

QuakerAction

Two former child soldiers in Burundi learn carpentry skills.



**American Friends
Service Committee**

www.afsc.org

IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 Message from General Secretary Shan Cretin
- 3 West Virginia Mine Disaster: Justice for the Dead?
- 4 Burundi: Recovering from Conflict
- 5 Truth and Reconciliation in Maine
- 6 Overview: Healing Justice in the “Occupy” Era
- 8 North Korea: Food Assistance
- 9 Stories of Hope & Inspiration
- 10 Donor Profile: D. E. “Woody” Clinard
- 11 Resources

The truth, spoken plainly and tenderly

Dear Friend,

In *All God's Children: the Bosket Family and the American Tradition of Violence*, Fox Butterfield tells the story of Willie Bosket, the first juvenile to be tried as an adult in the United States. Willie began committing crimes at age five and in 1978, at fifteen, murdered two people on the New York City subway. Butterfield traces the history of violence in Willie Bosket's family back to Edgefield County, South Carolina, and the Butlers, a slave-owning, violence-prone white family who enslaved his ancestors.

Captain James Butler, the first Butler to settle in South Carolina, was murdered after trying to recover stolen livestock. Butler's son hunted down one of his father's murderers and lynched him. This legacy of violence was handed down from generation to generation in both the Butler and Bosket families.

At AFSC we believe that ending generation after generation of violence must begin with healing and reconciliation. And truth in all its nuance and complexity is a catalyst for healing.

The first time Butterfield, a *New York Times* journalist, visited Willie Bosket in prison to interview him, Bosket expressed concern about a niece who was becoming violent. Bosket was willing to work with Butterfield on *All God's Children*, because he wanted to learn about the cycle of violence and how it might be stopped.

At AFSC we believe that *ending* generation after generation of violence must *begin* with healing and reconciliation. And truth in all its nuance and complexity is a catalyst for healing. We have seen victims find solace, despite the great harms done to them, when those who are perpetrators can acknowledge and begin to address the awful truth of their past actions, and when those who silently stood by can accept their culpability. This issue of *Quaker Action* focuses on the many ways AFSC works to end violence through programs that assist in truth telling, reconciliation and justice.



General Secretary Shan Cretin (right) talks with staff of AFSC's Gaza Program on a recent visit to the Middle East.

One of the stories you'll read is about Denise Altwater, AFSC's Wabanaki Program Coordinator, who lives on the Passamaquoddy Reservation in Maine. When she was seven years old, she and her five sisters were taken from home to live with white foster parents, who sexually assaulted and starved her. Denise and many other Native American children were scarred by government policies designed to strip them of their language and culture. Denise's courage in speaking out and inviting other Wabanaki to tell their stories led to the first Truth and Reconciliation process jointly undertaken by Native tribes and a U.S. state.

Telling her story has helped Denise heal from traumas imposed by the brutal policies that sought to eliminate and assimilate the Wabanaki. "I believe that it's important that the state of Maine be involved in this process, that citizens be educated and become a part of all this, because it's not only healing for Wabanaki people, it's also healing for the state workers who implemented those harsh government policies."

In the aftermath of war and violence, healing and reconciliation require great courage. To live in true community we all must be able to acknowledge and repent for "the evil that enslaves us, the evil we have done, and the evil done on our behalf." AFSC's restorative justice approach allows people to heal themselves, as Denise describes above, and creates safe spaces for perpetrators, victims and enablers to learn from one another. Please join me in supporting AFSC's efforts to use the truth, spoken plainly and tenderly, as the foundation for healing, reconciliation, and a truly peaceful world.

In peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shan Cretin".

Shan Cretin
General Secretary

WEST VIRGINIA MINE DISASTER

Justice for the Dead?

BY BETH SPENCE

Shortly after the horrific April 5, 2010, explosion at Massey Energy's Upper Big Branch mine that claimed the lives of 29 men, I attended a meeting of family members at a high school near Beckley, West Virginia. There I met, among others, Gina Jones, whose husband, Dean, was killed in the explosion, and Gary Quarles, who lost his son and best friend, Gary Wayne Quarles.

During the next year, the AFSC loaned me to the Independent Investigation Panel created by then Governor Joe Manchin and headed by former federal mine safety chief Davitt McAteer. I saw Mrs. Jones, Mr. Quarles and other family members again and again. I met them when they were still in shock in the immediate aftermath of the disaster. I watched them wipe away tears as they listened to the results of investigations that detailed the unsafe conditions at Upper Big Branch. And then in December 2011, I saw them struggle with the news that a settlement had been reached between the U.S. Attorney of Southern West Virginia and Alpha Natural Resources, which purchased Massey after the explosion.

Many of those family members—who continue to pay the highest price for Massey's negligence at Upper Big Branch—believe that true justice for the 29 miners will occur only when former Massey officials are criminally prosecuted, convicted, and sent to prison.

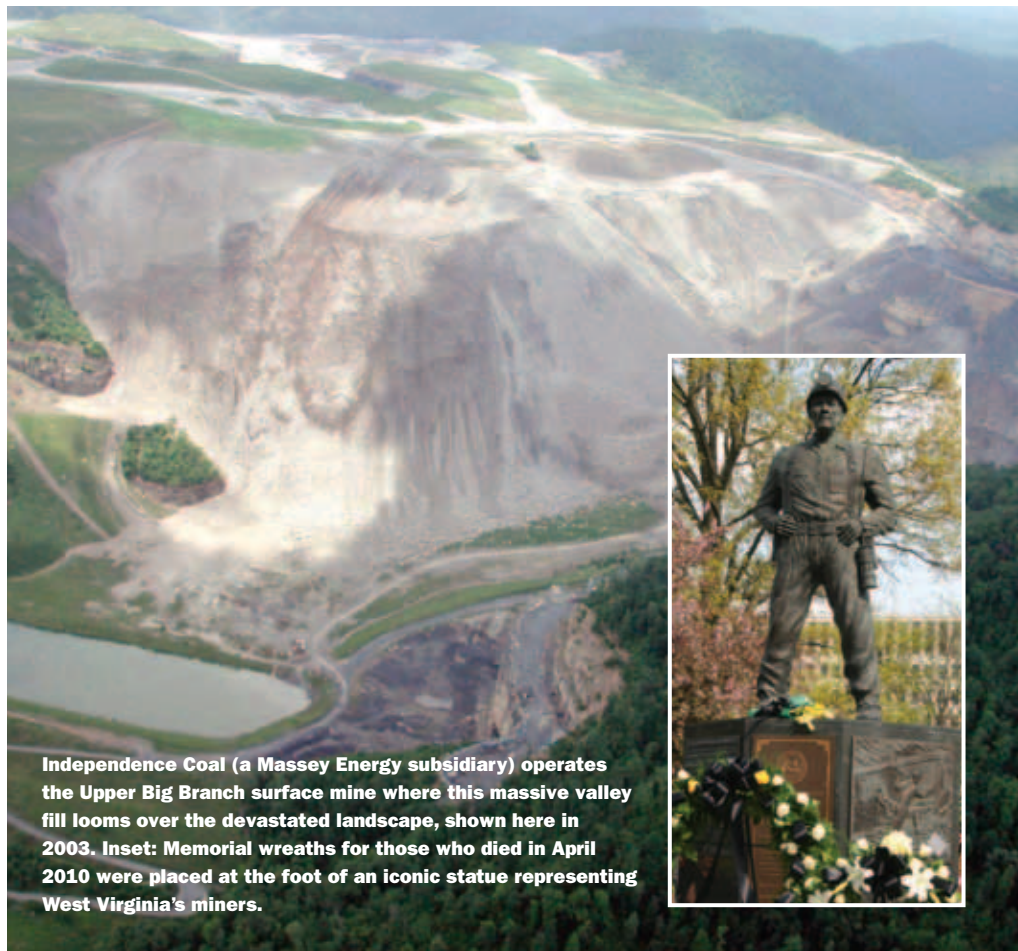
However, the settlement is more than a slap on the wrist. Alpha will pay nearly \$210 million in fines, restitution to family members, and other costs. These are significant penalties. The fines are the most extensive ever levied against a coal company for a mining disaster. And, unlike previous disaster settlements, federal officials have left the door open for criminal prosecution of Massey officials.

Also included in the settlement is a requirement that Alpha spend nearly \$130 million for safety training and safety equipment improvements designed to address the root causes of the UBB explosion. Some of these requirements were recommendations made in the independent panel's report.

The sad truth is that no amount of money and no number of criminal convictions can bring back the husbands, fathers, sons, brothers, and grandsons who were lost on that fateful day. Families have been unalterably changed and, in some cases, shattered by the disaster. As Gina Jones said simply, "You can't put a dollar amount on my husband." And Gary Quarles said of his son, "I'm the same right now as I was when I found out that he was dead. And I can't see it

changing no matter how much money... comes our way or how many people go to prison." At best, the federal settlement is a significant step toward preventing other families from having to endure what the Upper Big Branch families have endured. AFSC staff will continue to monitor the outcome of the settlement and the agreements concerning mine safety and the rights of miners who undertake one of the most dangerous jobs in the US.

Beth Spence works for AFSC's West Virginia Economic Justice project in Charleston. A former newspaper reporter and editor, she has written extensively about housing, education, and health issues in coalfield communities, and was the lead writer for the report on the Upper Big Branch Mine disaster.



Independence Coal (a Massey Energy subsidiary) operates the Upper Big Branch surface mine where this massive valley fill looms over the devastated landscape, shown here in 2003. Inset: Memorial wreaths for those who died in April 2010 were placed at the foot of an iconic statue representing West Virginia's miners.

Big Branch photo by Vivian Stockman

Burundi: Recovering from Conflict



Participants listen to a presentation at the Lessons Learned from Truth and Reconciliation Commissions conference in Burundi.

Leah Hazard

(Right) In Burundi, former child soldiers learn carpentry skills.



From Bujumbura to New York City, AFSC and the larger Quaker community are supporting Burundi's recovery from decades of conflict. AFSC is engaging partners from the grassroots to the government to the United Nations to ensure that healing justice and reconciliation programs continue to grow in this small central African country.

One hopeful sign of progress is that the 2010 national elections did not erupt into widespread violence, as many had feared, in part because of AFSC's success in bringing together 50 leaders from Burundi and seven other African nations, some of which had avoided election-related conflict and some of which had not. These leaders candidly shared their lessons about what might trigger violence. Subsequently, the Burundi government implemented a number of preventative measures such as educating citizens about the political process and having local leaders call for peace and respect.

Before and during the elections, the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) in New York helped to link the policy-level conversations at the UN with ac-

One hopeful sign is that the 2010 national elections did not erupt into widespread violence, as many had feared.

vities on the ground, consulting with a range of Quaker and other partners on a number of initiatives, including a project to monitor indicators of potential violence. On the eve of the elections, one private cell phone company texted reminders of the importance of peaceful elections to its subscribers.

In addition to promoting peaceful elections, an important development in Burundi's difficult path to peace is the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) supported by the government. Even as that process moves forward, existing reconciliation efforts will also need support to connect communities. A workshop organized by AFSC Burundi staff in August helped connect the two efforts.

The three-day "Transitional Justice Mechanisms: Lessons Learned from Truth and Reconciliation Commissions" conference in Burundi drew 50 participants from government, civil society, and the UN, as well as experts on transitional justice and TRC commissioners from South Africa, Kenya, Liberia, and Sierra Leone.

Following up on the summer workshop, QUNO hosted three informal meetings with experts from civil society, the UN, and diplomatic corps to explore ways to support the reconciliation efforts and connect to the ongoing work of the UN Peacebuilding Commission, which Burundi joined in 2006.

"Burundi is not a country that receives a lot of attention from the UN in New York or from international donors. However, it is important for us to stay engaged and to uphold the valuable work of local Burundian Quakers in trauma healing and reconciliation," says Camilla Campisi, QUNO Representative. "Given the important contributions that Friends have already made to peace in Burundi, continued support (by AFSC) is one way to ensure that the country does not slip into conflict once again."

Truth and Reconciliation in Maine

An unprecedented truth and reconciliation process, the first of its kind in the United States, is under way among the five remaining Wabanaki tribes and the state of Maine. What happened lives in recent memory but has its roots in history. In the 1800's, the United States government established boarding schools to solve the "Indian problem." Native children were systematically removed from their homes and tribes and stripped of their language, culture, and identity in a campaign of forced assimilation. Many were starved, neglected, and abused. Some died.

Decades passed, and the practice didn't end. In the 1950's and 60's, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Child Welfare League of America created the Indian Adoption Project, a 10-year experiment focused in New England. AFSC's Denise Altvater and her five sisters were among the hundreds of children who were tragically and traumatically separated from their families and tribes as a result of that experiment.

"From the time they showed up on the reservation and took us from our home until we were returned four years later, we were starved, beaten, humiliated, raped, and tortured," recalls Denise, who was seven years old in 1966, when state workers came to take her away.

By the late 1970's, Maine was removing native children from their homes at nearly 20 times the rate for non-native children, often placing them in abusive situations. In 1978, Congress passed the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) which offered new protections, but the belief that native children would be better off raised by white foster families persisted.

Twenty years after the ICWA was passed, Denise shared her story with child welfare staff in Maine and was invited to help develop training for state workers. Over the next 10 years, they laid the groundwork for the truth and reconciliation process launched last May.

Goals include achieving a common understanding of what happened, providing a place for Wabanaki voices to be heard and for healing to begin, and recommending best child welfare practices

going forward. But as Denise says, "I just can't emphasize enough that the important piece of this work for me and for others of us is the healing for Wabanaki people. It's time."



This old photo shows some of the hundreds of Native children who were removed from their homes to boarding schools or to state foster care.



A young Denise Altvater (far right) and other children from her home reservation.

"It has been 13 years since I first told my story (of being removed from my home and placed in a hostile and abusive foster care environment). A story that I did not even know needed to be told. Since then, I have learned to feel, care, love, and most of all, strive to become the person that the Creator meant for me to be when I was born.

"From the very beginning, we decided this truth and reconciliation process was not going to be between two departments within our governments, but between our governments themselves and here we are today, side by side as equal partners doing what I once thought was impossible."

Denise Altvater

Excerpted from her remarks at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission document signing



The “Best and Worst of Times”

Healing Justice in the “Occupy” Era

BY KING DOWNING

Dickens’ classic opening for *A Tale of Two Cities* might have been written for today’s justice systems. Economic collapse, political pandering, and rising populism could nourish either retrenchment or reform. Outlined here is a review of AFSC’s healing justice work, opportunities for future success, and suggested actions for the reader.

Current realities

- Politicians and their media supporters push punishment as the solution for crime and recidivism.
- Corporations dominate politics through unlimited campaign contributions, making alternative visions of justice difficult.
- The criminal justice system is checkered with racial disparities—from street “stop and frisk” practices to rates of incarceration to length of sentences to execution.

What Can Influence Change

- Economic pressures force governments to look at alternatives to costly incarceration.

- Public dissent, such as the nation-wide “Occupy” movement, highlights corporate dominance, criminality, and lack of prosecution, taking protest to levels unseen in 40 years.
- People behind bars across the country organize large strikes, calling solitary confinement torture and prison labor unfair, citing international law and the incarceration exception to the 13th Amendment ban on slavery.

AFSC has been working hard to end punitive practices and to create rehabilitative programs through 10 programs in the United States. Efforts focus on: prisoner advocacy; the impact on society of incarceration rates; and community recovery, transformation and healing.

Prisoner advocacy

In many prisons, inmates are subjected to especially harsh punishment for infractions or “breaking the rules” that govern their lives. Segregating prisoners from others or putting them in solitary confinement for long periods of time have a debilitating effect on the emotional, and often the physical, well-being of those separated from the larger inmate population. AFSC has targeted these practices in the following ways:

- **MICHIGAN:** individual and group advocacy over unduly harsh security levels that affect prisoner housing
RESULT: segregation unit in one prison closed; five percent reduction in long-term segregation beds produced
- **MAINE:** advocacy for incarcerated Wabanaki tribal members seeking recognition of cultural practices, adults in solitary confinement, and tribal members forcibly removed as youth to prison-like “schools”
RESULT: incarcerated natives allowed traditional ceremonies; solitary confinement population cut in half; state truth commission on forced removals established (see article on page 5)

Impact of mass incarceration

Among developed nations, the U.S. has a high percentage of its population in prison. This is especially true for young men of color who remain incarcerated in numbers disproportionate to their percentage of the larger society. Continuing to imprison citizens at such an alarming rate affects taxes, the costs of building and maintaining facilities, and communities whose members are in prison and who deal with those who eventually return.



Survivors of solitary confinement photographed at AFSC's 2008 Stopmax Conference for the video "Solitary Confinement: Cruel and Inhuman" (see pg. 11).

Photos: Terry Foss

- **CALIFORNIA:** advocacy against solitary confinement, including staff participation as an inmate-selected mediator for 12,000 prisoners who staged a hunger strike over deplorable conditions (see page 11)
- **RESULT:** legislative hearings held, including AFSC testimony; concessions by government to improve prison conditions produced; national dialogue on solitary confinement begun
- **ARIZONA:** campaign against private prisons, including critical report showing their lack of security or cost savings; lawsuit challenging state failure to conduct comparative analysis of public vs. private prisons
- **RESULT:** two cities decline prison-building; state department of corrections forced to make decade-late public/private prison cost-comparison study; construction contract bids delayed and reduced by over half
- **MARYLAND:** facilitation of prisoner-led joint peace/healing justice conflict resolution programs in three state prisons
- **RESULT:** 206 graduate from the programs and 95% of them remain violence-free; 56 become state-certified mediators; program expands to a new fourth facility
- **WASHINGTON:** convening of a freedom school and Youth Undoing Institutional Racism (YUIR) group
- **RESULT:** 75 youths (85% of color) graduate from the school; 20 graduates join other YUIR members in the City of Seattle's Justice Roundtable—meeting with the mayor, police chief, and other officials—to discuss the impact of practices on youth of color; 15% actively participate in other community initiatives, which include keeping young people out of the criminal justice system
- **NEW YORK:** facilitation of a grassroots "New Jim Crow" coalition/campaign against mass incarceration; technical assistance for formerly incarcerated entrepreneurs
- **RESULT:** the formerly incarcerated, including veterans of the 1971 Attica prison uprising, assume leadership in public education and advocacy; business start-up trainings held, funding secured for small business development; one business started

Community Recovery, Healing and Transformation

Many prisoners have term-limited sentences, meaning that they will return to the "outside" and re-enter a community which may have changed dramatically in the years they were away. Programs inside prisons can help prepare inmates for their lives of freedom, and the support they receive once they are released can be crucial to their success in society.

Healing Justice Opportunities—Take Action!

AFSC believes that creative alternatives to imprisonment are desirable and necessary to changing the course of criminal justice in this country. Providing direct support and education for prisoners is one option, and sharing "best practices" across the healing justice program plays a role in the goal of reducing incarceration rates. Collaborating with other AFSC programs on common concerns such as prison privatization, community healing and conflict resolution, and responsible investing also strengthen the work for healing justice. And in recent months, AFSC has developed links with various "Occupy" groups that include on their agendas concerns about the rise of the prison industrial complex.

As AFSC continues its healing justice programs, you can become involved by:

- Staying informed about healing justice issues and sharing your knowledge with others
- Supporting AFSC calls for action
- Joining and supporting local Occupy movements or community groups working on ex-prisoner issues

King Downing is the Program Analyst for the Healing Justice Program.

North Korea

Food Assistance for North Korea

BY LINDA LEWIS

A FSC has worked with partner farms in North Korea (DPRK) since 1997. That country has suffered from chronic food shortages since the collapse of its agricultural and industrial sectors in the late 1980's. It relies heavily on international food aid to supplement what the country is able to produce, but any disruption to the fragile balance can tip the country from shortage into crisis. Last year, the government made appeals for food aid to foreign governments and international relief agencies, citing dire need due to anticipated winter crop losses. AFSC responded to the food crisis with direct assistance and is continuing its program with the cooperative farms.

On our regular AFSC visit to DPRK farm partners in late May 2011, we observed the effects of the unusually cold and dry winter. Dr. Jerry Nelson, an agronomist from the University of Missouri travelling with us, estimated barley yields would be 50% of normal, the winter wheat yield would be at best 70% and could go as low as 25% of normal.

AFSC program assistant for agriculture, Zhang Ynyun (second from left), meets with North Korean farm managers to talk about crop planting and expected yields.



AFSC responded to the food crisis with direct assistance and is continuing its program with the cooperative farms.

Late maturation would delay harvests by about two weeks and could put second crop planting behind schedule. There were also signs of nitrogen and phosphorus deficiency in newly planted corn, a result of fertilizer shortages. Lack of fuel was another conspicuous problem, and

we saw the use of such slow farming methods as hand transplanting and plowing with oxen.

Subsequently, AFSC received a direct appeal on behalf of four farms, which reported that they had run out of food and were in immediate need of 50 metric tons (MT) of corn or flour to support the farms' populations for one month. The cost would be approximately US\$12,000 for 20MT of food and delivery.

As is AFSC's practice, we set up monitoring protocols with the farm managers, including a staff member inspecting the corn shipment before it arrived in Pyongyang and visits to the four recipient farms. Each farm manager was charged with distributing the corn to those families most in need of food.

During our fall farm visit in November 2011, AFSC followed up on the emergency food shipment and learned more about the current food security situation on our partner farms. All of the farm managers expressed their appreciation to us for the corn and also for AFSC's timely assistance during a difficult period. It is clear from conversations with DPRK officials that there is awareness at higher government levels that AFSC responded positively to the emergency food aid appeal. We believe this will have a beneficial impact on AFSC's future activities in North Korea.

Linda Lewis is the Country Representative for North Korea and is based in Dalian, China.



In North Korea, much of the agricultural work is still done by hand, such as the rice being transplanted here.

News from around AFSC

\$1 Trillion Festival Brings Creative, Thoughtful Films

Youths from Oakland to Pittsburgh, Miami to Chicago used videos to provide provocative answers to the question, “What would you do with a trillion dollars?” in the second annual film festival co-sponsored by AFSC and the National Priorities Project (NPP).

Their visions of how the U.S. should spend its federal tax dollars—in contrast to the more than \$1 trillion which has been spent so far on the Iraq and Afghanistan wars—showcased music, poetry, and slides as they demonstrated their understanding of budget priorities. In an entry from the San Francisco Bay area, participants sang, “How come there’s no money sponsoring programs for our youth, but there’s so much money for the military to go and shoot?”

The videos and the other entries are posted at www.youtube.com/user/IHTDVideos.

More than 30 entries were judged by a panel including actress and activist Susan Sarandon. The festival culminated in an April trip to Washington, DC, where AFSC and NPP held a youth leadership conference, screened the videos for members of Congress, and held a screening at Busboys & Poets, a community gathering place.

Back Wages Settlement Reached

The Service Committee’s New Hampshire office, along with several partners, raised public awareness of immigrant construction workers who had not been paid for their labor at a construction site for student housing in Durham, NH. The eight men sought help when, after seeking payment for months of work, they were terminated from their jobs and evicted from their housing. In addition to their own economic needs, many of the workers send money home to family

members. The loss of their wages was a real crisis. While the amount of money paid was not revealed, estimates place the figure in the tens of thousands of dollars.

Economic Justice Project Coordinator Maggie Fogarty said, “This has been a very gratifying experience. I have gotten to know these hard-working, honest individuals. Their compelling story galvanized numerous groups in our community and created pressure that certainly had a positive effect on the outcome of this case.”

Across the country, AFSC’s economic justice programs focus on fairness for workers, educate the public on budget priorities, and work for a more equitable society.

Dayton, Ohio: Welcoming Community

The March 2012 issue of *Latina* magazine cited Dayton, Ohio, as one of the country’s most open and supportive cities for immigrants. In addition, the city was awarded nearly \$500,000 by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development to implement fair housing regulations, to educate the community on fair housing issues, and to stabilize minority neighborhoods through improved community policing. AFSC staff Migwe Kimemia was instrumental in building community support for the Welcome



Migwe Kimemia shakes hands with an Ohio representative at a fair housing event in Dayton, OH.

Dayton program, which is designed to attract more immigrants to the city. While he works primarily with African immigrants, Migwe now serves on the Dayton Human Relations Council, where he hopes to have a positive impact on all the new residents of the city.

Window & Mirrors Exhibit Makes Significant Impact in Pittsburgh

When more than 1,100 people visited the Windows and Mirrors exhibit in Pittsburgh this winter, they got to see something else, as well. Sharing the space with the dozens of murals depicting the human costs of the Afghanistan War was a collaborative work of art by Iraqi war refugee, Mina Al Doori, and U.S. veteran of the Iraq War, Joyce Wagner.

The two were brought together by AFSC’s program in Pittsburgh. Together, they used stories and art to create a collaborative installation. When asked what their intent was, Mina and Joyce said, “We just want to say what’s true for us. The war happened. It’s real. People suffered. And many women ended up taking care of their families alone.”

The closing event for Pittsburgh’s Windows and Mirrors exhibit was a potluck dinner for Iraqi refugees and war veterans, some of whom are beginning dialogues of their own.

Windows & Mirrors

The exhibit continues to tour the country. Please see the schedule below and check for updates at www.windowsandmirrors.org.

Wilmington, OH	April 2–June 29
Ft. Collins, CO	April 6–April 27
Chicago, IL	May 1–May 31
Dayton, OH	July 6–July 29
Providence, RI	July–August

DONOR PROFILE

Woody Clinard's Long Walk with AFSC

Known to all as “Woody,” D. Elwood Clinard is typical of many AFSC donors. He met someone who influenced his view of the world. Discussions with a new neighbor and that man’s experiences serving with the Service Committee in Gaza gave Woody a perspective and information about an organization that resonated with his own beliefs.

A long-time resident of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, Woody opened an independent insurance business in 1951. He and his wife, Helen, raised four children in the community, where he was instrumental in founding his Episcopal Church and where she found a home in the Unitarian Fellowship. To the couple’s great delight, their offspring produced eight grandchildren, and that younger generation always provides stimulation and amusement to their grandparents.



Even though the Clinards are well up in years and Helen suffers from advanced Alzheimer’s disease, they’ve continued to stay in their house. To keep his hand in business (the insurance agency is now operated by his son), Woody works from home by managing residential rental

properties and an office building. He also sings in a choir known for its lively renditions of Broadway show tunes, battles weeds in his garden, tries to get in frequent laps in the swimming pool, and volunteers as a tutor.

With his family well-situated, Woody has decided that the bulk of his estate will go to charity—including a substantial bequest to AFSC. One reason he appreciates AFSC is the “two sides to the story” approach that the organization brings to its programs. “I know that the seemingly voiceless have much to offer, and the Service Committee helps communities and individuals find ways to speak their truths.”

As a donor for more than 50 years, Woody has steadfastly and enthusiastically supported AFSC’s worldwide programs. And he knows that the bequest he leaves will support future work to bring about the peaceful world he envisions.

Friends for the Future



AFSC’s current work for peace and justice, including the programs featured throughout this issue of *Quaker Action*, traces a significant portion of its support to the decisions made by some of our supporters years ago to include the Service Committee in their estate plans. According to Mike Gillum, AFSC’s gift planning director, between a quarter and a third of the organization’s annual income comes from bequests and other legacy gifts that provide essential funds for the organization’s worldwide programs.

If, like Woody Clinard, you believe the mission of AFSC must be pursued with as much commitment and creativity this century as it was in the last, please consider joining him as a Friend for the Future by including the Service Committee in your will or trust. Your thoughtful planning now helps ensure that AFSC’s unique witness will be sustained and strengthened in the years ahead.

For more information, please call 1-888-588-2372 or email giftplanning@afsc.org. Thank you!

Healing Justice Resources



BEYOND PRISONS: A New Interfaith Paradigm for Our Failed Prison System

Laura Magnani & Harmon L. Wray
Fortress Press, 2007, 204 pages
(available from www.quakerbooks.org)

To those who live behind bars, the American system for punishing lawbreakers is known as “the criminal injustice system.” They’ve got it right. Our prison system is a failure. Prisons damage people far more often than they help. About half of released felons re-offend and return to prison—up to 80 percent of them in some states. And we lock up American black men at a rate eight times higher than that of South Africa at the height of apartheid.

Our society’s solution to criminal offenses has always been a simple one: more prisons. For two-and-a-half centuries, Americans have been unable to imagine that a lawbreaker’s “debt to society” could be paid in any currency other than time spent in a cage.

It is this failure of moral imagination that Laura Magnani and Harmon Wray set out to remedy with *Beyond Prisons*. “Punishment, by its very nature, causes harm,” the authors write. “We cannot punish our way to a healthy society.”

How then do we go about the task of repairing our retribution-based criminal justice system? We don’t, they say. We throw it out and start over.

Before we can create a justice system that represents the “peace-building justice paradigm” they envision, we must overcome our fears of each other and our cultural ignorance of the causes and motivations of criminal behavior. “Street crime,” they point out, “is typically an act of desperation,

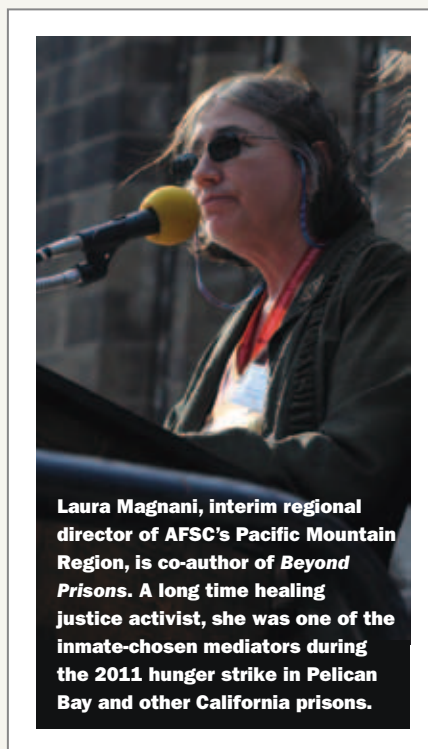
insanity, drug-induced behavior, or sometimes all three.” The only way to end it is to address its real causes: “poverty, mental illness, drug addiction, and broken relationships.”

In the end, the authors call for a new morality based on truth telling, acknowledgment, and reparations—and belief in the power of good to overcome evil.

We created this retributive justice system, Magnani and Wray remind us; now we can create a different system. Forgiveness can be public policy. Equality and justice are possible. If we can imagine a world without prisons, they suggest, we can create it.

— CAROL ESTES, FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR OF UNIVERSITY BEYOND BARS
(www.universitybeyondbars.org)

*Excerpted from a review appearing in
the Spring 2008 issue of YES! Magazine:
www.YesMagazine.org*



Laura Magnani, interim regional director of AFSC's Pacific Mountain Region, is co-author of *Beyond Prisons*. A long time healing justice activist, she was one of the inmate-chosen mediators during the 2011 hunger strike in Pelican Bay and other California prisons.

**Most of these books
can be ordered from
Quakerbooks.org**

Also from AFSC staff:

FREE DOWNLOADS

Buried Alive: Solitary Confinement in Arizona's Prisons and Jails

by Caroline Isaacs and Matthew Lowen
(Tucson)

tinyurl.com/qa-buried-az

Private Prisons: The Public's Problem

by Caroline Isaacs

tinyurl.com/qa-private

Buried Alive: Long-Term Isolation in California's Youth and Adult Prisons

by Laura Magnani

tinyurl.com/qa-buried-ca

The Prison Inside the Prison

By Rachel Kamel and Bonnie Kerness
(Newark, NJ)

tinyurl.com/qa-pip

Survivor's Manual: Surviving in Solitary

Edited by Bonnie Kerness

tinyurl.com/qa-sis

BOOKS

When the Prisoners Ran Walpole

by Jamie Bissonette (Maine)
with Robert Dellelo (Cambridge), et al
(available at www.quakerbooks.org)

Marshall Law: The Life and Times of a Baltimore Black Panther

by Marshall “Eddie” Conway and
Domnique Stevenson (Baltimore)

tinyurl.com/qa-marshall

VIDEO

Concrete, Steel & Paint (DVD)

by Tony Heriza (Philadelphia)
and Cindy Burstein

www.concretefilm.org

Solitary Confinement:

Cruel & Inhuman (on YouTube)

by Claire Schoen and Jan Sturmann
with Tony Heriza

tinyurl.com/qa-torture



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Every year, bequests from AFSC supporters like you foster youth programs, as well as our work around the world. We value all bequests—large and small—that help ensure the financial stability of our ongoing witness for peace, justice, and human dignity. Naming AFSC in your will or trust or as a beneficiary of your retirement account reduces your family's taxes and continues your commitment to Quaker Service.

For more information, call the Gift Planning Office at 1-888-588-2372, write to us at GiftPlanning@afsc.org, or visit the website at afsc.org/giftplanning.



Photo by Martha Yager

Many AFSC programs encourage and mentor young people as the peacemakers of tomorrow.



AFSC meets all
20 BBB Charity
Standards

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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