

Bell Ringing for Those Cut From TennCare

Send not to know
For whom the bell tolls,
It tolls for thee.

—John Donne (1572-1631)

by Jane Hussain

A bell tolling took place on the last weekend of July at Legislative Plaza in downtown Nashville. Bells were tolled 71,900 times to commemorate the cuts in the healthcare of 719,000 Tennessee citizens, which began to take effect on Monday, August 1. People from all over the state gathered to help toll the



bells for themselves, their family members, friends and neighbors. The bells were tolled every every few seconds for 24 hours a day, starting on Thursday, July 28, and continuing until 9 p.m. on Sunday evening, July 31.

This event, along with many others, was organized by GROC, or The Grassroots Organizing Committee, one of the many groups working to save TennCare and to prevent as much suffering and death as possible. Most members of GROC are TennCare enrollees and ex-enrollees. GROC has been meeting on and off since last December, usually at the Peace and Justice Center, and sometimes at Edgehill United Methodist Church.

GROC is currently concentrating on organizing town hall meetings wherever its members live, in order to educate Tennessee's state legislators on how the TennCare cuts are affecting their constituents, and to ask them to join the growing number of senators and representatives calling for a special legislative session, as soon as possible, to deal with the catastrophic situation resulting from the TennCare cuts.

If you'd like to work with GROC, please call Dan Joranko at 615-430-2455. In any case, write, phone, email and fax your state senator and representative; ask them to call for a special session on TennCare!

LETTER FROM THE CENTER

DONATE TO THE NASHVILLE PEACE AND JUSTICE CENTER

NPJC is launching our annual grassroots fundraising campaign. Our goal is to raise \$30,000 through your new and renewed contributions, a substantial portion of our total budget.

1. WRITE YOUR ANNUAL NPJC MEMBERSHIP CHECK

Send \$1 - \$1000+ to the NPJC:
1016 18th Ave. South / Nashville / TN / 37212

2. JOIN MONTHLY AUTOMATIC BANK WITHDRAWAL PROGRAM AMOUNT: \$_____ (\$5, 10, 25, 100 or More)

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

BANK: _____ CITY: _____

ABA # (9 DIGITS): _____

ACCOUNT #: _____

3. PLANNED GIVING Put NPJC into your WILL or Life Insurance.

4. KROGER GIFT CARD Send us \$5 or more with #4 "KROGER CARD" circled and we'll send you a Kroger card. 5% of all your groceries will go to NPJC.

5. ENROLL YOUR COMPANY IN COMMUNITY SHARES Call NPJC to find out more.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
NASHVILLE PEACE AND JUSTICE CENTER
(615) 321-9066
matt@nashvillepeacejustice.org

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NASHVILLE PEACE AND JUSTICE CENTER

A community-based, multi-issue center for the Middle Tennessee region seeking to promote peacemaking, social justice and environmental issues in our society and the world.

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Americans United for Separation of Church and State
Amnesty International
Bring Urban Recycling to Nashville Today
Common Cause
Cumberland Greens Bioregional Council
The Emma Center
Earth Matters
First Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashville
Greater Nashville Unitarian Universalist Congregation
Homeless Power Project
Interfaith Alliance of Middle Tennessee
Latin American Central American Solidarity Association
Living Wage Campaign of Nashville
Middle Tennessee Presbytery/Peace With Justice Committee
Mideast Peace Coalition
Nashville Friends Meeting
National Organization for Women
Pan Africa
PeaceRoots Alliance
Radio Free Nashville
The Scarritt-Bennett Center
Tennessee Coalition to Abolish State Killing
Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition
United Nations Association
Veterans for Peace
War Resisters League

ALTERNATIVES

is the official bimonthly publication of the Nashville Peace & Justice Center

EDITORIAL COLLECTIVE

Ashley Crownover, Al Levenson, Gene Kelly, and Karl Meyer

SUBMISSIONS

We seek cartoons, articles, letters and photos related to peace and justice issues relevant to the Tennessee progressive community. We will try to respect the integrity of your submissions, but we reserve the right to edit for clarity, grammar, spelling and length. Objections? Write us a letter.

Fax: 615-320-8897 Phone: 615-321-9066
Email: nashvillepjc@yahoo.com

Calendar

September/ October 2005

September 4: Homecoming 2005, Highlander Research and Education Center, New Market, from 2 to 8:30 p.m. News of Highlander, performances, honoring of Frank and Margaret Adams, dinner, hayride, book signing, "Jammin' for Justice." More Info: 865-933-3443.

September 7: Religion, Violence and Peace, a class that looks at religion and faith as forces behind both acts of violence and works of peace, 7 p.m. at First Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashville, 1808 Woodmont Blvd. in Nashville. We will be using segments from the PBS newsmagazine series Religion & Ethics News Weekly as a starting point in our discussions. Led by Cynthia Stewart. More Info: 615-383-5785.

September 8-11: Sierra Summit 2005, National Environmental Convention and Exposition, Moscone Center, San Francisco. Workshops on everything from "Backyard Organics" and "Eating Smart" to "Photography and Nature" and "Restoring the Wild." Exhibit hall with environmentally sensitive technologies and products. More Info: www.sierrasummit2005.org.

September 11-17: "Journey for Justice," annual Freedomwalk across six southwest Georgia counties, calling attention to police abuse, courthouse oppression, and jailhouse conditions. More Info: Prison & Jail Project, P.O. Box 6749, Americus, GA 31709; 229-928-2080.

September 13: Theologians Under Hitler, new film screening sponsored by The Baptist Center for Ethics. Immanuel Baptist Church, 222 Belle Meade Blvd. in Nashville, 1-3 p.m. Produced by Steven Martin, pastor of First United Methodist Church in Oak Ridge, the film explores the role that many German theologians played in the "Nazification" of the German church in the period prior to World War II. We'll talk about the intersection between theology and ideology and how Christians can become captive to destructive political perspectives, both in pre-war Germany and in the United States today.

September 14: Religion, Violence and Peace, a class that looks at religion and faith as forces behind both acts of violence and works of peace, 7 p.m. at First Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashville, 1808 Woodmont Blvd. in Nashville. We will be using segments from the PBS newsmagazine series Religion & Ethics News Weekly as a starting point in our discussions. Led by Cynthia Stewart. More Info: 615-383-5785.

September 17-18: Twenty-third Annual African Street Fest at TSU. This year's theme is "Mother Nature sustains humanity's needs, but not man's greed." It will be a tribute to Waangari Maathai, Kenyan Nobel Peace Prize winner and environmental/social justice activist. Stop by the EarthMatters area near the children's pavilion and our opening ceremony at noon on Saturday. Volunteer with us by calling 228-1649.

September 17: TCASK Garage Sales. See article on page 8.

September 22-25: Jobs With Justice (JWJ) Annual Meeting, Renaissance Grand Hotel, St. Louis, MO. For labor, religious, student, and community activists supporting the right to organize, economic justice, accountable development, and more. More Info: www.jwj.org.

September 22: National Student Labor Pre-Conference, in connection with the JWJ Annual Meeting. Orientation to student and worker rights on college campuses, fresh from victories at Georgetown and Washington Universities. Go to www.unionvoice.org/ct/G7aRz-511ct0.

September 24: Peace Rally/International Protest Day from 12-2 p.m. More Info: Call the NPJC at 615-321-9066.

September 24: EarthMatters Seventh Annual Green Power Day. Come to the eARTH Food Park, 10th Ave. S. & Gale Lane at the I-440 overpass in Nashville, from

10 a.m.-3 p.m. for solar demonstrations, kids activities, garden, permaculture and compost tours and workshops. Entertainment by some of Nashville's finest including Valerie Cole and Clarence Dobbins of the Clarence Dobbins Revue. This year's event will be a fundraiser for the Kids To The Country program needing more local support. More Info: 615-252-6953 or www.earthmatterstn.org.

September 24-26: Call for Justice Weekend, New York Ave. Presbyterian Church & Holiday Inn, Capitol Hill, Washington, DC. Led by the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) and UUSC "Stop Torture" coordinator Jennifer Harbury (a prominent human rights advocate and past CRLN luncheon speaker), this national gathering will educate the public and our national leadership about the grim realities of current U.S. practices. More Info: www.uusc.org/programs/STOP/cfjw_signup.html or www.unitedforpeace.org/article.php?id=2854.

September 26: Monthly NOW Meeting, 7 p.m. at the NPJC*. Topic: "Voting Reforms." More Info: 615-269-7141 or tennesseerow@comcast.net

September 30-October 2: Fair Trade Futures Conference, sponsored by Oxfam America, Chicago, Illinois. Activists converge to talk about how fair trade makes a difference to poor people around the globe, with stories from Fair Trade Certified coffee and other areas. More Info: www.oxfamamerica.org.

October 8: Tennessee NOW State Conference, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Nashville Airport Embassy Suites. The theme is "Women and Religion." Registration is \$40, lunch is \$20. More Info: 615-269-7141 or tennesseerow@comcast.net.

October 15: Fourteenth Annual Leaf Lift Registration, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Register to be a Leaf Thief for the annual curbside rescue of fall leaves. Join this city-wide "organic composting/land sculpting" activity which kicks off with the Smashing Pumpkins event on Nov. 5. More Info: 615-252-6953 or www.earthmatterstn.org.

October 24: Monthly NOW Meeting, 7 p.m. at the NPJC*. Topic: "Love Your Body." More Info: 615-269-7141 or tennesseerow@comcast.net.

October 25: BURNT Fundraiser at the Bluebird. See the article on page 5.

October 27-30: National Annual Conference, National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, Hyatt Regency Austin on Town Lake, Austin, Texas. More Info: 888-286-2237, conference2005@ncadp.org, or www.ncadp.org.

Weekly Activism

Sundays: Food not Bombs from 1:30-3 p.m. at Legislative Plaza (between Capitol and Sheraton, at 6th and Union). More Info: ryan@monsterlabs.com or 615-293-0603.

Wednesdays: Peace Coalition from 6-7:30 p.m. at NPJC*. Join the two-year-old NPJC Peace Coalition as they plan protests and educational events.

Thursdays: Women in Black from 12-1:00 p.m. on Broadway between 12th and 11th. "Silently stand in black: to mourn, to remember, to be a presence for peace."

* NPJC offices and board room are located at 1016 18th Ave. S., Nashville, Tenn. 37212. Call 615-321-9066 for directions.

DONATE TO THE NPJC (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

WHAT WE'RE DOING:

LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Training for Community Organizing!

In January 2005, we initiated a 9-week institute for community organizing. With 3 cycles a year, over 75 Middle Tennesseans will graduate with the skills needed to work effectively on issue-based organizing campaigns.



TENNCARE CAMPAIGN

With the largest cuts to a state health care system since Medicaid inception, NPJC is a leading member of the statewide coalition to stop and reverse the cuts. We have:

- * Worked with over 100 TennCare enrollees
- * Supported the longest sit-in in U.S. history
- * Organized dozens of forums and rallies
- * Prepared citizen meetings with legislators

PEACEWORK

Continued to speak for peace and against the U.S. War on Iraq through education and action.

RESOURCE CENTER FOR LOCAL JUSTICE GROUPS

Supporting the work for Immigrant, Women's, Homeless, Environmental Rights and more!



INTERVIEW WITH SENATOR RUSS FEINGOLD

by Chris Lugo (Tennessee Indymedia)
and Sharon Cobb

Russ Feingold was the only senator to vote against the Patriot Act. He was the first senator to introduce legislation into the U.S. Senate demanding a timetable for ending the war in Iraq, and he is a leading proponent of national health care. Feingold was in Nashville on Saturday, July 9, to address the statewide conference of Democracy for Tennessee, an organization dedicated to running progressive Democrats candidates in Tennessee.

Chris Lugo, Tennessee Indymedia: Could you address the resolutions introduced in the House and Senate to bring the troops home?

Senator Russ Feingold: I am pleased to see that one of the most conservative members of the House and one of the biggest leaders of the pro-Iraq war movement introduced a bill that put a timetable on the withdrawal of troops from Iraq. What I did in the Senate, and I was the first one to do this, was to introduce a resolution that would cause the president within thirty days to give us his mission statement of what we are doing there, what the timetable is for accomplishing the steps that have to be accomplished and a timetable for withdrawing the troops. So there are different approaches, but it is a sign when you see a bipartisan group like we did in the House come together and when I do a resolution like mine some Republicans came up to me and said, "You know, I am not sure about your language but maybe we can work together." There is a very fundamental anxiety about this Iraq intervention that the president

is trying to repress and deny but it is real and it is growing and it is growing in places like South Carolina, not just places like Massachusetts.

How did your colleagues respond to that?

Some concern. Many of my colleagues are afraid of being associated with the idea of withdrawing the troops because whenever it is mentioned the president says we can't just cut and run, but of course that is a false choice. There aren't just two choices, to stay forever or cut and run—what we need is a rational approach that tells not only the American people but the Iraqi people that we have a plan to leave someday, that we are not just trying to occupy it; this is the way to take the wind out of the sails of the insurgents and the terrorists. In fact, one of the retired generals told me off the record, I said, "Wouldn't we be better off if we had some vision of when we are going to leave?" and he said, "Nothing would be better to take the wind out of the sails of the terrorists." I think the president doesn't understand the dynamic there. This has become a recruiting ground for terrorists all over the world. We don't know who perpetrated the London bombings, but we may find out that these are people who were trained in Iraq because Porter Goss, the head of the CIA, says that that is what is happening. The people are being trained in urban warfare and are being exported around the world, so I think that we have been playing into the hands of the terrorists by getting into a situation that we were not prepared for.

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PLURALISM AND TOLERANCE MESSAGE OF OPPONENTS TO "JUSTICE SUNDAY II" IN NASHVILLE

by Chris Lugo, Tennessee Indymedia

In a dramatic response to August's "Justice Sunday," organizers in Nashville with the Human Rights Campaign Fund, National Organization of Women, Tennessee Guerilla Women, and Americans United for Separation of Church and State hosted several separate counter-events designed to show the compassion, tolerance and pluralistic perspective of the community. At the Two Rivers Baptist mega-church, pro-choice women gathered in the streets to oppose the nomination of rightwing activist judges. Sylvia Jones, a pro-choice woman, said, "I am grateful that there are a lot of people out there who believe as I do. Rights need to be protected and children need to be valued and women's lives need to be valued." Meanwhile, across town two hundred people gathered to hear a message of pluralism and compassion organized by Americans United for Separation of Church and State. Barry Lynn, who was a designated speaker at the event, said, "I think when Judge Roberts demonstrates a hostility to women's reproductive rights, separation of church and state, and protection of the individual by the bill of rights, then I think these are three strikes against Judge Roberts."

Sandy Smith-Madsen of the Tennessee Guerilla Women said she was present to oppose a theocracy: "I am here to take a stand to say that Nashville is not happy with all these autocratic theologians coming into our town today. They are taking this country down the wrong path, and I mean down. They want everybody to be just like them. I thought we were supposed to be progressing in this country toward the idea of tolerance, instead of legislating hatred and conformity. This is part of a huge effort by the Right to get Roberts nominated, and I am a little bit worried about the left being able to stand up and challenge them. There are at least seven Democratic women in Congress who are going to take a stand. I don't know about the rest of them. I know the pro-choice women are really energized and I know the gay community is getting really pissed off. If they keep on pushing against us then eventually we are going to push back. It is important for us to be here because they are really stereotyping us here in the South, saying there aren't any feminists here, there aren't any pro-choice women standing up, but here we are standing up for our rights."

Kathy Austin, National Organization of Women, said she was concerned about the direction the country is going: "I am here because I am very concerned about the Supreme Court and the direction that this country is going to be going in the next forty years if Bush gets his way. I am concerned that the Right Wing is characterizing people like Roberts as someone who would do justice if they

get their way, when in fact he will not do justice. I am concerned that the Right Wing says they are against activist judges when Bush is appointing the most activist judge. They are trying to give the impression that all of Nashville's Christian community is of one mind and that is not the case. We are asking our members across the country to contact their senators to tell them that we do not want justices like John Roberts, we want justices representative of

the public. The Republicans have been the obstructionists here. People don't realize that when Clinton was in office he couldn't get any federal judges appointed and we don't want our Democratic senators to be afraid of the filibuster if that is necessary. So we are trying to get that message out. We want them to stand up and do what is right for the country. This is very serious. If they get those justices in, and I am not going to call them justices, if we get those men in then their decisions are going to shape the lives of our children and grandchildren and we need to stop that."



Cynthia Bennett of the National Organization for Women. Photo ©Al Levenson.

Carolyn Hughes, Nashville Peace Coalition, said we have to talk about true justice: "I am here because I want to make the point that our government has separation of church and state and my read is that what we are being told here by Tom Delay is that the church can tell us what government can do and be and that is un-American. We are a democracy, not a theocracy. This is the second so called "Justice Sunday," and we know from the first one that the congregation was told what political opinions to have and how to vote and this violates these churches' non-profit status. When we talk about peace, we have to talk about justice."

Rita Fuson-Frazier, a 62-year-old protester, said she believes in justice for all: "I believe in Justice for all people. If homosexuals want to marry they should have the right. I think this is a personal choice. All religion is a viable belief for yourself. I am a Christian and a United Methodist, but for them to say I have no morals because I don't believe like they do well I find this very offensive. I have the freedom to protest and that is what I am doing."

Charles Sumner of Americans United for Separation of Church and State said that there are many people who do not agree with the message of Justice Sunday II. "I think we are here to show that there are a lot of people who do not agree with 'Justice Sunday II,' and we do not agree that that a particular religious point of view should be the position of the government. The government should be a secular government and decisions should not be

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LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE GRADUATES ANOTHER CLASS OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZERS

by Jen Cartwright, Director of Education

On August 18, the Peace and Justice Center graduated another class of the Leadership Institute, a nine-week training in the skills of community organizing. After many hours of workshops on topics ranging from public speaking to media relations to lobbying, the 18 graduates gathered with friends, family, community members and Leadership Institute alumni to celebrate the successful completion of the program. We gave out diplomas, we feasted on a potluck banquet, listened to graduation speeches, and we even got a visit from Vice Mayor Howard Gentry. I'd like to let the Summer 2005 Leadership Institute participants describe their experiences in their own words. Here is some of what they had to say on their program evaluations:

"The Leadership Institute helped to re-ignite my activism and sense of responsibility for others. It re-affirmed my belief in the power of the people."

"The Leadership Institute was a wonderful and meaningful and empowering experience. I was exposed to a new skill

set in grassroots activism and organizing. The classes and instructors were all excellent."

"Very well-organized and informative series of classes. The classes covered a wide range of information and strategies that are useful across many disciplines."

"The Leadership class actually exceeded my expectation. All of the instructors were knowledgeable and had great presentations. Class was always well attended with exciting and interesting people. I look forward to attending other classes at the NPJC and strongly recommend this class to others wanting to learn more about grassroots organizing."

We are currently accepting applications for the Fall 2005 Leadership Institute (deadline September 12). If interested, contact Jen Cartwright at 615-321-9066 or jen@nashvillepeacejustice.org.



BURNT FUNDRAISER AT THE BLUEBIRD

by Rachel Sumner

Some of Music Row's most talented, dynamic and inspiring songwriters will perform on Tuesday, October 25, at the Bluebird Cafe at 9 p.m. to help raise money for the environmental organization BURNT.

Grammy award-winning songwriter Don Henry received song of the year awards for co-writing Kathy Mattea's critically acclaimed hit "Where've You Been." In addition to the Grammy, this song holds awards from the Academy of Country Music, the Country Music Association, and the Nashville Songwriters Association International. In fact, "Where've You Been" was the first song ever to be so honored by all four organizations. Henry's songs have been recorded by Ray Charles, the Oak Ridge Boys, Lonestar, Rosie Flores, Christy Sutherland, The Thompson Brothers Band, Bryan White, and many others.

You've heard Jana Stanfield's music on "20/20," "Entertainment Tonight," "Oprah," the movie *8 Seconds*, and radio stations nationwide. Stanfield has shared stages with fellow performers ranging from Kenny Loggins to The Dixie Chicks and is well-known for her motivating, heartfelt songs as well as her incredible sense of humor. Reba McEntire, Suzy Bogguss, and Andy Williams are a few of the artists who have sung her songs.

Don Henry and Jana Stanfield will perform "in the round" with two more hit songwriters (TBA). It will be an evening you will not want to miss, not only because of the music, but because the money raised at this concert will help support a healthier environment for our community. For more information, visit www.burnt-tn.org or www.bluebirdcafe.com; or call the Bluebird Cafe at 615-383-1461.

SENATOR FEINGOLD (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

Can you comment on Rumsfeld's statement that we will be in Iraq for twelve more years?

Well, that is more honest than some of the things I have heard. I certainly oppose being there that long, but I think that when you get yourself caught in an insurgency that has the ability to recruit people from all over the world because they want to do target practice on our kids, then you are asking yourself for a very long duration. I mean, ask the French what happened in Algeria, ask the Soviets what happened to them in Afghanistan, this is the kind of thing we have gotten ourselves into and it is not the best way to counter Al Qaeda and I really wish we could get back to the approach we were taking after 9/11 but before we got into Iraq, that is what I am urging the president and the Congress to do.

So what would your exit strategy be?

Well, I think the president should identify the steps that have to be taken, I mean, he has roughly referred to things such as how many police need to be trained, how many military need to be trained, when the constitution should be done, but what we need to do is sort of set forth those pieces of it, do everything we can to get other countries to assist in training people and also to provide troops to replace our troops so that there could be more of an international force and basically say, "Look, we are going to be here about this long" and "We believe this can be done within this time frame" and it has to be somewhat flexible, you don't want to be too rigid about it. You know, this idea of a timetable worked with the transfer of sovereignty, it worked with the elections. We said we are going to do it on this date, people weren't sure it was going to happen, what happened was positive. So it is sort of illogical, in fact the president said in his recent speech—which was frankly one of the worst foreign policy speeches I have ever heard—he said, "We can't put more troops in because people will think that we will stay there forever." That is exactly why we need some kind of vision for when we are going to leave, otherwise people are going to think

we are going to stay there forever and so the very logic that the president uses requires us to realize it is going to help the Iraqi democracy if the central issue in Iraqi politics doesn't become how do we get Americans out of here—because you can be sure that is going to be the central issue if we don't have any vision of when we are going to leave.

Have you spoken with Senator Frist about the health care crisis in Tennessee?

I have not, but I look forward to it now that I have been here and heard a lot of the different things going on. It is a very important, very difficult story, the history of TennCare, and one of the things I have done here is heard some of the concerns that have occurred, some of the positive visions that TennCare had in the first place; but there are lessons to be learned for any efforts that we have on national health care from this experience.

Sharon Cobb: Where do we go from here with the Patriot Act and how do we reform it?

Well, we have reached across the aisle on the Patriot Act and I didn't have to do it. The pressure on a lot of conservative Republicans back in their home states became very intense after people realized the points I had made when I voted against the Patriot Act. People realized that their library records are vulnerable. I was the only senator who voted against the Patriot Act, there were about sixty House members who voted against it. People realized their houses could be searched without any warning, and that their houses were being searched even if they had nothing to do with terrorism, in fact even if they had done nothing wrong. So our goal here is not to repeal the Patriot Act, but to fix those provisions so that it focuses on terrorists, not on law-abiding citizens. There is a bipartisan bill called the "Safe Act" which would fix many of the provisions that caused me to be the sole vote against the Patriot Act.

RESPONSE TO JUSTICE SUNDAY (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)

decided because of a particular religious perspective. We don't want the person who is a conservative, religious ideologue to be nominated to the Supreme Court and we would like to prevent it."

Barry Lynn, Americans United for Separation of Church and State, was there to combat the message of the ideological right: "I think it is very important that some voices from the religious community be heard that are an alternative to the rhetoric being presented at 'Justice Sunday II,' which is more a celebration of power than it is a celebration of justice. I think it is important also that the independence of the federal courts is crucial. When Judge Roberts demonstrates a hostility to women's reproductive rights, separation of church and state, and protection of the individual by the bill of rights, then I think these are three strikes against Judge Roberts and I do not feel he is the appropriate candidate for the position of Supreme Court Justice. We are working actively to make it clear that we have looked at the record and reluctantly concluded that this is not a man who should be given a lifetime tenure on the Supreme Court. I think we will find more and more organizations that look at the record and conclude that he should not be the nominee."

Cynthia Bennett of the National Organization of Women said she wants justice every day: "I am here with other people from NOW and the Tennessee Guerilla Women because we want to bear witness that this is not the only way. They are doing this 'Justice Sunday' again and we are here to say that we don't just want justice on Sunday, in fact, we want justice every day. You

don't have to be a Christian just to want justice, and it is not just Christians anyways. It is their particular brand of Christianity. That is the problem. They are saying that you must believe as they believe, otherwise you just don't count. Your opinion doesn't matter. We want to know everything about John Roberts. We want there to be a fair and just hearing, not the way he avoided questions last time. I happen to be a Christian, too, and I don't believe the same thing that they believe. God is not Government. God didn't intend for government to be run by evangelicals. During the Civil War, Lincoln said, "What keeps me awake at night is not wondering if God is on our side, but rather wondering if we are on God's side."

Rita Nakashima Brock, who also spoke to a pluralistic alternative to the message of Justice Sunday, said, "Those folks meeting tonight with Tom Delay, Chuck Colson, and James Dobson think they own the Bible and God speaks only to them. They are boasting that they have taken over two branches of our federal government and that they are going to take over the third. Earlier this year, Tom Delay and his ilk in Congress actually threatened to take away the funding for our courts if judges did not enforce their narrow agenda. There's a word for an extremist government controlled by one narrow religion: It is called theocracy, not democracy."

"We here today inherit a great legacy of people of faith who organized movements to safeguard the core values of our democracy," Brock said. "They worked for abolition, women's suffrage, care for the poor, peace, and civil

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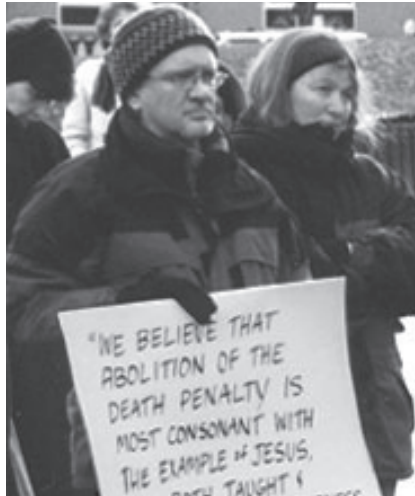
TENNESSEE PREPARES FOR NATIONAL WEEKEND OF FAITH IN ACTION ON THE DEATH PENALTY

By Alex Wiesendanger,
Associate Director, TCASK

Groups across the state have already begun planning for the National Weekend of Faith in Action on the Death Penalty (NWFA), which will celebrate its eighth year this year from October 21-23. The NWFA is a weekend of nationwide actions in solidarity against the death penalty held by faith communities and human rights groups. Last year 556 groups around the country participated.

The NWFA is an opportunity for individuals and groups to examine the critical issue of the American death penalty through the lens of their particular faiths and to engage in dialogue with members of their own and other communities based on these positions. Many of the major faith traditions worldwide, including nearly all Protestant denominations, the Catholic Church, Reform and Conservative Judaism, and Buddhism, have explicitly condemned the use of the death penalty. Leaders of many other faith traditions have expressed concern over the implementation of the death penalty in the United States. The NWFA allows us to examine our tradition's position and then put our faith into action.

Across Tennessee, a number of groups have already registered with Amnesty International, committing to a wide range of actions. The Unitarian Universalist Church in Chattanooga will be hosting a production of "The Exonerated," while the Amnesty International chapter at the University of Tennessee will be showing the film *The Empty Chair* and then hosting an interfaith panel discussion on the death penalty. Other early registrants include chapters of the Tennessee Coalition to Abolish State Killing (TCASK) in Knoxville and



Chattanooga, the Second Presbyterian Church in Nashville, and the Church of the Good Shepherd in Lookout Mountain. Previous actions have included homilies on the death penalty, a moment of silence for those on death row and murder victims, marches, vigils, panel discussions, and letter writing tables.

TCASK has set a goal of registering thirty Tennessee communities with Amnesty International this year. When a group registers with Amnesty they will receive an organizing packet including information packets, contact information, and a DVD of *The Empty Chair*. This weekend is a wonderful chance to engage your faith community in our struggle to end legalized state killing. To register, visit the

Amnesty International website (www.amnestyusa.org/faithinaction/) or contact the TCASK office (463-0070 or nwfa@tcask.org) and let us know what your community is planning.

***The Empty Chair* is a 42-minute documentary following four families as they struggle to deal with the pain and grief, the urge for vengeance and the call to forgiveness resulting from a family member being murdered.**

JUSTICE SUNDAY (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6)

rights. Even Roe v. Wade was started in a church basement in Dallas, Texas, by women of faith who were wanted to protect women's lives. And now, one grieving mother, camped in Crawford, Texas, is trying to stop an illegal, unjust, and unwise war. Cindy Sheehan was a speaker on our national Freedom and Faith Bus Tour in June, and, following today's events, a number of religious leaders will leave here and join her in Crawford to stand with her and other grieving mothers struggling for peace."

Brock continued, "My Christian tradition taught me to value the religious freedom of everyone in this land. My faith is not just something I do in private. It informs my politics, which it should. But I know that if my values are good for our democracy, other religious and nonreligious people can discuss them, and we can reach a common good for all. This commitment to the common good

of all is one way I live out the core of my faith, which is that God is love. Jesus told us to love our neighbor and he placed no limits on who is our neighbor, no limits by race, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, IQ, language, physical ability, nationality, or income level. My faith is strengthened by how widely I love my neighbors, not by how narrowly I define them.

"You here today know that people of faith must not be silent. The mothers and fathers and sisters and brothers of those serving in our military must do all we can to end this horrible war and keep speaking and working until it is ended. We must speak up and do all we can for the next few years to protect this precious experiment we call democracy because there is none but us together to protect it."



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TCASK TO HOLD GARAGE SALES SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 17

By Randy Tatel, Executive Director, TCASK

The Tennessee Coalition to Abolish State Killing is offering you a variety of E-Z ways to volunteer and help TCASK with a major fundraiser to raise the funds needed to cover overhead for our first ever Jesuit volunteer. Twenty-two-year-old Alex Wiesendanger will spend the next 12 months working as a program organizer in our Nashville office. On Saturday, September 17, TCASK will hold simultaneous garage sales in 4 cities and we need YOUR help to make the Nashville sale a HUGE success.

E-Z VOLUNTEER TASKS TO HELP TCASK HAVE A SUCCESSFUL GARAGE SALE

- Donate sellable items to TCASK (call for pick-up)—your donations are tax deductible (you'll receive a letter for your taxes)
- Volunteer your truck and time to pick up items on the weekends
- Spread the Word! TCASK has a flyer you can spread amongst your friends, colleagues and family members—or forward this email!
- Bake bread, cookies, and other pastry delights for TCASK to sell on September 17
- Donate sellable items to TCASK (call for pick-up)
- Volunteer to help Friday, September 16, to sort, organize and prepare for the sale

Call 615-473-2950 or visit www.tcask.org for more information.