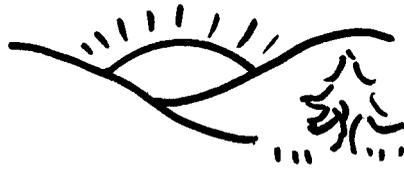

*Concerned
Educators
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Environment*



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CEASE at the California AEYC Conference, March 2005

Sharon Davisson reports:

CEASE members participated in a series of workshops focusing on the harmful effects of bullying on everyone involved - the person bullying, the person being bullied and the bystander who may fail to intervene. The workshops were well attended and the participants contributed interesting information and stories. Ideally, the participants will use the resources and strategies suggested to become allies of those who experience bullying.

At the Advocacy Center this year CEASE was well represented with two themes. Sunny Wallick forwarded all the materials needed to represent the theme "The Power of One". Based on the children's book *Swimmy*, where all the little fish band together to scare off the big bully fish, participants were offered a little fish on which to write how they can each use their power of one.

In addition to this activist piece was a display of the World Peace Rose Garden located on the capitol grounds in Sacramento. The vision of the Rose Garden is "To engage world citizens in activities that promote world peace." There are Peace Rose Gardens in Pacific Palisades, CA, Atlanta, Georgia, Mexico City, Mexico and Assisi, Italy.

Advocacy Center participants had an opportunity to create Peace Roses to wear as a reminder of inner peace. On Sunday CEASE members led a fieldtrip to the Peace Rose Garden. It was a lovely sight. The day was bright and sunny; our rainbow PEACE flags fluttered in the breeze as about twelve of us marched toward the garden. Along the way other conference participants joined us and soon we looked like a "real" peace march. That may have been why a policewoman halted the group and most seriously asked just what we were doing! Luckily Marilyn Pearce had a permit at hand, and we were allowed to continue to the garden.

We spent some time quietly viewing the garden and reading the peace poetry written by middle school children. We gathered for a meditation on "finding that peaceful place" and then shared our reflections. At this point a group of B'hai's joined us, recognizing that we were kindred spirits. Serendipitously, when we passed out songbooks, we discovered that we had printed up the exact number necessary. We closed our peace experience by singing several peace songs focused on the power of one. Chris Lamm even convinced the group to sing, "Peace is the World Smiling" in three-part rounds. The fieldtrip was a beautiful and inspiring experience.

Report From The Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood (CCFC) - *note: this is the new name of Stop Commercial Exploitation of Children*

Local PBS Stations are Saying No to Commercial Venture. Next fall, Comcast, PBS, Sesame Workshop and HIT entertainment will introduce PBS KIDS Sprout, a new 24-hour digital cable channel for preschoolers - with commercials. In response, CCFC launched a campaign urging local PBS stations not to affiliate with KIDS Sprout.

We asked you to contact your local PBS stations to ask them not to participate in this blatantly commercial venture and many of you responded: You called, you emailed, and you got your family and friends to do the same.

We are happy to report that many PBS stations have decided to say "no" to KIDS Sprout. We don't know the final numbers yet, but of the twenty-three stations we've talked to so far, twelve have decided not to affiliate including WGBH in Boston.

The decision was not an easy one. Several program managers told us that affiliating with Sprout would have provided their stations with much-needed funds, but that they were unwilling to help expose their viewers to more commercial content. In Boston, where CCFCers were particularly active in campaigning against KIDS Sprout, WGBH explained why they will not be affiliating: "We have a local children's digital channel that we operate with the city of Boston and we would not want to jeopardize that channel. We also are not comfortable with undertaking marketing efforts to support a commercial channel."

In the coming weeks, CCFC will be working with other organizations to lobby Congress for funding for genuinely commercial-free programming for children. Stay tuned! See www.commercialfreechildhood.org for more.



These characters were distributed on book marks by members of the Japanese Federation of Co-op Labor Union (Sekyo Roren). They were part of the large delegation from Japan which joined the march to support nuclear sanity at the opening of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Convention Review at the UN in May. The Review ended without any progress to report on May 27, 2005....

The Habit of Leaving Children Behind

Historically in the competitive, individualistic culture of the United States, leaving children behind has been a wounding habit. The habit has been acceptable, regrettable, unavoidable, unfortunate, and legal. Segregation and the inequitable practices and rules for funding, administering and staffing schools have always existed leaving behind the poor and disadvantaged ones, immigrant children, children of color, children with disabilities, and the children without “much potential or appeal.”

But the new federal education law, NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND (NCLB), will break this old habit of leaving only special groups of children behind. The new law is greasing the wheels of the free-market education model. This model ensures every child will eventually be left behind through the dismantling of public schools and the end of public education. No one would argue that our school system is perfect or that it hasn't often contributed to its own disrepair. Public schools have, however, despite their shortcomings, been a resource the public could claim, a community symbol of inclusion and relating, in theory if not always in practice.

Few were aware of the true intentions of Bush's education bill when it became law in 2002. It institutionalizes the flow of public school education funds to private (and parochial) school facilities. For example, the local school district is required to provide parents in “failing schools” with private educational services and tuition (voucher) for private programs to students with low test scores.

While few schools have yet suffered from the law's sanctions such as the appointed state or private takeover and teaching staffs being dismissed, many troubling changes have occurred since the passage of NCLB. The daily rhythms of school have been wholly reorganized to accommodate testing which determines priorities of learning as well as graduation eligibility. Physical education, music and art as well as community-building and creative expression time are discarded to focus on the subjects covered by the tests. Intellectual pursuits of questioning and critical thinking have become captive to rote memorization and test-taking skills. I know two wonderful and dedicated teachers who have chosen to leave public education because they could not bear to inflict the cruelty of testing on children who for reasons of language, learning disability or personal style are unable to reflect their brilliance through the vehicle of timed, high pressured tests. And there are others who can not bear to leave behind the creativity and participatory education that led them to teaching. Students may be retained in a grade and diplomas denied to those who don't pass even if they earn high marks in their actual classroom work. Low scores and a future without a high

school diploma generate increased student dropouts channeling many young people to the largest growing industry in the US - the criminal justice system.

In addition to the prison track, Mr. Bush's education law opens a second path for children left behind. Buried deep within the 670 pages of NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND is a provision requiring public secondary schools to provide contact information for every student to military recruiters. The law also requires high schools to allow military recruiters the same campus access as administrators give to colleges and job recruiters. In the past, schools in Cambridge, San Francisco and Portland, OR, refused military recruiters access to their campuses on the grounds that the Pentagon discriminated against gays and lesbians. Now schools refusing to comply face losing federal education funding under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. (Private and parochial schools are exempt from the No School Left Behind requirements.) And while NCLB is making a high school diploma less accessible to students, the military has abandoned its long standing high school graduation requirement for enlisting.

Although school communities have no recourse for keeping recruiters out, any individual parent or student has the right to opt out. They may request in writing that their information be withheld. Schools may release directory information but they must give parents and students the option of refusing disclosure.

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND is a predator, preying on the most vulnerable, those least able to defend themselves in the climate of zero tolerance and high-stakes testing, those without access to higher education or meaningful employment, children who have been historically and habitually left behind. Still, we know intuitively, an injury to one is an injury to all. Ultimately this law has the effect of eliminating political dissent and local control by disempowering individual school authorities, overriding local and state anti-discrimination policies and making the protection of student privacy a contentious issue.

Opposition is widespread. Clarity, courage and imagination, core elements of CEASE, are needed now, more than ever. We are part of a consciousness rising up and spreading across the country, envisioning a different future and longing to break the habit of leaving children behind.

Betty Burkes, Cambridge MA

Resources

Rethinking Schools www.rethinkingschools.org
Waging Peace www.wagingPeace.org
War Resisters League www.warresisters.org

Losing a Fighter for War's Victims



by Sarah Sewall

Armed only with her humanity, Marla Ruzicka did the impossible. Virtually alone, she directed attention and resources to the invisible victims of war. She moved the military without using force, galvanized official Washington without powerful connections, and motivated the press without sensationalism just intimate connection to civilians whose deaths she documented and grieved. Her work was a triumph of the heart.

She was recently killed by a car bomb while traveling to help Iraqis affected by the war. No one can take her place, but the United States can fulfill her mission to account more fully for civilian harm in war.

Marla was a humanitarian. By the time she founded her organization, CIVIC*, her early activism had shed its political skin and distilled into a personal campaign for civilian victims of war. First in Afghanistan and later Iraq, she walked door to door, recording how families had been affected by conflict. By creating a methodical record of civilian harm limbs lost, buildings destroyed, children killed, she and her colleagues bore witness to the suffering. She used that information to get assistance to victims. She provided it to a Harvard-sponsored collateral damage database to assess the military causes of civilian casualties. She made it harder for US authorities to ignore the human costs of war.

She was relentless, settling into a military lawyer's office until he saw the merits of a particular injury claim, hounding a commander until he approved a wounded child's medevac. Her force of will helped convince Senator Patrick Leahy of Vermont, to direct millions through the US Agency for International Development to assistance for families and communities. She didn't know that such things simply "weren't done." So she did them.

In her optimism and naivete, she was quintessentially American. But she stood apart in her sense of responsibility for others. She healed as she moved through ravaged communities: holding victims, crying with the bereaved, gathering evidence of harm, and promising help. Strangers responded to her for no reason other than her authentic concern.

If she connected with the victims, she also found common cause with those in uniform. She forwarded me an e-mail from an Army officer who tracked her down long after he had left Baghdad. "I admired you for your compassion, sensitivity, and courage; you were a bright spot in all of that tragedy," he wrote. "I had the great misfortune and sad duty to tell you of a child's death one for whom

you were searching at a hospital. You cried briefly on my shoulder as I told you that news. I was saddened and touched by your sorrow that day."

It mattered to her that they were able to share that sadness together. She understood that US soldiers don't wish harm upon the innocent, and she looked upon them as allies.

Marla's parents called her an ambassador for us all. But in truth, she was doing what the US government would not. Marla searched out what most Americans try to ignore the collateral effects on the innocent. She was the sole American present at the funeral of a Jordanian taxi driver, whom she called the first civilian victim of the Iraq war. She named the dead, documented injuries, and recorded damaged lives. Along the way, she worked without blame, without an agenda.

Still, she believed the United States could do better, not just at healing the wounds inadvertently caused, but to prevent future suffering. Which is why she wanted the government involved in the work to which she dedicated her life. She proved how much just one person could contribute. She believed that relief groups, de-mining teams, health organizations, journalists, and human rights investigators could also assess the impact on civilians. But she knew that unless the US government, and particularly the military, was engaged, it couldn't be done right. More fundamentally, only the military could apply the information to better avoid civilian casualties in the future. So not long before she died, Marla asked Leahy to create a government office responsible for maintaining a record of non-combatant casualties of US military operations.

Marla represented Americans better than we deserved. Honoring her life means asking our government to acknowledge the unintended victims of armed conflict and to learn from their suffering.

* You may contact CIVIC, at P.O. Box 1189, Lakeport CA 95483.

Sarah Sewall is adjunct lecturer at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government where she directs the Carr Center Project on the Means of Intervention.

From *The Boston Globe*, April 25, 2005. Reprinted with permission of the author

The Campaign to Ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child

John Surr Reports:

I represented CEASE at yesterday's quarterly meeting of the Campaign to Ratify the Children's Rights Convention (CRC). (Feb.15, 2005) A number of items came up during the meeting that will be of interest to our members.

1. The Campaign's Summit Conference: *The Children's Rights Convention: Mobilizing Communities for Ratification*, will be held on the campus of American University in Washington, DC, in the third week of May 2006. We hope to have over 1,000 people in attendance from all of America, including children. Costs will be held to a minimum, and housing on campus will be offered. We hope to have a big rally at the U.S. Capitol as a climax.
2. The Campaign's website, www.childrensrighscampaign.org, is up on the web, but still pretty primitive (e.g., we don't have e-mail links to a real person yet). We plan to update and develop the website into a comprehensive resource for those who seek tools to help them in bringing about ratification (e.g., templates for letters to Senators and editors).
3. Although prospects are not bright for added votes in the Senate for the Convention in the 2006 elections, we are reviving our efforts to contact and educate Senators and their staffs. If you have connections with any Senators and would like to get involved with these efforts, please contact me or Marty Scherr, whose e-mail address is mscherr@iss-usa.org.
4. The Campaign will be trying to use the widespread support, even in the Bush Administration, for the Protocols to the Convention on Trafficking in Children and Child Soldiers, both already ratified by the Senate, as a basis for generating support for the Convention in general. You might try this approach in your community as well.
5. The Campaign is seeking enthusiasts who can help to mobilize local and State governments to declare their support for ratification. An abundance of resources, based on positive experiences in Houston and Kansas City, among other locations, is available from Marty Scherr.
6. The Campaign liked the article on the CRC in *Young Children*, (Sept. 2004 pp.36-37) and wants to use it as an example of what other organizations can do.
7. A training curriculum for adults, including college students, about the Convention has been put on line at www.yapi.org/curricula.htm. It can be used without charge.

8. Emory University's Center for Interdisciplinary Study of Religion will hold an invitational conference on the CRC from a balanced, academic and theological perspective, with Jimmy Carter as one of the keynoters, on October 20-21 at their suburban Atlanta campus. Those interested might call one of the organizers, Prof. John Vandervyver at (404) 727-6991, or Dr. Jeremy Gunn at (202) 903-3891, to inquire about invitations.
9. UNICEF's Innocenti Research Center in Italy has just produced a research study on the impact of implementation of the CRC, based on reports by 62 countries that are parties to the Convention. This provides solid evidence of the successes brought about by the CRC, and it also may be useful in allaying fears of those impacts on the US.
10. Finally, the Campaign has a pitifully small treasury to use to support its activities, which need to grow in the coming months as the Summit approaches. If you, or an organization to which you belong, want to support the Campaign you can send donations with checks made out to International Social Service-USA Branch, 207 E. Redwood St. Baltimore, MD 21202, marked "for CRC Campaign".

You can contact John at surr@his.com

and a book for children . . .



For Every Child, The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in words and pictures, UNICEF, Phyllis Fogelman Books, NY. 2001

Twelve of the Articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child are beautifully illustrated in this book for children and the adults who love them. Children should be cherished, protected, educated, and allowed to speak, play, worship, and know their names and nations, regardless of where they live on this globe. Fourteen well known illustrators of children's books have contributed to this volume, and Caroline Castle presents the text in language accessible to children. "Watch over us. Wrap us up against the cold and rain, and give us shade from the hot sun. Make sure we have enough to eat and drink, and if we are sick, nurse and comfort us." (Right No. 24.) Archbishop Desmond M Tutu offers a foreword challenging us all to make these rights come true for the world's children in the New Millennium.

Lucy Stroock, Cambridge MA

Grandparents Enrich Preschool

Each year the families in my program, Stepping Stones Preschool, send in photographs of family members and fill out a questionnaire about the origin of their ancestors and family traditions or stories that they would like to share with the children. This year, after attending the NAEYC workshop “The Grandparent Connection” I was inspired to broaden our family theme. Along with the annual family questionnaire, I included a letter to grandparents, inviting them to visit our school and share stories, photographs, artifacts - anything they thought the children might enjoy.

The response has been heart warming and educational for all of us. One grandfather brought tools from his own father in Ireland: a sheep shearer, ice prongs, thorn bush cane and a bellows to get the peat fires going. He talked about the Irish famine and how his family barely survived. The children were startled that, “there wasn’t even anything for breakfast?” Another person shared a Christening gown, worn by her as well her children and grandchildren, telling us, “It is a special piece of clothing. All the children in our family have a special day in which they wear white and we celebrate that they are full of light.”

We have a world map on the wall with photographs of the children and our grandparent visitors surrounding it. Each photograph is linked by string to the parts of the world from which their family originated. We tie these wonderful stories together with the map, books and song. We sing Ruth Pelham’s “Under One Sky” adding different countries to the song as the grandparents talk about their origins. “We’re from Ireland, we’re from Poland, we’re from Vietnam and from Hawaii, too...”

I expect this grandparent project to continue throughout the spring. Having this connection between generations, this celebration of diversity, this opportunity to listen and appreciate and share is a gift to everyone.

Sharon Davisson, Nevada City CA

CEASE Bibliography of Books about Grandparents and Elders

Inspired by “The Grandparent Connection” workshop, several CEASE members began to collect a bibliography of books for preschoolers which feature Grandparents and Elders.

An annotated bibliography is now available from CEASE and will soon be posted on our website and at the CEASE Interest Forum on NAEYC’s website.

Book Reviews

Sitti’s Secrets

Naomi Shihab Nye, Nancy Carpenter (Illustrator), Aladdin Picture Books, 1994

“My Grandmother lives on the other side of the world. When I have daylight, she has night. When our sky grows dark, the sun is peeking through her window and brushing the bright lemons on her lemon tree”. Mona travels from her home in the U.S. to visit her grandmother’s small Palestinian village on the West Bank. Here for all who read it is the love of family. When she returns home, Mona writes to the president, “I vote for peace. My grandmother votes with me.” Children and adults will see themselves in this love that bridges two cultures. Beautiful illustrations and universal story. Pre-K – adult.

Sunny Wallick, Redlands CA

King & King

Linda de Haan, Stern Nijland (Illustrator), Tricycle Press, 2002.

Originally published in the Netherlands, this charming, though fractured, version of the classic Cinderella story is delightful. The Queen insists that her son marry so that she can retire. There is a bevy of princesses to audition for the job of wife, however her son has another idea. Their search for a suitable bride extends far and wide, but none of the eligible princesses strikes the Prince’s fancy, until Princess Madeleine shows up. The Prince is immediately smitten- with her brother, Prince Lee. Vibrant collages bring this heartwarming tale to life. The sequel is **King & King and Family**. A story of how adopting can create a non-traditional family.

Karen Kosko, Cambridge MA

One Voice Can Be Heard

I went to see a unique documentary feature film, The Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill, at the Embassy Theatre in Waltham MA. It records and validates the lives of Mark Bittner and the parrots whom he comes to care for and name as he is searching for meaning in his life. As usual, previews were part of the film experience, but that day I was truly dismayed. The featured film was rated G meaning that even young children were welcomed. However, that day the previews, were absolutely horrendous. Those in the film industry always claim that the previews have been made appropriate for a general audience, even when they are advertising R rated films. I found that these 3 previews had visuals that were terrible. So, after

continued on page 3

One Voice Can Be Heard continued from page 6

the film, I spoke to the cashier who stated that they have to show what the corporate office sends. I could not let this rest, so I sent an e-mail message explaining the situation to a main address. I was very pleasantly surprised to get an e-mail message from the district manager of the Embassy Theater who apologized and said that he had spoken to the manager. I quote him, "Every manger needs to know the content of the film playing and the audience viewing that film. He or she then needs to run previews where the content is suitable for that audience. In this case, he completely missed the mark." He added that he

understood my concern because he has two young children of his own. I was thrilled and wrote to thank him for his kind response. It is important to me that as a retired teacher, I am still able to be an advocate for young children.

Alice Wadden, Watertown MA



Statement of purpose

This revised Statement of Purpose was adopted at the CEASE Annual Meeting November 21 1996.

CEASE is a network of parents, teachers and other concerned individuals who are dedicated to creating a safe world for our children. We seek to end the violence that permeates our society to an ever increasing degree and to remove the root causes of this violence by advocating for peace, justice and economic opportunity.

We are committed to:

- Raising public awareness about both the origins of violence and the disastrous effects violence and injustice have upon children, families and communities.
- Eliminating the acceptance of violence which is created by mass media conditioning.
- Ensuring the abolition of nuclear weaponry, and other weapons of mass destruction, and an end to the proliferation of conventional weapons.
- Putting a stop to the dangerous degradation of our natural environment by supporting the development and use of reusable, non-polluting resources that protect the health and safety of future generations.

Central to the solution of these problems is the redirection of national priorities and funding from the military and corporate interests to human services and environmental preservation.

We work towards these goals through the following activities:

- Providing a supportive network for teachers and parents who share our concerns.
- Educating the early childhood community through the publication of **CEASE NEWS**, creating periodical informational fliers, giving workshops and developing peace education materials.
- Advocating for a government that is committed to improving and expanding quality child care and child development programs.
- **Fostering a society that focuses on the well being of young children and their families through all our work.**

YES, I WANT TO JOIN THE CEASE NETWORK

Date _____

- Enclosed is my \$10 subscription. new subscription renewal
- Enclosed is my \$5 student subscription. Here is an additional gift to help defray expenses.
- Enclosed is a gift membership for:

Name _____ Phone number () _____

Address _____

_____ e-mail _____

Place of work _____ position _____

NAEYC Member How did you learn about CEASE? _____

For tax deductible contributions over \$50 make check payable to Survival Education Fund

Return to CEASE, c/o Lucy Stroock, 55 Frost Street, Cambridge, MA 02140

E-mail: info@peaceeducators.org

Progress on Banning Corporal Punishment in U.S. Schools

Dallas School Board voted unanimously to ban corporal punishment in its schools in March, 2005, joining Houston, El Paso, San Antonio, Denton and Austin. Legislation to ban corporal punishment in schools statewide is currently before the Texas legislature, as well as legislatures in Pennsylvania, Indiana, and Missouri.

Twenty eight states now ban corporal punishment. Almost 100 countries ban it. Only a handful of the 100 largest cities in the U.S. have not banned its use. Corporal punishment leads to student injuries, lawsuits against educators and school boards, and is used disproportionately on children with disabilities, boys, minority children and poor children. Texas could be the twenty-ninth state to ban this archaic, dangerous and ineffective practice.

This report is provided by Nadine Block, Director of the Center for Effective Discipline, Executive Director of the Center for Effective Discipline and co-chair of EPOCH-USA. Their website is www.stophitting.org There you will find information about the status of corporal punishment use, laws and regulations, the effects of use and alternatives. (614)221-8829

Spread the Word!

CEASE asks for your help in expanding our network. We would like to reach people entering the field and others who may not have encountered our work at conferences.

Please consider giving a gift membership to people whom you think might be interested.

We, also, encourage everyone to take **CEASE News** to Conferences and other events. Let us know ahead, and we will send your copies of the **News**.

Children of Hiroshima

The slide presentation of the art and words of children from Hiroshima, created by Peggy Schirmer and Linda de Lissavoy, is now available on VHS and DVD.

Contact CEASE for a copy of this brief and moving portrayal.

Price: \$10.00.

CEASE welcomes contributions to the newsletter. Please write us about your work for a peaceful and safe world for children. We will publish as space allows.

Finally, please feel free to copy any materials you receive from CEASE and distribute them to colleagues, parents, students.... Help us to reach out!

Let people know about our website:
www.peaceeducators.org

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