

Welcome, Mark!

By Stuart Williams, Omaha Chapter

'Tis the season to be jolly! Voters have routed most of the officeholders favoring war as a solution, and Nebraskans for Peace has hired Mark Welsch, one of Nebraska's finest organizers, to be our coordinator in Omaha.

Mark is revered in Omaha and in Nebraska for his tenacious efforts to protect people from tobacco. His 16 years as president of the Group to Alleviate Smoking Pollution, known as GASP, resulted in success after success at state and local levels, culminating in the recent smoking ban passed by the Omaha City Council.

In 1998 Mark retired from work and devoted his life to anti-tobacco, social justice and environmental issues. Since the polls show the public to be in favor of environmental issues, pro-union, in favor of women's rights and human rights, a progressive organizer is literally worth his or her weight in gold, if we are to live in a peaceful sustainable world. According to Mark's resume, one of his objectives as coordinator is to mobilize members of a group and to work with the media and elected officials to change society's norms.

Let's all pitch in and help Mark make NFP an even better organization.



A CALL TO ACTION

By Holly Dzyban, Omaha Chapter

Chapter members need to write to the governor about the serious Whiteclay situation in Nebraska. Address follows: Governor David Heineman, Box 94848, Lincoln NE 68509-4848, e-mail gov.heineman@gov.ne.gov.

Here is a sample letter: Dear Governor Heineman:

The village of Whiteclay sits on the northern edge of Nebraska, just a few yards south of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Whiteclay boasts a population of 14. Its main business: alcohol.

Four liquor stores do business in Whiteclay. They sell an average of 11,000 cans of beer every day, mostly to Pine Ridge residents who walk or drive south to the stores.

Pine Ridge is a dry reservation. Persons cannot legally buy or consume alcohol on reservation land, and Pine Ridge stretches roughly 20 miles east and west of Whiteclay.

Nor is alcohol consumption permitted in Whiteclay either. None of the liquor retailers are bars—all are package stores. Plus, Nebraska's open container laws do not allow the consumption of alcohol on the street.

Since 1973, unsolved murders numbering 64 have occurred in and around Whiteclay. The trade of stolen goods in exchange for alcohol is common. People drink themselves to unconsciousness on the streets of Whiteclay 24 hours a day.

Nebraska's Liquor Control Commission complains that its hands are tied. It cannot take any of these facts into account



(Continued on page 2)

when deciding whether or not to award a license. Or so it claims. Several half-hearted attempts have been made to give the Liquor Control Commission more discretion in dealing with Whiteclay. In 2002 LB 1306 proposed banning the sale of alcohol within five miles of reservation lands. Earlier this year LB 530 would have allowed the liquor commission to take population density into account when awarding licenses.

However, the legislature has enacted no laws. And hundreds of persons, alcoholics and casual drinkers and bystanders, come closer to death every day. How can we let alcohol kill human beings in this community? Moreover, how can we as Nebraskans profit from this sickness and great moral wrong?

Please intervene. Introduce a dram shop law for Nebraska, prohibiting the sale of alcohol to intoxicated customers. Forty-three other states have them. It is certainly time for one in Nebraska. (Your Signature)

Peace Matters

By Beth Furlong, Omaha Chapter

Peace does matter.

One way to further peace is by participating as a Fulbright fellow. As a recent Fulbright lecturer in two schools of nursing in Hungary in the spring of 2006, I took advantage of an international opportunity and learned the value of increased cross-cultural communication. As a result, every Thursday I read online the Budapest Sun, Hungary's one English newspaper published weekly.

I heartily encourage interested persons to seek this fellowship. There are three categories of individuals who can pursue Fulbright fellowships: 1) an individual educationally prepared at the doctorate level or the terminal degree in one's discipline can apply to be a lecturer or a researcher; 2) high school teachers; and 3) recent college undergraduates or masters' graduates who are researching a particular question.

Dear readers: What would you like to see in Peace Matters? Send ideas, letters or articles of 100-300 words (subject to editing) to Mark Welsch, NFP Omaha Office / PO Box 6418, Omaha NE 68106; 453-0776; e-mail nfpomaha@NebraskansForPeace.org

In 1946 the U.S. Congress established the Fulbright program. Operating in 150 countries, its purpose is to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic, and peaceful relations, between the United States and other countries of the world, according to The Hungarian-American Fulbright Commission. Although this program started during the Cold War era, the need for global understanding is more urgent than ever today.



Individuals are encouraged to obtain more information at this website: http://www.cies.org/about_fulb.htm

In addition, I am eager to give presentations to interested groups. I will adapt the presentation to your time and interest needs, i.e., 1) how to obtain a Fulbright fellowship; 2) strengths and challenges of the Hungarian health system; and 3) a summary of my experience. Weaved through all presentations will be data on history, politics, and economics of Hungary. Please contact me at bfurlong@creighton.edu or 553-3220 at home or 280-2012 at work. I have presented to numerous respected groups in the Omaha area.

MORE ACTION REQUESTED

By Anne Else, Omaha Chapter

The following six paragraphs were written by former President Jimmy Carter for Cox News Commentary about his new book: *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid*.

"I signed a contract with Simon & Schuster two years ago to write a book about the Middle East, based on my personal observations as the Carter Center monitored three elections in Palestine and on my consultations with Israeli political leaders and peace activists.

"We covered every Palestinian community in 1996, 2005 and 2006, when

ANSWER: Richard Cohen writing in The Washington Post on December 26, in his commentary titled "A Delusional System of Justice."

(Continued from page 2)

Yasser Arafat and, later, Mahmoud Abbas were elected president and members of Parliament were chosen. The elections were almost flawless, and turnout was very high--except in East Jerusalem, where, under severe Israeli restraints, only about 2 percent of registered voters managed to cast ballots.

"The many controversial issues concerning Palestine and the path to peace for Israel are intensely debated among Israelis and throughout other nations--but not in the United States...

"This reluctance to criticize any policies of the Israeli government is due to the extraordinary lobbying efforts of the American-Israel Political Action Committee and the absence of any significant contrary voices.

"...My most troubling experience has been the rejection of my offers to speak, for free, about the book on university campuses with high Jewish enrollment and to answer questions from students and professors. I have been most encouraged by prominent Jewish citizens and members of Congress who have thanked me privately for presenting the facts and some new ideas.

"The book describes the abominable oppression and persecution in the occupied Palestinian territories, with a rigid system of required passes and strict segregation between Palestine's residents and Jewish settlers in the West Bank. An enormous imprisonment wall is now under construction, snaking through what is left of Palestine to encompass more and more land for Israeli settlers."

This is why NFP has established a Palestinian rights task force. We may be a "small voice in the wilderness," but hope that this



small voice might grow as we speak out against the oppression of the Palestinians by the Israeli government. Please write your Congressmen asking them to end all military aid to Israel. Also ask Omaha bookstores to stock President Carter's book, and ask Creighton University to bring President Carter to Omaha as a speaker.

PM 3

Congratulations to the Gandhi Award Winner, Carol Windrum. April 6th, the UNO School of Social Work will celebrate the 10th year of awarding by having Gandhi's grandson speak. Mark your calendars. If you want to attend this luncheon, contact Ashlie Hurt at 554-3057 or ahurt@mail.unomaha.edu

Upcoming Events to Attend

by Steven Abraham

All are invited to the lively discussions that occur at the Second Unitarian Church during "First Hour" at 9:00 a.m. on the second Sunday of the month. Past speakers included Alan Potash, executive director of the Anti-Defamation League, Anne Else and Dana Bainbridge of the Omaha chapter of NFP, and Musa Al-Hindi, NFP member knowledgeable of Palestinian rights.

Also, films are shown and discussed. On February 11 Russell Alberts will talk on preparing a dwelling for sustainability, and the following Sunday (not the usual Sunday), the 18th, Dr. Bruce Johansen, writer and distinguished professor at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, will talk about global warming.

Peace Matters Committee:
Editor: Mark Walsh
Assistant Editor: Victoria Peterson
Layout: Carol Windrum and Tim Fickenscher



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Donations to Nebraskans for Peace are NOT tax deductible because of our political activity. Tax-deductible donations CAN be made to the Nebraska Peace Foundation for our educational work. This form and checks for both Nebraksns for Peace, and the Nebraska Peace Foundation may be sent to: 941 "O" Street, Suite 1026, Lincoln, NE 68508, 402-475-4620

Fax 402/475/4624 nfpstate@NebraskansForPeace.org

Calendar of Events

Feb. 14, 6:30-7:30 p.m. **NFP Omaha Leaders Group** at Augustana Lutheran Church, 3647 Lafayette Ave.

Feb. 21, 28, March 7, 14, 21, 28, April 4 (the seven Wednesdays in Lent) from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. **Vigil at StratCom/UNO**, 6825 Pine St. (three blocks east of 72nd and Pine St., which is 16 blocks south of Dodge St., behind and east of UNO Scott Technology Center).

Feb. 26, 7:00 p.m. **Palestinian Task Force** at Hanscom Park United Methodist Church, 4444 Frances St.

March 6, 5:30-6:30 p.m. **Peacemakers Task Force** at Crane Coffee at 7772 Cass St.

March 14, 6:30-7:30 p.m. **NFP Omaha Leaders Group** at Augustana Lutheran Church, 3647 Lafayette Ave.

March 15, **Coalition Building for Progressives**, social gathering at 5:30 p.m., meeting at 6:00 p.m. at McFoster's Restaurant at 38th and Farnam and Harney Sts.

March 26, 7:00 p.m. **Palestinian Task Force**. Contact Anne Else at 556-5184 for location.

April 3, 5:30-6:30 p.m. **Peacemakers Task Force**. Contact Elaine Wells at 415-9500 for location.

April 6, Noon, UNO School of Social Work will honor NFP member Carol Windrum with the **Gandhi award**. Reservations (\$25 for luncheon) are required by contacting Ashlie Hurt at 554-3057 or ahurt@mail.unomaha.edu.

April 15, 1:00-6:00 p.m. Third Omaha Peace and Justice Expo at UNO Student Center. Keynote speaker will be Cindy Sheehan.

April 30, 7:00 p.m. **Palestinian Task Force**. Contact Anne Else at 556-5184 for location.

May 6, 5:00 p.m. **NFP Omaha Rice and Beans Dinner** at Hanscom Park United Methodist Church, 4444 Frances St. More information later.

NFP-Omaha Office
Nebraskans for Peace
PO Box 6418
Omaha NE 68106
453-0776
nfpomaha@NebraskansForPeace.org

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<p>WHO SAID? The devil is not in the details; it's in our certainty. (See inside.)</p>
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