzzle they were trying to assemble.

An occasion that immediately occurs to me is the time a man inquired about those who had helped save him as a child in wartime France. The Archives' staff had the opportunity to put him in touch with the woman who actually took care of him and 40 other children before they began their journey to the U.S. It was satisfying to be able to do this. I can only imagine what it meant to him.

Most people seldom have that kind of experience in their jobs. I think the next archivist will have the privilege of similar experiences, plus the joy of helping others to gain access to a collection of records that contribute enormously to the social history of this country.

Jack Sutters will retire this year as director of AFSC's Archives Unit.

Justice Visions

Two new *Justice Visions* issue briefs are available from AFSC's National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Program:

- Close to Home: Developing Innovative, Community-Based Responses to Anti-LGBT Violence
- Corrupting Justice: A Primer for LGBT Communities on Racism, Violence, Human Degradation & the Prison Industrial Complex

Both are available in downloadable (PDF) format at www.afsc.org/lgbt/criminal-justice/general-resources. Print copies: \$2 (prepaid). Order from the National LGBT Program, Community Relations Unit; American Friends Service Committee, 1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19192. (For bulk orders, please contact Lillie Bloomfield at (215) 241-7127 or lbloomfield@afsc.org.

Great Careers

Alternatives to the military booklet (2nd Edition)

Twenty pages filled with many local and national career opportunities: peaceful jobs and careers that offer what the military promises—without giving up your rights and supporting the war machine. Available as a free download at www.afsc.org/pacificsw/counter-recruitment or order print copies from AFSC Pasadena by contacting Jochen Strack at (626) 791-1978, ext. 138.

The Intrepid Quaker: One Man's Quest for Peace

The memoirs, speeches, and writings of long-time AFSC staffer and board member Steve Cary reveal leadership and philosophy that mirror the Quaker experience in education and peace work in the latter half of the twentieth century. Hardcover, 337 pages.

\$19.95



Life Over Debt T-shirt



Show your support for AFSC's Life Over Debt campaign (see story on page three) with this attractive T-shirt.

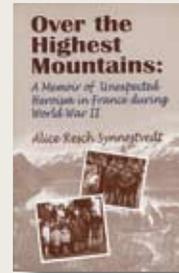
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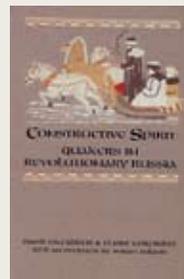
Sizes: S – XXXL

Over the Highest Mountains: A Memoir of Unexpected Heroism in France during World War II

Alice Resch Synnestvedt, a Norwegian nurse, describes how she discovered the Quakers in Vichy France and wound up spending six years working amid the deportations and the detention camps, rescuing people from the Nazis. Softcover, 284 pages. **\$17.95**



Constructive Spirit: Quakers in Revolutionary Russia



In the chaotic aftermath of WWI, the newly-formed American Friends Service Committee sent a team of six women to join their British counterparts who were helping refugees fleeing from Poland into Russia. The book includes dramatic first-hand narratives of their courageous adventures. Softcover, 232 pages. **\$16.95**

AFSC photo notecards

AFSC's photo notecards are graced with images from our recent program work. The cards come with matching envelopes in packages of eight. **\$10**



The Little Book of Peace

Compiled by Patricia J. Chui, this volume is small in size (4 ¼ x 5 ¼ inches) but big in impact as it quotes thinkers and doers throughout history. 184 pages. **\$7.95**

Unless otherwise noted, order all items on this page through AFSC's Literature Resources Unit
 1501 Cherry Street
 Philadelphia, PA 19102-1403
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 Fax: (215) 241-7275 or order online at
www.afscstore.org

Build a Future for ...

Africa



Every year bequests from our supporters allow AFSC to undertake relief, economic development, and peacemaking work in some of the world's most difficult places.

Right now in Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and in the African Great Lakes region, AFSC is providing safe water, improving agricultural methods, and working for peace. In the U.S., AFSC's Life

Over Debt Campaign—recently endorsed by Desmond Tutu—has become a rallying point for debt relief for African nations (see story, page 3).

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To learn more about becoming a Friend for the Future call our Gift Planning Office toll free at 1-888-588-2372, ext. 3, check the box on the enclosed reply envelope, or visit our website at:

www.afsc.org/give/planning.

Photos: (top left), David Funkhouser; (middle), Terry Foss; (bottom right), AFSC photo



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