

The Poverty Program

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

JUN 10, 2 PM FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE, 120 FRIEND ST., AMESBURY, MA, chairperson Sam Baily
ARMS TRADE - Movie *LORD OF WAR*

JUL 22, 6:30 PM CONG. AHAVAS ACHIM, chairperson Rabbi Stanley Sadinsky
GENOCIDE - Movie *GHOSTS OF RWANDA*

AUG 12, 2PM Belleville Church, chairperson Whitney Erskine
AIDS/HIV - Movie *FACING AIDS*

SEP 16, 2 PM BELLEVILLE CHURCH, chairperson Helen Hatcher
UN Peace Event- Movie *PEACE ONE DAY*

OCT TBA: UNITARIAN CHURCH, chairperson Rob Burnham
Millennium Goals, Volunteer Job Fair

NOV TBA: Discussion and Planning Meeting for 2008 Program

*If you would like to become involved with any of the programs, email
povertyprogram@gmail.com.*

ARMS TRADE June 10, 2 PM, Friends Meetinghouse, Amesbury

Sam Baily, chairperson, will give a brief overview on arms trade throughout the world, followed by the movie Lord of War, and a discussion following the movie.

Lord of War: One man demonstrates how to get rich selling warring nations the tools of their deadly trade in this dark comedy drama. Yuri Orlov (Nicholas Cage) is an opportunistic businessman who stumbled into a gold mine after the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union. Huge caches of Soviet weapons became available at bargain prices (and even for free if one wasn't above stealing), and as literally billions of dollars' worth of Soviet military technology disappeared, it began finding its way into the hands of weapons dealers eager to sell it to the highest bidder. Orlov was one such dealer who found plenty of buyers for guns and military gear in unstable Third World nations, who paid cash and didn't appreciate too many questions. Orlov's exploits in the arms business quickly made him a very rich man, but they've also led to some unwanted attention from Jack Valentine (Ethan Hawke), an Interpol agent who is convinced Orlov isn't playing by the rules. Inspired by a true story. ~ Mark Deming, All Movie Guide

Let's all try to attend the June 10th presentation!

NEWSLETTER: Letters to the editor, articles, calendar events may be submitted by the 15th by mail: 280 High Street, Newburyport, MA or email: povertyprogram@gmail.com. If you would like to receive the newsletter or stop receiving it, please contact us.

WEBSITE: Charities: if you would like to be listed or linked, or list volunteer or donation needs, please email (povertyprogram@gmail.com) or call Catherine at 978-463-0507. Events for the calendar may be submitted at any time but if you would like to be listed in the newsletter, please submit by the 15th.

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May Human Rights

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Abbreviated Version)

Right to Equality, Freedom from Discrimination, Right to Life, Liberty, Personal Security, Freedom from Slavery, Freedom from Torture and Degrading Treatment, Right to Recognition as a Person before the Law, Right to Equality before the Law, Right to Remedy by Competent Tribunal, Freedom from Arbitrary Arrest and Exile, Right to Fair Public Hearing, Right to be Considered Innocent until Proven Guilty, Freedom from Interference with Privacy, Family, Home and Correspondence, Right to Free Movement in and out of the Country, Right to Asylum in other Countries from Persecution, Right to a nationality and Freedom to Change Nationality, Right to Marriage and Family, Right to Own Property, Freedom of Belief and Religion, Freedom of Opinion and Information, Right of Peaceful Assembly and Association, Right to Participate in Government and Free Elections, Right to Social Security, Right to Desirable Work and Join Trade Unions, Right to Rest and Leisure, Right to Adequate Living Standard, Right to Education, Right to Participate in the Cultural Life of the Community, Right to a Social Order that Articulates this Document, Community Duties Essential to Free and Full Development, Freedom from State or Personal Interference in the above Rights

Rob Burnham gave an excellent introduction to this month's presentation on Human Rights and Child Soldiers. He presented information on the Declaration of Human Rights signed into law at the UN in 1948, when the world declared "never again" will the world stand by and allow a genocide. Unfortunately and shamefully, since then we have had the Cambodian killing fields, Bosnia, Rwanda, and now Darfur - as the world stands by. These events have been publicized. What isn't in the public eye as much is the use of children in armed conflicts, estimated at over 300 thousand children, some children are as young as 8 who are stolen during the night or abducted during military raids; brutalized themselves; forced to commit atrocities so that they, themselves, won't be slaughtered, and then they are fed drugs to make them more compliant and to numb them from what they will be forced to do. They are handed machetes, AK-47s and sent off to battle to commit atrocities themselves, to walk through fields of land mines, clearing the field of land mines by being blown up. Girls as young as eight are used as concubines for the soldiers.

"We were told to kill people by forcing them to stay in their homes while we burned them down.

We even had to bury some alive. One day, my friends and I were forced by our commanders to kill a family, to cut up their bodies and to eat them ... My life is lost. I have nothing to live for.

At night, I can no longer sleep. I keep thinking of those horrible things I have seen and done when I was a soldier."

~ Kalami, 15 years of age, a six-year veteran of one of the armed groups in eastern DRC.

<http://blogs.amnestyusa.org/student-activism/archive/2006/11/08/1eldli0uwnit3.htm>

It is difficult to imagine what these children have witnessed. It is difficult to imagine what they have been forced to do. It is difficult to imagine being a parent and having your child stolen and knowing the horrors that your child is enduring. It is difficult to imagine a world where this is even happening. Here, safe in our homes in one of the wealthiest nations on earth, it is a world apart but which for these children, the horrors are more than real and these horrors will haunt them throughout their life. There is hope for these children in the form of rehabilitation centers

UN MAP OF CHILD SOLDIERS



which have been started in many of the countries where there is conflicts that use children soldiers. The movie, Soldier Child, that was shown during this month's presentation is about a rehabilitation center in Uganda that is successful in helping these children forgive themselves as well as helping to reunite these child soldiers with their families and reintegrate them back into society. There is one image from the movie that remains with you - it is the image of the little 4 year old child whose hands were burned off in front of her parents to make them comply with the rebels. As a parent, as a grandparent, it is hard to imagine having the ability to forgive some of the atrocities that these children soldiers have perpetuated - especially if they were committed not by your own child, but to your child. It is a soul-searching question that each of us needs to ask ourselves - would we be

able to forgive? Soldier Child is a story of forgiveness of self, of yourself and the grace of the gift of forgiveness by others that makes this such a powerful movie.

For an excellent in-depth article on child soldiers, go to Amnesty International's website and read DRC:

Children at war, creating hope for the future <http://www.amnestyusa.org/document.php?lang=e&id=ENGAFR620172006>

Facts About Child Soldiers, Human Rights Watch:

- Although there are no exact figures, hundreds of thousands of children under the age of 18 serve in government forces or armed rebel groups. Some are as young as eight years old.
- Since 2001, the participation of child soldiers has been reported in 21 on-going or recent armed conflicts in almost every region of the world.
- Children are uniquely vulnerable to military recruitment because of their emotional and physical immaturity. They are easily manipulated and can be drawn into violence that they are too young to resist or understand.
- Technological advances in weaponry and the proliferation of small arms have contributed to the increased use of child soldiers. Lightweight automatic weapons are simple to operate, often easily accessible, and can be used by children as easily as adults.
- Children are most likely to become child soldiers if they are poor, separated from their families, displaced from their homes, living in a combat zone or have limited access to education.
- Many children join armed groups because of economic or social pressure, or because children believe that the group will offer food or security. Others are forcibly recruited, "press-ganged" or abducted by armed groups.
- Both girls and boys are used as child soldiers. In some countries, like Nepal, Sri Lanka and Uganda, a third or more of the child soldiers were reported to be girls. In some conflicts, girls may be raped, or given to military commanders as "wives."
- Once recruited, child soldiers may serve as porters or cooks, guards, messengers or spies. Many are pressed into combat, where they may be forced to the front lines or sent into minefields ahead of older troops. Some children have been used for suicide missions.
- Children are sometimes forced to commit atrocities against their own family or neighbors. Such practices help ensure that the child is "stigmatized" and unable to return to his or her home community.
- In some countries, former child soldiers have access to rehabilitation programs to help them locate their families, get back into school, receive vocational training, and re-enter civilian life. However, many children have no access to such programs. They may have no way to support themselves and are at risk of re-recruitment
- In 2000, the United Nations adopted an Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict. The protocol prohibits the forced recruitment of children under the age of 18 or their use in hostilities. To date, it has been ratified by more than 110 countries.
- The ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labor prohibits the forced or compulsory recruitment of children under the age of 18 for use in armed conflict. It has been ratified by over 150 countries.

http://hrw.org/campaigns/crp/fact_sheet.html

Thanks to the many people who made this program a success!

CONGRATULATIONS TO WHITTIER VOCATION TECHNICAL SCHOOL

ALL THEIR SENIORS AND JUNIORS HAVE PASSED THE MCAS: NOT SOME - ALL!

Thank you to the Commission on Diversity and Tolerance for awarding the Poverty Program a mini-grant which will be used to pay for our website, povertyprogram.com, postage and photocopying of the newsletter. Cynthia Peirce did our grant application - thank you, Cynthia!

WEBSITE UPDATE: If you do a google search for "poverty program", our website comes up on the first page. We are 6th out of a possible 36,900,000 sites!

VOLUNTEERING

Amnesty International's Merrimac Valley Local Group 708

invites you to join our group to defend prisoners of conscience throughout the world on the third Thursday of every month at 7 PM. The next meeting is June 21, 2007 at the First Religious Society Unitarian, 26 Pleasant Street, Newburyport, MA 01950. For more information, contact: Steven Brzozowski, sbrzozowski@gmail.com or Rob Burnham, 603-501-9549.

Local groups are community-based volunteers who work as a team for the promotion of human rights. They are representatives of Amnesty International in their communities. They work with local media, lobby public officials, produce events, work in coalition with other organizations, and raise money for AIUSA. Local groups work on AI's human rights campaigns, action files, and also adopt cases of individual prisoners of conscience.

Amnesty International was founded in London in 1961, Amnesty International is a Nobel Prize-winning grassroots activist organization with over 2 million members worldwide. Amnesty International undertakes research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination, within the context of its work to promote all human rights. Amnesty International USA (AIUSA) is the U.S. Section of Amnesty International.

PETTINGILL HOUSE & SALVATION ARMY

Poverty in our area is increasing. Please help.

The Pettingill House and Salvation Army are serving more people this year - more than 12,000 more meals at Pettingill House - and are in need of our assistance in restocking their pantries. Please make a monetary donation or donate food (pasta & sauce, canned goods, mac & cheese, juice, cooking oil, condiments) or toiletry items to these organizations. The Salvation Army can also accept fresh and frozen fruit and vegetables.

An article on MSNBC (<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/18488538/>) relates the findings of a study about happiness and doing good. Their conclusion: **DOING GOOD MAKES YOU FEEL GOOD!**

ACTION ALERTS

Help Stop the Use of Child Soldiers

Write to US members of Congress, urging them to co-sponsor the Child Soldiers Prevention Act of 2007.

Dear Senator/Representative:

I am greatly concerned about the thousands of children who are exploited each day in state-run armies, paramilitaries and rebel groups around the world. Called "child soldiers," they serve as combatants, porters, human mine detectors and sex slaves. Their health and lives are endangered and their childhood's are sacrificed.

Senators Durbin (D-IL) and Brownback (R-KS) have introduced the **Child Soldier Prevention Act of 2007 (S. 1175)** to encourage governments to disarm, demobilize and rehabilitate child soldiers from government forces and government-supported paramilitaries by restricting various forms of U.S. military assistance provided to these governments until they end any involvement in this practice. According to U.S. government data, the United States provides military assistance to nine governments that fall into this category. The bill is strategic and allows that countries that take concrete steps to demobilize child soldiers be eligible for U.S. assistance solely for the professionalization of their armed forces for up to two years before any additional prohibitions on assistance would be imposed. The bill provides the President with the authority to waive prohibitions if he determines that such a waiver is in the best interests of the United States. Moreover, the bill encourages the United States to work with the international community to bring to justice armed rebel groups that kidnap children for use as soldiers.

Rightly, this bill is directed at national governments that receive U.S. military assistance to help them professionalize their forces and to ensure that U.S. taxpayer dollars are not used to finance the exploitation of children in armed conflict.

This is an important issue for my family and me. I urge you to cosponsor this important bill.

I look forward to your reply. Thank you. - Your Name.

CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

If you would like to submit a question for candidates in the upcoming election, the Poverty Program will submit to each candidate a selected list of questions and post all the responses on the website. To submit questions, email povertyprogram@gmail.com, or mail them to 280 High Street, Newburyport, MA. Please put "candidate questions" in the subject line.

BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

The Universe in a Single Atom, The Convergence of Science and Spirituality by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Science versus religion, Faith versus Reality. How can we, as individuals reconcile these seemingly polar opposites? This is a thought-provoking book which asks us to look into ourselves, our own beliefs and look for similarities with others in order to create a world where we honor the differences and all strive to work together to serve and better humanity.

To Catch a Fire: This is a true story about what makes a freedom fighter or terrorist, and how a person is defined by who is looking at the person and the event. It is a look at what events trigger a man becoming a freedom fighter and later a political prisoner. It is the story of the life of Patrick Chamusso, set in the 1980's during Apartheid.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Events must be submitted by the 20th of each month.

WEEKLY PEACE RALLY

Every Sunday at noon at Market Square.

PEACE MONTH FAMILY CELEBRATION

May 31, Peace Pole, Boardwalk, Newburyport

UN INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE DAY

JUNE 20

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL MEETING

JUNE 21, 7 PM (THIRD THURSDAY MONTHLY)

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL FUNDRAISER

JUNE 26, 5:30 FLATBREAD, AMESBURY

SHALUPE FOUNDATION

CONGOLESE INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION

JUNE 30, 3-11:30, ST. MICHAEL'S, LYNN, MA

FOR MORE INFORMATION: 781-595-9342

LIVE AID CONCERT

JULY 1 <http://liveearth.msn.com/>

POVERTY PROGRAM GENOCIDE

JULY 22 Ghosts of Rwanda, Ahavas Achim

THE DARFUR/DARFUR EXHIBIT

COMING TO BOSTON SEPTEMBER 7, 2007

Samantha Powers to speak, YoYoMa will do a closing piece.

DARFUR/DARFUR is a traveling exhibit of digitally-projected changing images that provide visual education about the richly multi-cultural region while exposing the horrors of the ongoing humanitarian crisis. [darfurdarfur.org](http://www.darfurdarfur.org), <http://www.thedevilcameonhorseback.com/home.html>

Children's news



Save the Children Art Contest

You can enter this contest at any time and as often as you wish. For more information, go to the Save the Children website at: <http://www.savethechildren.org/get-involved/kids-and-youth/kids-art-contest/>

Children's Editor

The Poverty Program Newsletter is looking for editors, reporters either an individual or group of young people who would like to work together to write, edit, and contribute articles, pictures to this section of the newsletter. Please email povertyprogram@gmail.com or call 978-463-0507 if you are interested.

ARTICLES

Wisdom from the Past

"Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home - so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm, or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world." *Eleanor Roosevelt*

CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

by Catherine Yesair Gould

- **The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) has been signed and ratified by 192 countries.**
- **Is the United States one of the 192 countries? Much to our disgrace, no. We've signed but it hasn't even come before the Senate to be ratified!**
- **We are the only country, who can ratify this treaty, that has not done so.**

The Convention on the Rights of the Child is an international document that began in 1979, took 10 years to draft and is a "comprehensive human rights treaty for children". The treaty was unanimously agreed to by the UN General Assembly in 1989, and became international law in 1990, 17 years ago. It has been ratified by all the world's governments, EXCEPT SOMALIA AND THE USA! What does ratification mean? It means that "governments commit themselves to ensuring that children grow up in safe and supportive conditions, with access to high quality education and health care, and a good standard of living. It means governments agree to protect children from discrimination, sexual and commercial exploitation and violence, and to take particular care of orphans and young refugees."

The Child Rights Campaign website states the following (www.childrightscampaign.org):

Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC):

- *The Convention sets out a child's rights in 54 articles and two optional 'protocols', or extra provisions. It is guided by four fundamental principles:*
 - *A child should not suffer discrimination*
 - *A child's best interests should be at the top of the agenda when decisions affecting them are being made.*
 - *A child should have the right to survive and develop. This includes the right to mental and physical well-being.*
 - *Children should be free to express their views. And these views should be taken into account in all matters that affect them.*

Built on varied legal systems and cultural traditions, the Convention on the Rights of the Child is a universally agreed set of non-negotiable standards and obligations. It spells out the basic human rights that children everywhere -- without discrimination -- have.

- *the right to survival,*
- *the right to develop to the fullest,*
- *the right to protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation, and*
- *the right to participate fully in family, cultural and social life.*

Every right spelled out in the Convention is inherent to the human dignity and harmonious development of every child. Two Optional Protocols, on the involvement of children in armed conflict and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, were adopted to strengthen the provisions of the Convention in these areas. They entered into force, respectively on February 12, 2002 and January 18, 2002.

Why is it important that the US ratify this agreement? Several reason but one that stands out is that the USA, is supposed to be a world leader and by not ratifying this agreement we are not setting a good example to the world; we are not actively participating in promoting and creating a better world for our children and the children of the world. Are we not signing the agreement because of own children, American children, have no need for such an agreement? Sadly, American children are amongst the highest for poverty, hunger and infant mortality rates in the industrialized world. Some statistics:

- 3 American children die every day from abuse and neglect.
- Almost 75% of all murders of children in developed nations are American children.

- Of the industrialized nations, only Mexico has more children living in poverty

So, as citizens, what can we do? Write our senators and demand that the CRC be brought before them and ratified. This country must take a stand on human rights issues, especially for the children but we need to look at ALL of our policies, actions that have diminished our global standing in the world in regards to human rights issues. If we can't ratify a treaty on Children's Rights that protects children from not to being abused, what does that say about our nation and where we are heading? If we want to be even considered as world leaders, then it is time to start making policies that are reflective of moral leadership.

FACTS:

- 73 million children in the USA. Since 1960, the number of children has increased by 7%, and since 1960 federal spending on children has decreased 17%.
- 1 in 5 children live in poverty; 40 % of children live in low-income families; highest poverty rate for children - 30% - Washington, DC.
- 900,000 to 1.4 million children experience homelessness each year.
- US has the worst child poverty statistics of the 24 industrialized nations.
- US has the highest teen pregnancy rate of the 24 industrialized nations.
- US has the worst child mortality rates of the 24 industrialized nations.
- US has the highest child abuse death rate of the 24 industrialized nations.
- US has the worst math literacy scores for 15 year olds of the 24 industrialized nations.
- 30% of 8th graders do not read at an 8th grade reading level.
- National graduation rate is only 68% in 2001.

For more information: http://www.childrightscampaign.org/files/pdf/facts_you_should_know.pdf

ODDS AND ENDS

PANOS (<http://www.panos.org/history/index.asp>) is a great website of pictures, information and inspiration. "Twenty years after the creation of Panos, the vision of a global network of institutes striving towards a common goal - ensuring that information is effectively used to foster public debate, pluralism and democracy - has become a reality."

LITTLE THINGS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Bring Cloth Bags to the Market

Using your own cloth bag instead of plastic or paper bags reduces waste and requires no additional energy.

“All that is needed for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing.” (Anonymous, often attributed to Edmund Burke)

SHALUPE FOUNDATION

Is a registered Non profit organization in the USA, France and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Vision:

Shalupe means "lifeboat." We want to reach out to every deprived person in the Democratic Republic of Congo; the poor, the hungry, the sick, the naked, the hopeless, the homeless and the crying. Our lifeboat supplies food, clothes, a place to stay, or even a hospital bed; whatever we can do to save a life.

Mission:

To play a key role in supporting a vital and vibrant integrated framework for the underserved Congolese population. We address every critical need by providing services, projects, information and education to meet every challenge. Supporting: Shelters- Healthcare-Education-Nutrition-Women-Street Children-Job Training-Transportation....

Contacts:

60 Elm Knoll Rd, Braintree, MA 02184.

www.shalupe.org

info@shalupe.org

339-219- 3114

339-226-7460

978-270-7783

Congolese Independence Day

June 30th, 2007

3:00 PM- 12:00 AM

Come Enjoy a Night of celebration!

SHALUPE FOUNDATION

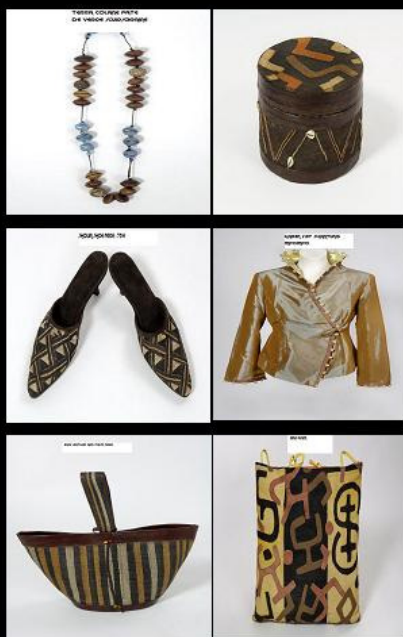
Invites you

To a Cultural journey of celebration with Congolese artists, designers, singers and dancers
Participate in the exciting auction to help us increase our fundraising efforts.

Enjoy Congolese Ethnic food, Fashion, Arts, Music and Dance during our special Cultural Night.

St Michael's Hall
61 west Neptune
or 25 Elmwood Av
Lynn ma 01905
781-595-9342

Here are some items that will be sold



SHALUPE FOUNDATION
60 Elm Knoll Rd, Braintree, MA 02184.
www.shalupe.org
info@shalupe.org
Tel: 339-219- 3114



Reservation Card

(In advance: \$25. per person, \$ 40 per couple.)
At the door: \$30 per person

Name: _____

Yes, I am coming to the Congolese Cultural Night
Enclosed is \$ _____ for _____ person (s)

I am unable to attend but I am enclosing my contribution of: \$ 5,000. - \$ 2,500. - \$ 1,000.
- \$ 500. - \$ 250. - \$ 100. - Other _____

All proceeds will go towards the realization of every project described on our website

For tickets or contributions, Please mail, email or call

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Thank you for your support!