



American Friends
Service Committee

Quaker values in action

South Star

Newsletter of the South Region, American Friends Service Committee • Spring 2012

“We who believe in freedom must not rest until it comes.”

FROM ELLA'S SONG BY SWEET HONEY IN THE ROCK

*Celebrating
the past as
we move
forward*

The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) has a long and diverse history. Since 1917, this organization has been at the center of worldwide progressive movements in the areas of peace, civil rights and economic justice.

Since 1948, the work has been organized through a regional structure, allowing for maximum impact at the grassroots level.

At its November 2011 meeting, the Board of Directors of AFSC approved a new regional structure to support U.S. programs, moving from nine regions to four: the Northeast, Midwest, West and South.

The change in administrative structure keeps all existing program offices open. The new South Region includes the former Southeast Region (SERO) programs based in North Carolina, Atlanta, Miami and New Orleans and the former Middle Atlantic Region (MAR) programs based in Baltimore, West Virginia and Washington, D.C. The Pittsburgh program, formerly in MAR, has moved to the Northeast Region.

While the new regions cover a larger geography, we are confident that the new structure will allow us to devote more of our resources to direct program work and less to administration.

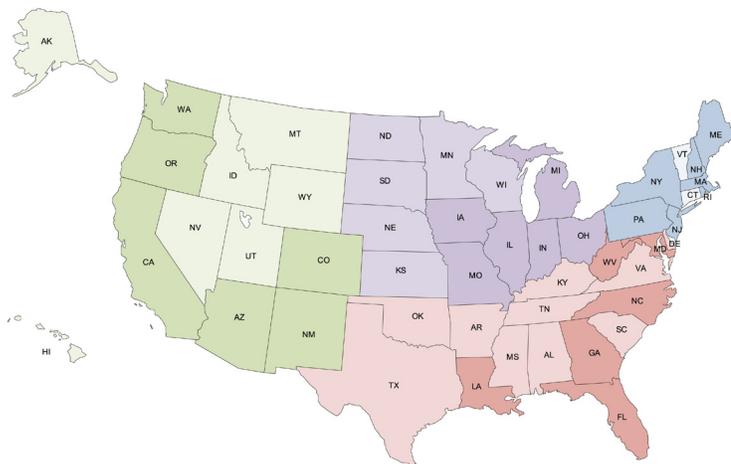
This newsletter celebrates the work of the Middle Atlantic Region and the Southeast Regions during the past 64 tumultuous years. We take a look back at amazing achievements, dynamic people and critical events that we now see were historically significant. (Please see highlights of the work in the timelines on pages 4-7.)

Bonnie Erica Horton is the newly appointed regional director of the South Region, based in Atlanta. Brooke McDonald is the associate regional director, working out of the Baltimore office. (Please see messages from Bonnie and Brooke on page 2.)

Along with the new administrative structure for the South region, a new executive committee is forming to provide oversight and support for regional programs. Many of the members of the new committee are drawn

from the previous executive committees of MAR and SERO.

With the help of our many friends, partners and supporters, we will navigate this transition with energy and creativity, finding ways to strengthen our grassroots work, to encourage a collaborative learning environment, and to ensure timely responses to unfolding events in the world where AFSC's spirit-led witness can truly make a difference.



*AFSC's new regions:
Northeast, blue; Midwest,
purple; West, green; and
South, pink. The darker
colors represent where
AFSC programs currently
operate.*

A message from the regional director

I am pleased to write to you as the Regional Director for the South Region. Starting at the conclusion of transitions that have taken place over the past years, I feel a new energy within the region.

I am excited to work with staff members to safeguard thriving peace, social and economic justice programs already in place. I am also eager to invigorate our current work with new initiatives and approaches, explore collaborations amongst programs, and continue to measure the impact of this transformative work.

As our General Secretary Shan Cretin likes to say, our best work is grounded in the grassroots. It is a mix of community organizing, advocacy, education, capacity building, and creative demonstrations of alternatives to broken economic, political and social systems.

The impact of our work rises to even greater heights when we connect local grassroots work to something larger—national and international movements and issues—



Bonnie Erica Horton

and when we exploit the synergy between peace and justice to push for positive change.

As we move into this new structure, we will take care to retain the values and spirit that successfully guided the work of the Middle Atlantic and Southeast regions over the years.

In my role as Regional Director, I will work to ensure that South Region resources are expended in a manner that allows for the ‘highest level of impact.’

As we work to solve some of the complex problems facing our world, my focus will not be on massively scaling up or spreading any single social innovation – but rather trying to ensure that our work connects the dots across issues with both likely and unlikely partners. Internally, and externally, we will continue to focus on aligning our strategies, methods and actions to leverage significant, meaningful change!

Bonnie Erica Horton

Thank you to our faithful volunteers, donors and supporters

There are not enough words to describe how amazed and grateful I am for the dedication, compassion and generosity of the many individuals who have given of themselves to the Middle Atlantic and Southeast regions over the past sixty-four years.

My time with AFSC has been very short in comparison to many of our sup-



Brooke McDonald

ported with communities struggling for economic security, just and accountable institutions and non-violent solutions to conflict.

I would like to say thank you for your unwavering support and generosity. We truly appreciate that you have joined us in this journey. Without you, none of the work we do would be possible!

I would like to say a *very special thank you to our regional executive committee members*, both past and present. Your contributions over the years: choices to invest in new programs, constructive feedback about project design, and unwavering support – were invaluable.

To all of you who have supported AFSC’s work to create a society that respects the individual dignity and light of the divine in all, a huge “Thank you!”

Brooke McDonald



**American Friends
Service Committee**

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Editorial Committee

Bonnie Erica Horton

Brooke McDonald

Beth Spence

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porters. As we put together a timeline of a few (we could not fit them all!) key programmatic achievements for each region, I felt very deep appreciation to many generations of volunteers and donors who made AFSC’s work possible.

So many of the success stories would not have happened without the donation of funds and time from you, our friends who

'Quiet little civil rights project' to mark 50th anniversary in North Carolina

The year was 1963, and the South was still segregated when the American Friends Service Committee and residents of rural Warrenton, N.C., came together to launch the Citizenship Education Project, aimed at encouraging voter registration and civic activism among the impoverished black majority population.

Judy Beil Vaughan, then 19 years old, was one of the young people who answered the call to come to Warrenton to participate in what she calls "this quiet little civil rights project." Vaughan, 13 other college students and three adult leaders became the first interracial group to live together in Warren County.

Warrenton resident Eva Clayton was a guiding force behind the project. Clayton teamed with rural ministers to sponsor educational workshops where the students could provide information about voting procedures and registration. Altogether, the Citizenship Education Project conducted more than 30 workshops in Warren, Henderson, Green and Vance counties. The work began just weeks after the murder of Medgar Evers and ended a few days before the historic 1963 March on Washington, Vaughan said.

Last year, veterans of the Citizenship Education Project gathered to reminisce and to make plans to return to Warrenton for the 50th anniversary celebration of the project that helped shape so many of their lives.

Using photos, diaries, letters and personal stories from participants, Vaughan is compiling a history of the project. In March, she and fellow group member Jane Luton visited Warrenton, where they met with Clayton and Dorothy Gill Waddell, another member of the group. As they walked through the streets of the town and passed by the black churches where they conducted their workshops, Vaughan said she thought about that group of young people who once helped make history.

"I don't know if the project drew altruistic people, or if they were affected by what they did there, but so many of them went into the helping professions," she said. Vaughan herself became a physician who cared for low-income families.

The Citizenship Education Project also had an impact on the community. A Warrenton resident commented that the project "eliminated a lot of fear." It also laid the groundwork for Eva Clayton's election to Congress in 1992. Clayton was the first African-American woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from North Carolina.

The September 2013 reunion will include an event in



Above, Citizen Education Project members, from left, Jane Luton, Dorothy Gill Waddell and Judy Vaughan reunite with community leaders Eva and Theaoseus Clayton in 2012 (photo by Stacy Waddell). Below, Luton, Waddell and Vaughan among the group of project participants shown in this 1963 photo by Steve Dautoff.



which community participants and their descendants will be recognized. AFSC is offering support for the reunion, according to Ann Lennon, director of AFSC's Peace & Justice Program in Greensboro, NC.

"Former Southeast Regional director Will Hartzler gave support to this program, and I feel very honored to have connected with this history," Lennon said.

Persons interested in remembering the project or participating in the reunion may contact Judy (Beil) Vaughan at jfbvaughan@comcast.net.

A commitment to civil rights

In the early years of the Southeast Region, the Greensboro, NC, office focused on interracial Peace Education events. Many times the challenge of finding a venue was the greatest obstacle.

Following the U.S. Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, the AFSC started a School Desegregation Program. In 1957 Greensboro City Schools decided to accept desegregation without a court order. Southeast Region Executive Secretary B. Tartt Bell wrote a letter of thanks to the superintendent of schools.

That same year, AFSC consulted with North Carolina school systems in Greensboro and Winston-Salem to develop resources for school desegregation. Staff members helped schools prepare by organizing talks with the governor, school superintendents, newspaper editors, school board members and parents. An interracial seminar for teachers and principals examined the desegregation process.



Above, B. Tartt Bell's letter of thanks to the superintendent of schools in Greensboro, NC.

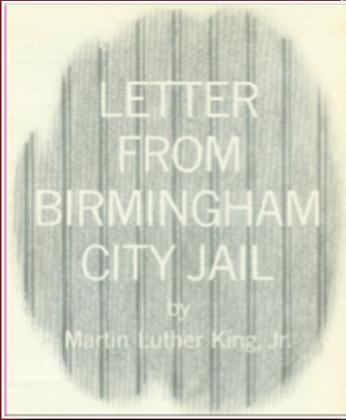


Below, AFSC staffer Bill Bagwell speaks with students about school placement after Prince Edward County, VA, officials closed their schools rather than integrate them. AFSC operated an Emergency Student Placement Project to help African-American students get their education.

Southeast Region Timeline

The Southeast office was officially opened in 1948, but AFSC was active in the area before it became a "region." From economic justice work during the depression, to civil rights work in the mid-20th Century, to current work on immigrant rights and peace, the region has always come to the aid of those in need.

<p>Howard Brinton visited Army camps in NC to identify and educate conscientious objectors on behalf of AFSC.</p>	<p>In cooperation with the Congregational Council for Social Action, the AFSC held an Institute of International Relations at the University of North Carolina.</p>	<p>AFSC started a School Desegregation Project in Southeast Region.</p>	<p>Southeast Regional office moved from Greensboro to High Point, NC.</p>	<p>Students in Jackson, TN, carried out educational programs to encourage African Americans to register as voters.</p>	<p>AFSC enabled 90 migrant families in FL to build or buy their own homes.</p>						
1917	1929	1939	1948	1953	1954	1957	1958	1961	1962	1963	1970
<p>AFSC established a presence in Marion, NC, supporting striking textile workers and reconciling a community divided over economic justice issues.</p>		<p>"Interns in Industry" project started in Atlanta, GA. Participants found their own internships and lived in houses provided by AFSC.</p>	<p>Southeast Region formed, based in Greensboro, NC. B. Tartt Bell was the first executive secretary.</p>	<p>Greensboro City Schools accepted desegregation without a court order.</p>	<p>Seven college-aged volunteers worked with the Merit Employment program to locate jobs open to qualified high school graduates in Greensboro.</p>	<p>Merit Employment Office opened in Atlanta, GA.</p>	<p>Sara Herbin, a director of AFSC's Merit Employment Program, was appointed by the North Carolina governor as an employment service representative to encourage employment of African Americans in state companies. She was the first African American member of Gov. Terry Sanford's cabinet.</p>				



In 1963, the AFSC printed and distributed 275,000 copies of a letter written by Martin Luther King, Jr., during his confinement in the city jail of Birmingham, Alabama.



AFSC worked to promote school desegregation in southern states throughout the 1960s and 1970s.

Throughout the 1960s, AFSC's school desegregation expanded in the South, moving into Virginia, South Carolina and Alabama.

In 1970, AFSC, partnering with another civil rights group, conducted a survey of 300 southern school systems. The study revealed that federal funds intended to halt discrimination were being widely used to deepen it.

In 1971, AFSC helped local groups in Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina gain access to school district plans and compare the plans with federal requirements and resources. AFSC helped obtain grants that exceeded half a million dollars for the local groups.

Following this work, AFSC facilitated the exchange of experience among concerned groups in these four states, kept federal agencies alert to specific needs and problems and conferred with other civil rights organizations on legal and community action strategies with particular emphasis on defeating new schemes to perpetuate discriminatory practices.

AFSC helped farm worker families in FL find construction jobs and obtain federally subsidized housing loans. AFSC also published a report that documented and exposed racial discrimination and bias on the part of a federal agency responsible for rural housing.

Southeast Region office moved to Atlanta, GA.

New Miami program focused on problem of joblessness among African American youths.

AFSC staff addressed Apartheid laws in South Africa and raised the issue of divestment of stocks and bonds.

After Hurricane Andrew hit, AFSC linked relief information to underserved farmworker communities.

The Gulf Coast Program was organized in response to Hurricane Katrina. Today, the focus is on New Orleans, where it is one of only a few on-going projects organized by national non-profits.

AFSC in Miami collaborated with the official consulates from El Salvador and Mexico, and, in a two-month period, spoke to at least 610 nationals from those counties about how to get national IDs and/or passports.

1971 1974 1978 1980 1981 1983 1984 1992 1995 2005 2008 2010

NC program helped low-income women overcome isolation, lack of access to information and exclusion from jobs. In the 1980s it became known as Women in the Workforce.

In Greensboro, Future Leaders-Future Changes brought together suburban white and inner-city African American youths to do activities together.

In Charlotte, NC, AFSC helped immigrants and refugees share their stories through a digital storytelling project.

With AFSC's help, black farm workers broke a 100-year barrier of housing segregation in seven FL counties.

AFSC helped a group of VA women form Help Empower Local People to address issues of hunger, malnutrition and employment.

In Atlanta, the Student Career Alternatives Program (SCAP) provided resources and alternatives to the military to more than 20,000 GA students.

Middle Atlantic Region Timeline

The Middle Atlantic Region Office was officially opened in 1949, but work was done in our “region” long before! Since the beginning, the region has worked on issues of economic and racial justice, prison reform, and ultimately, always – peace.



Aid to the coalfields

On July 5, 1922, the *New York Times* reported that the American Friends Service Committee was initiating efforts to provide basic humanitarian assistance for families in the coalfields of West Virginia and Pennsylvania.

In 1931 President Herbert Hoover asked the AFSC to step in once more to provide relief for the children of unemployed mine workers in the bituminous coalfields.

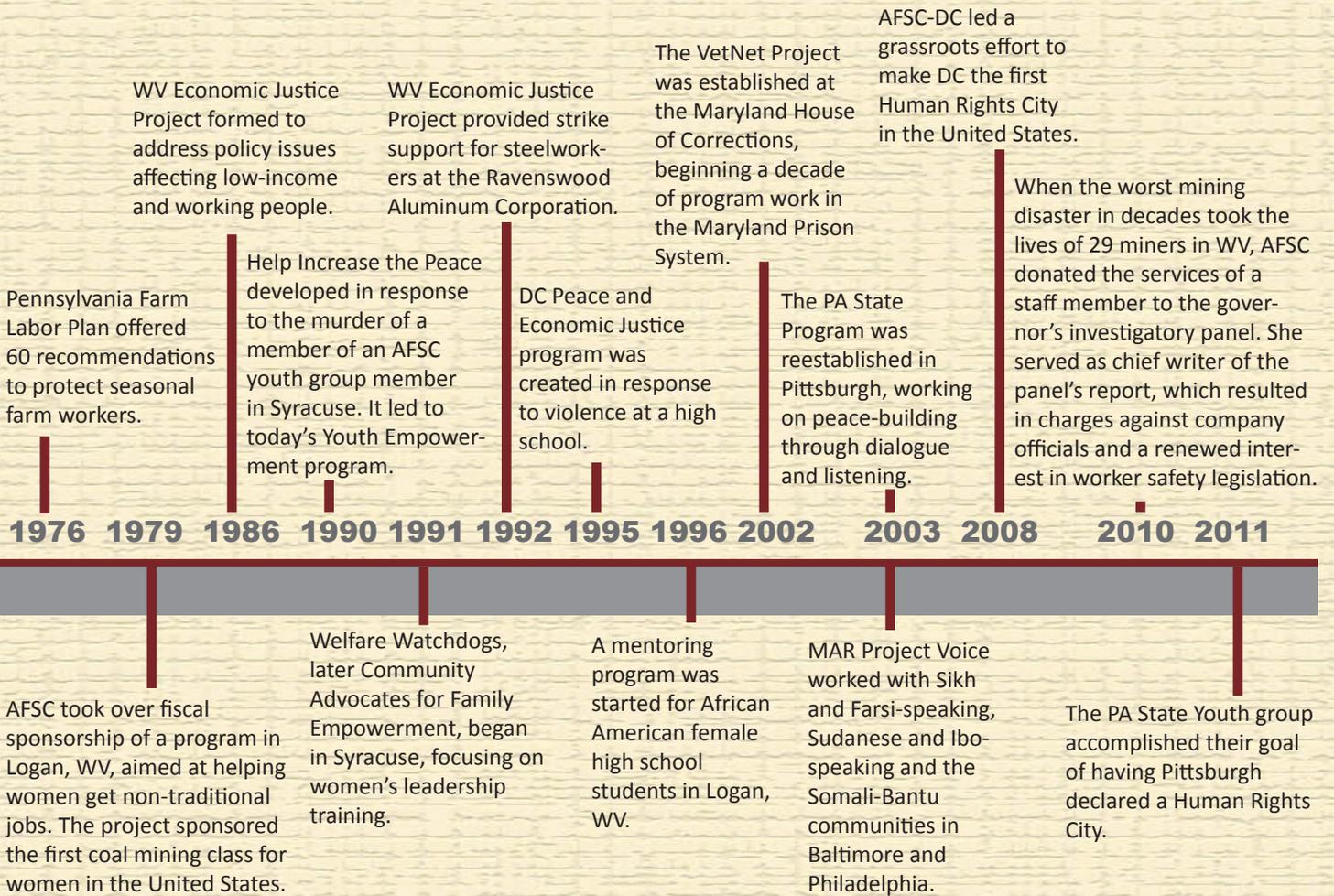
In response, the AFSC launched a program that would feed 40,000 miners' children in 41 counties in six Appalachian states. Volunteers are shown distributing milk in the 1930s Ben Shahn photo, center left.



“Investigation by our representatives in the coalfields of the two states indicate that a very serious condition exists among the children in families dependent upon the mining industry. Already a number are developing tuberculosis on account of malnutrition and there are hundreds of children who are without necessary food ... Without discussing any of the issues involved in the present controversy in the coal industry, the American Friends Service Committee believes that industrial strife does not justify the starving of innocent people.”—Wilbur K. Thomas, secretary, AFSC Home Service Committee

In 1937 AFSC formed Penn-Craft, a self-help housing project for miners in Fayette County, Pennsylvania. AFSC Executive Secretary Clarence Pickett pitched his “dream for a new community for coal miners

in western Pennsylvania” to executives from U.S. Steel, including an aged J.P. Morgan. The company agreed to give \$75,000 to the project. The AFSC purchased a 200-acre dairy farm northwest of Uniontown. To those selected, the AFSC committees awarded plots of land, averaging between 1.5 and three acres, on which to build their homes and cultivate their farmsteads. There was also a cooperatively run farm. Homes were made of stone from a nearby quarry (photo, right).



Criminal justice and conflict resolution

In 1970 Bernice Just, a Middle Atlantic Region staff member in Washington, DC, and a group of law students interviewed 597 men awaiting trial in District of Columbia Jails. She reported that “one had been confined 35 months, 11 others in excess of 18 months, and another 11 for a full year or more. Still another 72 men had been in jail for at least six months...” The DC office worked to secure pre-trial justice for minorities and low income groups.

In the same year Paul Wahrhaftig began work with AFSC in Pittsburgh, also concentrating on the issue of bail reform. Young people compiled statistical evidence on the difference between the way the bail system

worked in white suburbs and the way it worked in urban centers.

This work eventually evolved into the then-emerging concept of community dispute resolution. Paul



served on many task forces and planning groups that helped to chart the field of conflict resolution – ultimately serving as a resource to those in the field throughout the country. From Paul's perspective conflict resolution is “more than a profession, it is a social movement.”

In 1976, the DC office published *Emeshed*, left, a report on the problems of the criminal justice process based on the casework of 569 persons.

The work in the District of Columbia and Pittsburgh laid the groundwork for today's AFSC work addressing the criminal justice system and conflict resolution.



**American Friends
Service Committee**

SOUTH REGION

Suite 212, 3600 Clipper Mill Road
Baltimore, MD 21211-1848

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South Region Programs



**American Friends
Service Committee**

REGIONAL OFFICE:

ATLANTA

60 Walton Street NW
Atlanta, GA 30303
Phone (404) 586-0460
Fax: (404) 586-0465

Regional Director

Bonnie Erica Horton

BALTIMORE OFFICE

Suite 212
3600 Clipper Mill Road
Baltimore, MD 21211
Phone (410) 323-4200
Fax (410) 323-7291

Associate

Regional Director

Brooke McDonald

ATLANTA

60 Walton Street NW
Atlanta, GA 30303
Phone (404) 586-0460

Peace Education Program

Tim Franzen
Phone (404) 586-0460

Georgia Peace Center

Alice Lovelace
Phone (404) 586-0460

BALTIMORE

Suite 212
3600 Clipper Mill Rd.
Baltimore, MD 21211
Phone (410) 323-4200

Friend of a Friend

Dominique Stevenson
Phone (410) 323-7200

Youth Empowerment for Conflict Resolution

Miaferre Jones
Phone (410) 323-7348

GREENSBORO

Quaker Crossing
529-D College Rd
Greensboro, NC 27410

NC Peace & Economic Justice

Ann Lennon
Phone (336) 854-0633

NC Immigrant Rights

Lori Fernald Khamala
Phone (336) 854-0633

WEST VIRGINIA

Appalachian Center for Equality

Lida Shepherd
P.O. Box 1952
Logan, WV 25601
Phone (304) 356-8428

West Virginia Economic Justice Project

Rick Wilson
333 Porter Creek Road
Milton, WV 25327
Phone (304) 743-9459

MIAMI

American Friends Immigrant Services

Lucio Perez-Reynoso
111 NE 1st Street
3rd Floor
Miami, Florida
Phone (305) 600-5441

NEW ORLEANS

Peace and Conflict Transformation

Ahmane' Glover
1137 Baronne Street
New Orleans, LA 70012
Phone: (504) 565-3596

WASHINGTON, D.C.

DC Peace & Justice

Jean-Louis Peta Ikambana
1822 R St., NW, First Floor
Washington, D.C. 20009
Phone (202) 544 0324