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# Quaker *Action*



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Service Committee

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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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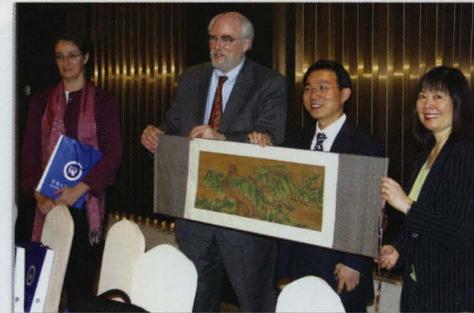
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**What's new on [afsc.org](http://afsc.org)**

**New materials for sale online**

Need unusual holiday gifts? Spread the message of peace with AFSC tote bags, T-shirts, buttons, books, and videos. Find them at [store.afsc.org](http://store.afsc.org).



**AFSC in China**

Learn more about AFSC's work in China, including a slideshow and report from a recent delegation that met with Chinese officials. See [www.afsc.org/china](http://www.afsc.org/china).

**Prevent war with Iran**

AFSC has been engaging in dialogues and exchanges with Iranians, trying to create the conditions for more official diplomacy between the U.S. and Iran. Read more about our work for peace at [www.afsc.org/iran](http://www.afsc.org/iran).

**On the cover**

AFSC's 2008 holiday gift card features art by Oregon artist Ann Altman. Please turn to page 15 for ordering information, and then keep reading to learn about the many ways that AFSC is fostering peace world-wide.

# Face to face

AFSC fosters international dialogue when governments are at odds

BY CARL ROOSE

**T**he two Iraqi parliamentarians sat side-by-side at the front of a packed chamber, facing the panel of U.S. Congress members. Sheik Al-Ulayyan wore a traditional white headdress and thawb (similar to a robe), Dr. Al-Jaberi a dark suit and red tie. They spoke in turn, responding to the members' questions in calm, deliberate Arabic, pausing now and then for translation by the interpreters seated at their sides.

The committee members were predictably curious: How many Iraqis want the U.S. to leave their country? Perhaps 70 percent, Dr. Al-Jaberi estimated. And if we pull out? Iraq can handle its own affairs, replied Sheik Al-Ulayyan.

For more than an hour they answered questions, and with each response they were quietly breaking new ground.

■ **It was June, and their trip**, arranged by the AFSC, was coming at a crucial point: the U.S. administration had been quietly negotiating a security agreement that would outline the terms of a continued U.S. military presence in Iraq.

Dr. Al-Jaberi and Sheik Al-Ulayyan reflected the political diversity within the Iraqi Parliament, but today they agreed on the matters at hand. Like the majority of their colleagues, they objected to many aspects of the proposed security agreement: permanent military bases, legal immunity for U.S. troops, and an ambiguous timeline for withdrawal. For Iraqis, they reported, these conditions were unacceptable.

Their briefing provided U.S. law-

makers and journalists a rare and valuable chance to hear directly from Iraqi citizens themselves, without having to rely on government-issued statements or news headlines. Over the next week of nonstop interviews, breakfasts, and panel discussions, the two parliamentarians would share their perspectives with hundreds of people eager to hear what they had to say.

The following month, AFSC sponsored a similar visit by Ayad Allawi, the former Iraqi prime minister, who reinforced the same message on those issues.

■ **Such "people-to-people" diplomacy** has long been a part of AFSC's history. In the 1960s, for example, the Service Committee facilitated a series of exchanges with the Soviet Union. More recently, AFSC representatives made a historic trip to Iran in 2007 as part of a religious delegation.

Effective though they are, the outcomes of AFSC's efforts of quiet diplomacy often go unnoticed and unpublicized—particularly when the anonymity of the parties is an important issue.

The Iraqi parliamentarians may have been an exception. Their visit appears to have solidified congressional understanding of the Iraqi opposition to the proposed security agreement, delaying its passage.

While the specific conditions of an



eventual agreement are still being negotiated, the U.S. administration's original goal of establishing permanent bases appears much less likely than before, and any deal is sure to be given careful attention by lawmakers in both countries.

At their heart, these visits are based on a simple philosophy: that it's important for people to come together and meet face to face.

In his welcoming remarks to the two Iraqi parliamentarians, Paul Lacey, the Clerk of AFSC's Board of Directors, put it aptly: "When we first met, I thought we spoke two different languages. Now I see that we both speak the language of peace."

**More information is available online at [www.afsc.org/IraqCampaign](http://www.afsc.org/IraqCampaign).**

*Carl Roose works in AFSC's Washington, D.C., Public Policy Office.*

**Photo: Sheik Al-Ulayyan during a panel discussion in Washington, D.C.**



# On the ROAD

Five principles lay the foundation for a

## THE FIVE PRINCIPLES

### Our nation should invest in peace

Our country should invest in diplomacy, development, and conflict prevention—cost-effective ways to improve national and global security.

### Military force should be the LAST option

The military is not an effective relief agency. The government needs a strong civilian foreign assistance and crisis response team.

### Give diplomacy a chance

With a highly skilled diplomatic corps, the United States can prevent conflict and restore its international reputation.

### Be a part of global efforts

We must work with renewed commitment in international institutions and partners to address major global conflicts and challenges, such as nonproliferation, climate change, migration, public health, and poverty.

### Create justice through development and trade policies

The nation's interests, and the world's, benefit from trade and development policies that alleviate poverty, treat men and women equally, and protect the environment.

**H**ow do you encourage the international cooperation necessary to achieve lasting peace and security? And what role can the U.S. play in this process?

Two years ago, AFSC public affairs staff in Washington, D.C., began grappling with those questions. They organized a coalition of more than two dozen partner organizations and convened a series of discussions to develop concrete recommendations for changes in U.S. foreign policy. The result is the **Roadmap for Peace** (see left).

“It’s extremely difficult to change U.S. foreign policy,” admits Aura Kanegis, director of AFSC’s Washington, D.C., Public Policy Office and one of the **Roadmap’s** key architects. “But everyone recognizes that our tools for diplomacy are inadequate. So there’s a window of opportunity now because of the mounting evidence that what the U.S. has done isn’t working.”

Aura points to Iran as a case where diplomacy would have borne valuable fruit. “The U.S. has spearheaded decades of sanctions against Iran,” she says, “and now that the U.S. wants to push them to change their stance on nuclear issues, they’ve got nothing. The toolkit is bare.”

The **Roadmap’s** five principles are intended to change that reality. AFSC and the broad-based coalition it has assembled are already talking with staff of both major party candidates, as well as key congressional legislators. Once the elections are over, the **Roadmap** and the names of all its endorsers will be formally presented to the new administration’s transition team. Then, together with Congress, work can begin on moving these principles forward even before a new president is sworn in.

It’s the first step on a difficult journey. To find out how you can join this effort, please go to [roadmapforpeace.org](http://roadmapforpeace.org).

## Be an agent for change

You can be part of the effort to change how the U.S. engages with the rest of the world. Please go to [roadmapforpeace.org](http://roadmapforpeace.org) and sign on as an endorser of the **Roadmap’s** five principles. They will be delivered to the new president’s transition team soon after the elections.

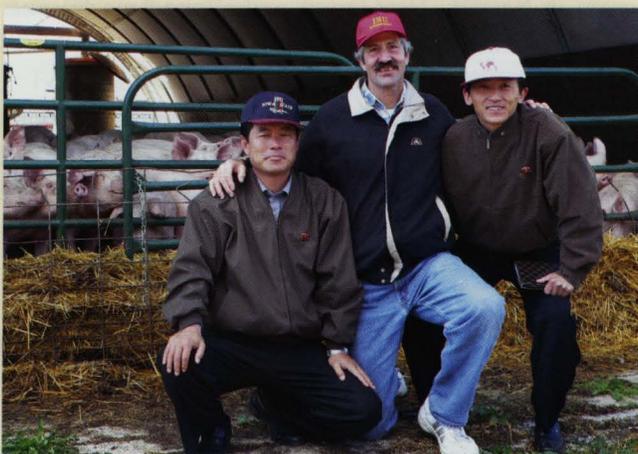
# to PEACE

new approach to U.S. foreign policy

Dialogue & diplomacy

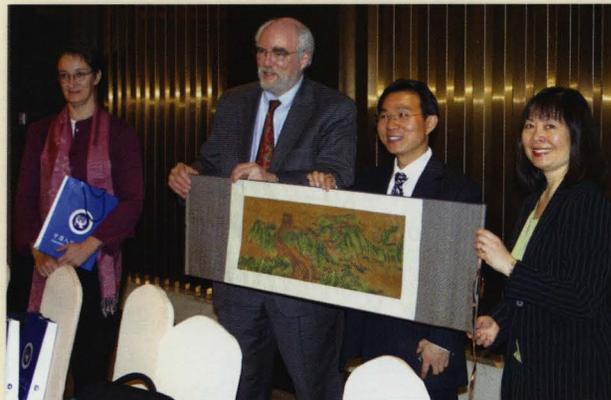
## The AFSC experience

The Roadmap for Peace isn't a pie-in-the-sky idea, as demonstrated by AFSC's more than 90 years of experience. This photo collage highlights recent AFSC efforts that serve as powerful testaments to the value of diplomacy, dialogue, and international cooperation.



Top: Bosnian peace gardens help bridge ethnic differences (2007). Photo: Bill Pierre

Bottom: North Korean agronomists exchange ideas with counterparts in Iowa (2006). Photo: Randy Ireson



Top: U.S. peace activists visit China (2008). Photo: Wu Na Reilly

Middle: Delegation of U.S. religious leaders to Iran (2007). Photo: Mark Beach

Bottom: Indonesia-Cambodia exchange on rebuilding trust after violence (2007). Photo: AFSC

# Behind the walls

## STOPMAX conference reenergizes efforts to end isolation and torture in U.S. prisons

BY WILLIE COLÓN REYES

*I spent 10 years locked down. At first I thought, "This is great: My own cell, my own television." But after a while...I felt my mind begin to slip from me. It's real quiet in there. You can hear your own thoughts.*

Hakeem Shaheed

**I**n September 1995, prison officials at the U.S. penitentiary in Terre Haute, Indiana, informed Hakeem Shaheed that he had broken prison rules and was being transferred to the federal control unit prison in Marion, Illinois. There, inmates were confined to tiny cells the size of parking spaces for 23 to 24 hours a day with virtually no human contact or exposure to the outside. He was going to the 20<sup>th</sup> century version of a dungeon, and the announcement hit him hard.

"I won't tell you I wasn't scared," Hakeem said during a presentation at the first national STOPMAX conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, organized by AFSC this past summer. "But I never feared man.

I was afraid of what I saw. I saw the products of Marion inside Terre Haute.

"One guy in particular couldn't cope with the open population [at Terre Haute]," Hakeem recalled. "He'd get in his cell, shut the door, and look out the little window. He eventually went back to Marion."

Stories like Hakeem's were part of the sharing—and the healing—that made the

Hakeem Shaheed

AFSC-sponsored STOPMAX conference such a unique, emotional experience.

From May 30 to June 1, 400 former prisoners, families of prisoners, and prisoner rights advocates from throughout the U.S. gained valuable skills and inspiration in their struggle to end the use of torture and isolation in U.S. prisons. They rekindled old friendships, established new networks, and learned from one another about strategies for survival and resistance to prison abuse.

The dozens of workshops and presentations addressed a wide range of topics, from how the creative arts can help prisoners survive solitary confinement to the needs of prisoners' families and the often-forgotten issues facing women and youth in isolation.

"We wanted to bring together people to network, share skills, and take the first steps toward a national campaign to end control units and supermax [supermaximum security] prisons," says Naima Black, AFSC's STOPMAX campaign coordinator. "This is not a pretty topic, but the energy was incredible."

For Bonnie Kerness, coordinator of AFSC's Prison Watch program in Newark, New Jersey, and a long-time prisoner rights activist, the conference gave her hope that the future of this struggle is in good hands.

"I was in awe at the number of young organizers from all over the country," she says. "This experience can't help but provide them with resources they might not otherwise have had."

Those new resources and connections have sparked several next steps, including the formation of a national steering committee for the STOPMAX campaign and the beginning of a national emergency response network.

As Bonnie notes, "The potential is enormous."

**For more information about ongoing efforts to end the use of torture and isolation in U.S. prisons, please go to [www.afsc.org/stopmax](http://www.afsc.org/stopmax).**

Willie Colón Reyes is the editor of Quaker Action.

Quaker Action



Working to End  
Solitary Confinement  
and Torture in US Prisons

**STOPMAX**

Campaign Conference

American Friends  
Service Committee

Fund For Nonviolence

Bread & Roses community fund



## Testimonies from the inside

Here's what a friend told me in prison. I was going into isolation. He said, "No one will help you here. You're on your own...You didn't exist before coming here. Your life never happened. The only thought that drives you on is to be alive at the end of the day."



*Jimmy Santiago Baca*

[reading from his acclaimed prison memoir, *A Place to Stand*]



Incarcerated persons who stand against injustice and who are political do harder time...You get beaten and harassed, your mail is lost and torn up, your visitors are harassed, the calls they make to you are censored...This is what goes on behind the walls.

*Munirah El-Bomani*

I got released to the streets in 2003. To this day, I don't sleep a full night. I wake up every 45 minutes to an hour [which is how often the guards in lockdown would wake him as they walked through his unit]... Sleep deprivation is sensory deprivation. It is torture.

*Bobby Delello*



Photos (from top left): **STOPMAX** banner; untitled graphic by solitary confinement prisoner Martin Vargas; opening event outside Eastern State Penitentiary, the first solitary confinement prison in the U.S.; workshop with AFSC staff member Bonnie Kerness (right); participants at a workshop on using theater and storytelling to explore conflicts.

## News from around AFSC



### IMMIGRATION

#### Rights trampled in rush to deport immigrant workers

In mid-May, nearly 400 workers in Postville, Iowa, were detained in one of the largest single-site immigration raids in U.S. history. About 50 were released immediately on probation—mostly women with children.

Officials pressured most of the detainees to plead guilty to criminal charges of identity theft and false use of a Social Security card, which carries a penalty of deportation, though few were involved in illegal activities. Those released on probation may not leave the area or work. Many cannot feed their families or afford legal fees, and courts have been slow in scheduling proceedings.

AFSC, as part of the Immigrant Safety Network®, helped mobilize and coordinate the response of hundreds of people and groups to assist in different capacities, including legal aid, “Know Your Rights” presentations,

and humanitarian assistance. That help is ongoing.

“We provided a lot of brains and a lot of heart to the response when it was needed,” says Sandra Sanchez, director of AFSC’s Immigrants’ Voice Program in Des Moines. “Our reputation opened doors that would have been closed to anyone else.”

Read more online at [www.afsc.org/iowa](http://www.afsc.org/iowa).

### YOUTH

#### Learning the truth about military service

Students in Illinois and California got a reality check about military service this past summer, courtesy of AFSC.

In California, the AFSC-San Francisco office and the Oakland-based Bay-Peace ran a six day “boot camp” for students who had signed up for the military’s delayed enlistment program. Twenty-one young people met and talked with veterans, heard stories of how the military treated women, spoke with soldiers who had returned from war, and talked with soldiers’ families. In addition, the group visited Camp Pendleton, an area community college, and learned about peaceful alternatives to military service.



Photos: (top) Demonstration for immigrants’ rights following the Postville raid (sign reads “United for immigrant dignity and security”); (bottom) “Boot camp” tour participants.

Photos: (top) Jon Krieg; (bottom) AFSC

Several of the teens later decided against enlisting and now work with the AFSC's counter-recruitment program.

Meanwhile, AFSC-Chicago's Truth in Recruitment program trained twenty-four teens from thirteen different high schools as activists in the "Peace. Here...There... Everywhere" summer youth institute. Among other activities, the students learned about AFSC programs and issues; staffed an information table at an Arab Fest; made anti-war flyers, T-shirts, buttons, and blogs; and prepared presentations ranging from women in the military to a brochure on post-traumatic stress disorder.

After the first training session, six of the twelve students volunteered at the AFSC-Chicago office.

## HEALING JUSTICE

### California condemns use of torture

On August 14, the California legislature passed a resolution aimed at preventing doctors, psychologists, and other health professionals from taking part in coercive interrogations at any U.S. military prison. Several professional organizations have passed similar resolutions, but California is the first state to do so.



AFSC, Physicians for Social Responsibility—Los Angeles, and the Program for Torture Victims coordinated the two-year campaign in favor of the resolution.

"The resolution calls attention to the intolerable dilemma that torture presents when those who are supposed to be the healers in our society are involved in the abuse of prisoners," says Eisha Mason, associate regional director for the AFSC Southwest Regional Office based in Los Angeles.

More information is available online at [www.afsc.org/losangeles/stoptorture](http://www.afsc.org/losangeles/stoptorture).

transportation.

AFSC is helping with these local efforts by partnering with Buddhist monks, who play an important role as respected leaders within the community. AFSC is also providing opportunities for sharing experiences, in addition to funding support for relief efforts.

A monk who worked with survivors of the 2004 tsunami went to Yangon two days after the cyclone struck. Not only did he and friends provide relief and rehabilitation to villagers, they also organized Buddhist rites for the dead.

## HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

### Rebuilding lives—and peace—in Burma

Cyclone Nargis took everything from people in the affected areas of Myanmar/Burma. But the people of Myanmar/Burma are used to relying on themselves. So they banded together and did what they could—assessing the needs of devastated villages, collecting money and supplies, and arranging

And the leader of a group that promotes peace and tolerance among people of different faiths and ethnicities mobilized its members. They provided basic supplies and rebuilding help to six communities. Their efforts have helped hundreds of students and families.

Read about our work in Myanmar/Burma online at [www.afsc.org/burma](http://www.afsc.org/burma).

Photos: (top) In Myanmar/Burma, AFSC is partnering with Buddhist monks; (bottom) Truth in Recruitment activists in Chicago.

Photos: (top) AFSC; (bottom) Jesus Palafox



## Steve Cary: A lighthouse beacon

### Leadership Endowment Fund honors a steadfast AFSC supporter

BY M'ANNETTE RUDELL

**A** mighty wind was blowing, the rain pelting and the surf roiling when the telephone rang in Norval Reece's Cape Cod cottage. On the other end was his long-time friend, Steve Cary, who bellowed, "Let's go catch some fish!"

Despite the weather, Norval knew his friend would not be deterred. He got his boat ready, picked up Steve, and off they went to troll for bluefish.

"That's a typical Steve experience," says Norval. "He was a rollicking, committed, humorous, and generous force of nature."

Through years of conversation, sharing meals, celebrations and yes, many fishing trips, Steve and Norval listened, disagreed, and pondered each other's viewpoints. Norval compared his friend to "Cape Cod's Chatham Lighthouse, visible for miles out into the Atlantic Ocean. He was a steady beacon and a moral compass. We always knew Steve was 'on the job.'"

Both Steve and Norval shared a deep and abiding faith in the American Friends Service Committee and its impact on the world. Norval spent two



***He was a rollicking, committed, humorous, and generous force of nature.***

years in India as an AFSC volunteer and upon his return to the United States, accepted several other assignments. That youthful experience convinced him of the value of service to the individual and the importance of young energy and ideas for the organization.

When "Spirited Engagement: A Campaign for the American Friends Service Committee" was announced, Norval readily agreed to head the Stephen G. Cary Leadership Endowment Fund effort that is part of the comprehensive \$200 million goal. He knew that many in Steve's Cape Cod

community and the Haverford College community (where Steve spent much of his working life) would respond to this unique opportunity to honor their friend and mentor.

Since its launch, nearly \$850,000 toward the Fund's \$1 million goal has been contributed or pledged. The first Stephen G. Cary intern, Emily Higgs, began her assignment at the Quaker United Nations Office in August. She's a graduate of Haverford College and participated in an AFSC youth delegation to the World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates in Rome, Italy. She will serve for a year, assisting in planning meetings and conferences, and researching and writing briefing papers and articles.

The AFSC is grateful to Norval and his wife, Ann, for their financial commitment to the Cary Endowment and for his enthusiastic leadership.

He notes, "I think we help create a better future when we make internships for young, non-specialists available through AFSC. Steve Cary had a passion for finding and nurturing young leaders for service work. I hope the Cary Fund will keep that passion alive."

**For more information on the Stephen G. Cary Leadership Endowment Fund, please contact Phil Irwin at (215) 241-7091 or [pirwin@afsc.org](mailto:pirwin@afsc.org).**

*M'Annette Ruddell is a Quaker Action contributing editor.*

*Photos: (top) Steve Cary; (bottom) Norval and Ann Reece.*

Photos: (top) Terry Foss; (bottom) courtesy of Ann and Norval Reece



## Displaced and disconnected

AFSC responds to a refugee resettlement crisis in Dayton, Ohio

By KAREN LIGHT

This past January, rumors were circulating that the boarded-up house adjacent to the AFSC-Dayton office was being occupied by immigrants. Staff, however, saw no signs of life until the beginning of spring when Migwe Kimemia, the Peace & Immigration Program Director, spotted children playing outside.

Migwe spoke with them in Swahili and learned that the rumors were true. A family of African refugees, including nine children, was, in fact, living there. The stove was broken and there was a gas leak. They were in this dangerous situation because they felt powerless and didn't know their rights.

"It was shocking for me to discover that a government-funded refugee resettlement program can debase human rights and dignity before my own eyes!" Migwe says.

■ **As Migwe learned more**, he realized that this situation was not unusual.

Prior to being resettled, many of these African refugees, originally from Burundi, had been raising families and growing up since 1972 in Tanzanian refugee camps where they had no access to basic education. Subsequently they were moved to Dayton where they were supposed to secure work and enroll their children in English-speaking schools. Hundreds of other refugees from Liberia, Rwanda, and Sudan had already been resettled in

Dayton by the same U.S. program.

Under the U.S. Refugee Resettlement Policy, refugees from all countries have just eight months to become self-sufficient, after which all aid is withdrawn. With no skills and little guidance on how to navigate the system, these refugees can find themselves dropping out of school, in homeless shelters, or under the grip of slum landlords, jobless, destitute, scared, and isolated.

AFSC-Dayton is working to change this by connecting the refugees with one another and helping them create a supportive community.

■ **On World Refugee Day** in June, AFSC sponsored a community festival for refugee families. More than 120 Africans came to celebrate their culture at a park where parents could speak to each other in their native languages and the children could play their favorite sport: soccer.

To build on the blossoming community spirit, a barbeque was later hosted

in the AFSC parking lot, which allowed everyone to become better acquainted with the facility and its services while enjoying themselves. In time for the barbeque, donations came pouring in from people across the city. These generous donations are helping families make real homes for themselves and find new friends.

AFSC is also facilitating dialogues on cultural differences and human rights to nurture hospitality and friendship. Other community actions involve pressuring the Dayton School Board to fully fund and staff the "English as a Second Language" program and address the academic achievement gap for refugee children.

In order to sustain community-building, assist refugees in the transition, and address issues surrounding the resettlement policy, AFSC co-founded the Coalition for Asylee and Refugee Empowerment. And a joint research project with United Way is exploring "best practices" for meeting basic human needs for all refugees.

"Our goal is to empower refugees to achieve their hopes and dreams, and become a voice for peaceful change in Africa," Migwe says.

*Karen Light works in the development unit of AFSC's Great Lakes Regional Office based in Chicago, Illinois.*

*Photo: Community festival for refugee families on World Refugee Day.*



## Healing the wounds of the past

In Southeast Asia, youth take the lead in building peace

BY PATRICIA DEBOER

**V**iolent conflict leaves deep wounds in societies—wounds that can take generations to heal. Both Indonesia and Cambodia have recently experienced violence, yet brave young people in these two countries are committed to breaking the cycle of hatred and fear. Below are the stories of two AFSC partner groups taking the lead in this invaluable, difficult work.

■ **On the island of Maluku** in Southeastern Indonesia, a dispute between Muslim immigrants from other parts of Indonesia and local people, mostly Christian, turned into sectarian violence. From 1999 to 2004, several thousand died and half a million people were forced from their homes. The violence traumatized the island and left communities divided by religion.

In 2006, AFSC introduced a group of Maluku young people to Jogjakarta Peace Generation, a student volunteer group that had been organizing inter-ethnic peace camps since 2000. With continued mentoring and financial support from AFSC, and advice from the Jogjakarta students, **Maluku Peace Generation** was born.

For their first peace camp, they worked with two Christian and two Muslim high schools. After gaining the support of community religious leaders, they organized a youth camp on the theme

“One Family.” The camp included homestays of Christian students at Muslim homes.

Uci, a young woman from the Christian community whose father had been killed in the violence, went to the peace camp despite her mother’s fears because she wanted to learn about Muslims.

“My past perspective about Muslims is changing,” Uci says. “From this point on my commitment is to tell my family and school that Christians and Muslims are from one family.”

Organizers are hoping to gain permission from Muslim families for Muslim-to-Christian home stays as well.

■ **In Cambodia**, young people inherit a legacy of resentment and fear of their larger, more powerful neighbor, Vietnam. The history of conflict between the two countries goes back centuries, but the traumatic events of the past thirty years in Cambodia have left a particular sense of vulnerability.

Young Vietnamese also have inherited prejudices, learning from their elders that they “saved” Cambodia from the Khmer Rouge. This simplistic version of history leads them to be offended when they hear how Cambodians feel toward their country.

Each side must overcome deep social and family pressures telling them that the other country is filled with violent and dangerous people.

Learning how to communicate across this emotional divide was challenging, but a committed core of young volun-



teers from **Initiatives of Change** refused to give up.

Since 2004 they have organized annual Cambodia-Vietnam dialogues for up to 50 participants. AFSC has helped the organizing team resolve disputes, develop a shared vision, learn new communication and facilitation skills, and gain support from other donors.

The visits have helped the young people go beyond stereotypes and see each other as human beings, with common needs, problems, and dreams. They have discovered that they can talk about painful issues without becoming enemies.

As one participant in the fourth annual exchange noted, “All our past problems will be lessons for the young generation to learn, in order not to make the same mistakes.”

*Patricia DeBoer is AFSC’s regional director for Southeast Asia.*

*Photos: Cambodian and Vietnamese volunteers from Initiatives of Change.*

Photos: AFSC



# BOOKS THAT DELIGHT AND ENLIGHTEN

AFSC staff members recommend their favorite children's books

With the holidays approaching, many of us have begun thinking about stocking stuffers. We asked AFSC staff members to recommend children's books that have enchanted the young people in their lives, while gently illustrating good values. The response was passionate and plentiful.

My kids love **Click, Clack, Moo—Cows That Type** about barnyard animals who get organized and demand better living conditions.

Margaret Fogarty, Concord, NH

One book that my children enjoyed is **The True Story of the Three Little Pigs**. It is a good book to use for discussions on injustice/justice, racial profiling, and stereotypes. I also use this book with adults in the prison setting. After reading it we challenge participants to re-think and then re-tell childhood stories and fairy tales.

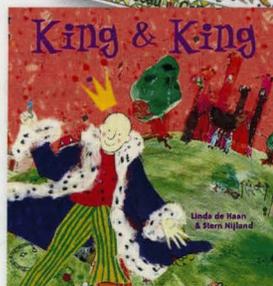
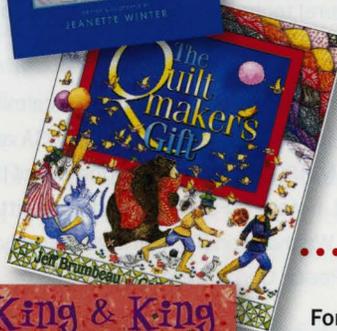
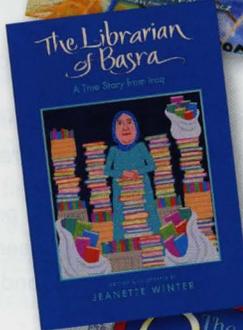
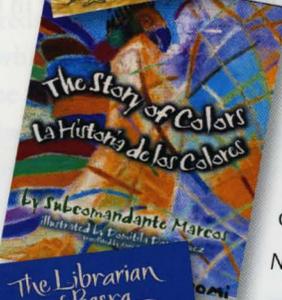
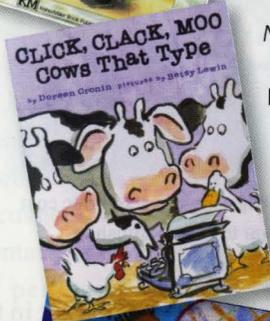
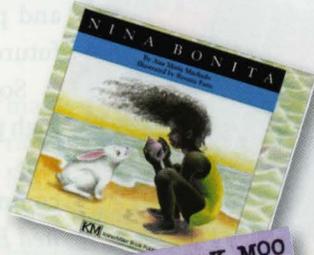
Dominique Stevenson, Baltimore, MD

My children like **Si Se Puede! Yes We Can!** about a janitors' strike in LA. It's told from the viewpoint of a little boy whose mother is taking the risk of joining a union to improve their lives.

Sayrah Namaste, Albuquerque, NM

**The Story of Colors**, in Spanish and English, is wonderfully illustrated by the Mazatecan artist Domitila Dominguez. It is structured like many indigenous creation stories and reminds me of the non-Western logic of the "folk tales" my father told me when I was a child. (Its author is none other than the EZLN Subcomandante Marcos.)

Gabriel Camacho, Cambridge, MA



Our daughter Quilana loves the book **King & King** and so do we. It's a happily-ever-after story about how people of the same sex can fall in love with each other and marry.

Natalia Cardona and Oskar Castro, Philadelphia, PA

**Mrs. Katz and Tush** is the story of an elderly Jewish widow and her friendship with a young African-American neighbor. They connect initially through Mrs. Katz's new cat, Tush, though their bond goes much deeper. I almost always cry at the last page.

Seth Horwitz, Philadelphia, PA

**Nina Bonita** is a delightful tale of a white rabbit who wishes: "When I get married I would like to have a daughter as black and pretty as she." It is just a lovely story about the richness of diversity. I've given a copy to all my grandchildren and my great-grandson. They all love it because it reflects our family.

Nina Laboy, Seattle, WA

The **Librarian of Basra** is the true story of how a determined librarian helped save the books in her library during the invasion of Iraq. A lovely book.

Rachael Kamel, Philadelphia, PA

We've been teaching my five year old different ways to be a peacemaker. **The Quiltmaker's Gift** illustrates perfectly the peacemaking that comes from standing with and standing up for those who are being hurt.

Janine Schwab, Philadelphia, PA

For more staff favorites, a full listing of books and authors, and links to related resources, please visit: [www.afsc.org/kidsbooks](http://www.afsc.org/kidsbooks). The books listed here are available through the AFSC online bookstore at [www.afsclabooks.org](http://www.afsclabooks.org).

# What we have accomplished together

A message from AFSC General Secretary Mary Ellen McNish

**T**hroughout this magazine, you can read about the Service Committee's recent successes and ongoing work to make the world more humane, peaceful, and fair. Your support and contributions make it all possible. Thank you!

Together, we bridged a gulf between the U.S. Congress and Iraqi Parliament (see story on p.3), helped communities rebuild after the flooding in Burma/Myanmar, and stood up for the dignity of all people, including the most vulnerable among us.

And, together, we're building some resources to ensure that our work will carry on into the future. AFSC's *Spirited Engagement* campaign is in the final phase. We've already raised more than 80 percent of the campaign's \$200 million goal to support AFSC's current peace and human rights programs. And we



Highlighting the economic cost of war in New Hampshire.

have built our endowment with some special and planned gifts that will support work in future generations.

So far, that money has helped us arrange a high profile visit from some Iraqi parliamentarians, and implemented work that meets vital community needs around the world. With *Spirited Engagement's* support, we highlighted the human and economic costs of the Iraq war during the presidential primaries, helped keep many immigrant families together, and placed *It's My Life* military alternatives guides in the hands of young people across the country.

Thank you for the work we've done so far. I'm looking forward to seeing what we can do

together in the future.

*Mary Ellen McNish*

## REFLECTIONS

### Volunteers for peace

AFSC's field experience and VISA program inspire U.S. Peace Corps

The Roadmap for Peace (see story on p. 4-5) isn't the first time the Service Committee has lent its expertise to the U.S. government in an attempt to foster greater international understanding and cooperation.

In 1960, AFSC began the Voluntary International Service Assignments (VISA) program, which provided community service opportunities to young adults who made one-to-two-year commitments. Volunteers did a multitude of jobs (e.g., digging wells, conducting literacy classes, teaching agricultural techniques, etc.) in the U.S. and various countries of Latin America, Europe, Asia, and Africa.

A year later, the U.S. government's Peace Corps program emerged with a similar structure and objectives. AFSC's experience in the field—through both VISA and its long-standing work camps for youth—clearly influenced the development of the Peace Corps. As one AFSC report from 1961 notes, "AFSC staff and committee members were drawn into planning groups in Washington [D.C.] and gave freely of their time and experience as criteria for the Peace Corps were established."

By the time AFSC laid down the VISA program in 1971, nearly 200 volunteers had served. The AFSC press release announcing the VISA program eloquently stated the program's ultimate goals, which still resonate today:

"Our speed in communication has not brought depth in understanding between people. Real understanding can only develop as individuals meet face-to-face in the home, in school, and at work, in a spirit of friendship."



Members of the first group of VISA volunteers.

in the home, in school, and at work, in a spirit

TAKE YOUR COMMITMENT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

## Join *Partners for Peace* today

Since 1917, dedicated donors and volunteers have been the backbone of the American Friends Service Committee. Whether rebuilding communities after war or natural disaster, advocating for peaceful resolution of conflict, or listening to and supporting those in grassroots struggles, our work cannot move forward without financial backing.

When you join *Partners for Peace*, our **monthly giving program**, you'll confirm your commitment to AFSC and give us support we can count on. Each month a fixed sum is transferred automatically from your checking account or charged to your credit card.

- *You'll reduce the volume of mail you receive and the paper we use.*
- *You'll save time and postage costs.*
- *You'll maximize the impact of your contribution by helping us reduce administrative expenses and banking fees.*

It's easy to sign up. Just complete the information on the enclosed envelope and we'll do the rest!

You also may call toll-free 1-888-588-2372, ext. 1, or go to the AFSC website: [www.afsc.org/give](http://www.afsc.org/give).

## Celebrating the holidays... *responsibly!*

For those important people in your life whom you honor during the holidays, make a gift to the worldwide programs of the American Friends Service Committee.

For each \$35 gift, you're entitled to a "Peace" card with original art by Ann Altman. The message inside reads:

*This card represents a gift made in your name to the American Friends Service Committee for its programs to alleviate suffering, promote human dignity, and work for reconciliation and peace.*



With your gift, you'll also receive matching envelopes and festive ornaments featuring the card art.

To order, complete the information on the enclosed envelope, call toll-free 1-888-588-2372, ext. 1, or go to the AFSC website: [www.afsc.org/give](http://www.afsc.org/give).

## Build a Future for

# YOUTH

Internships provide extensive opportunities for young people to gain life experience, to investigate social justice and peace issues, to engage in peer education, and to serve their communities. From Gaza to New York City, from Mexican mountain villages to San Francisco, youth join AFSC programs as diverse as planting gardens to “peace camps.”



Every year, bequests from AFSC supporters like you foster youth programs and the range of our other work around the world. We value all the bequests—large and small—that ensure the stability of our on-going witness for peace, justice, and human dignity.

To learn more about including AFSC in your estate plan, call our Gift Planning Office toll free at 1-888-588-2372, ext. 3, write to us at [GiftPlanning@afsc.org](mailto:GiftPlanning@afsc.org) or visit our website at: [www.afsc.org/give/planning.htm](http://www.afsc.org/give/planning.htm).

*Photo: Young AFSC volunteers in the San Francisco Bay area (AFSC photo)*

## In this issue

The Roadmap for Peace, developed by AFSC and a coalition of more than two dozen groups, would make dialogue and international cooperation the focus of U.S. foreign policy. It's an initiative that could put us on the path to lasting peace and security.

See story on p. 4-5.

Other news:

**3** **Fostering face to face dialogue between the U.S. and Iraq**

**12** **In Southeast Asia, youth take the lead in building peace**

**13** **AFSC staff recommend their favorite children's books**



### American Friends Service Committee

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**Quaker**  
*Action*

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