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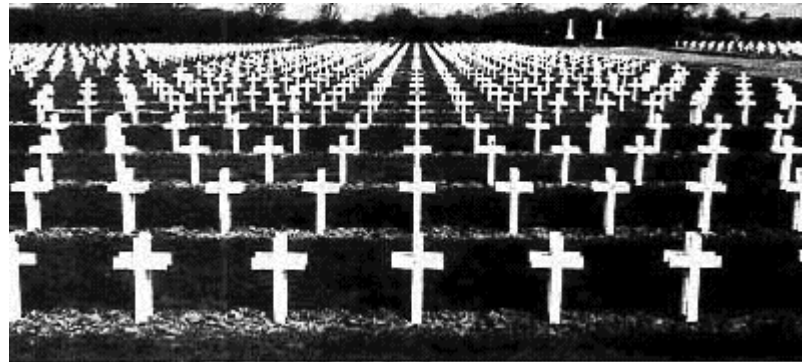
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The True Costs of the War in Iraq

By Ken Willis, RPEC Executive Director



One of the ads designed by RPEC Board Chair, Noah Scalin, for the Peace Center’s recent “Question War” ad campaign asks, “What is 50 billion dollars good for?” The answer, “Funding the entire US education budget for 1 year or buying ½ of a war”, is based on figures released by the American Academy of Arts & Sciences, which estimated the cost of the war would be between 100 billion to a staggering nearly 2 trillion dollars.

Recent news reports indicate the pre-war prediction is fast becoming a post-war reality. A Richmond T-D front-page headline for the May 27 issue of the paper proclaims, “U.S. giving Iraqis \$1 million per day.” The article goes on to state that the figure, provided by the Pentagon’s Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance, is in addition to multimillion-dollar contracts the State Dept. has awarded and “the roughly \$1 billion a week it takes to keep U.S. troops in Iraq.”

The cost, it seems, is rising daily. In mid-June, the Congressional Budget Office issued a statement saying the federal deficit for 2003 is likely to top \$400 billion, surpassing the previous record deficit of \$290 billion set in 1992. (The \$292.1 billion deficit for

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Message from the RPEC Board Chair

Dear friends,

I want to take a moment to talk to you about committees. Why? Because they form the core of the Richmond Peace Education Center. From coordinating the annual concert to publishing this very newsletter, they facilitate the work of this organization. And who runs these committees? RPEC members just like you. In recent months the board of directors has worked to revamp the RPEC committees, but we can't do this alone. These committees are where the real action of our organization takes place and we want you to be a part of it.

There are currently 4 committees: Programming, Membership, Newsletter, and Fundraising. Each one plays a unique roll in the functioning of RPEC and all of them can benefit from more members.

The newly formed Programming committee's function is to create and coordinate a wide range of RPEC activities and programs. This includes overseeing the existing Conflict Resolution and Transforming Relationships programs as well as creating new programs and events. There is a lot of work to do and if spreading the word of peace is important to you this is the committee you should join. Contact the chair, Chris Patterson at chris@ca4a.org for more information.

If you are interested in building the RPEC membership while also building a community of the current members why not join the membership committee? Mim Scalin is the chair and she can be reached at mimsg@aol.com.

The Newsletter committee creates the newsletter you are holding right now. Do you have writing or computer skills that could be applied to this project? Contact chair John Gallini at Gallinjb@aol.com.

If you are a fan of our annual auction, you have the Fundraising committee to thank. This group works on activities throughout the year that make it possible for RPEC to continue to exist. Paul Fleisher is the person to contact if you want to join. You may reach him at: pfleishe@earthlink.net

The Richmond Peace Education Center is nothing without its members, please consider joining one of the committees mentioned above and help RPEC to continue to work and grow.

Thanks,
Noah Scalin, Board Chair
noah@alrdesign.com

Connect with RPEC, Join our e-mail List!

Just send an e-mail to rpec-subscribe@lists.riseup.net and you will be signed on. You'll get all the latest news and information from RPEC and the Richmond peace community. Plus, once you are signed on you can send your own peace-related news and announcements to the RPEC membership by just e-mailing rpec@lists.riseup.net. What are you waiting for? Get connected today!

The Nuclear Weapons Picture – August 6, 2003

by John Gallini

For many years the threat of nuclear catastrophe commanded the energies of peace activists around the world. The end of the cold war changed that and priorities shifted. But the extreme positions of the present US administration have brought this concern for the possibility of nuclear tragedy back into focus. Hiroshima Day seems an appropriate time to review where we stand with reference to these weapons.

Strategic Nuclear Weapons

Let us look first at US weapons and the numbers game. A February, 2002 report from the National Resources Defense Council estimated that, at that time, there were 10,650 intact nuclear warheads in the U.S. stockpile. In addition, there were in approximately 5,000 plutonium pits and approximately the same number of canned subassemblies, which were retained as a "strategic reserve." Of the 10,650 intact nuclear warheads, about 6000 were "active", "deployed" and "strategic".

The Bush-Putin treaty of 2002 promised to reduce the number of operationally deployed strategic weapons from 6000 to 2200 over the next decade. But the reductions do not mean the weapons will be destroyed, only put in storage!

The Russians have similar numbers of weapons, and will likely do the same thing with those weapons that are "reduced", i.e. put them in storage. The U.S. Cooperative Threat Reduction Program has spent \$1 billion a year over the last ten years to denuclearize Kazakhstan, Belarus and the Ukraine, and it has dismantled some 6,000 nuclear weapons. But at least 20,000 warheads are still stockpiled at 123 sites, and 40,000 tons of chemical warfare weapons are left.

Terrorism and Nuclear Weapons

September 11, 2001 raised the specter of Al Qaeda type terrorists obtaining nuclear weapons. At that time a number of steps were identified that would reduce the likelihood that this would happen: 1) dramatically increase the spending to secure Russian weapons, 2) work with the Russians to achieve significant reductions in the nuclear arsenals of each country in order that there would be fewer nuclear weapons available to potentially fall into the hands of terrorists, 3) give full support to bringing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty into force, giving momentum to assuring an end to nuclear testing for all time, 4) reevaluate the administration's commitment to developing and deploying missile defenses, 5) work intensively with countries such as India, Pakistan and Israel to convince them that nuclear weapons were not in their security interests and that they would have a heavy price to pay if they did not join us in moving rapidly toward a nuclear-weapons-free world.

Here is the record. The Bush administration has supported cuts in the Nunn-Lugar funding for securing Russian nuclear weapons and materials. It has called for reductions in deployed strategic nuclear weapons over a ten-year period, although not within the scope of a binding treaty and, in fact, has indicated it plans to put the deactivated warheads on the shelf for potential future use. It has come out against ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and boycotted a UN conference to bring the treaty into force more rapidly. President Bush has announced that the US will unilaterally withdraw from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, and move forward rapidly to deploy ballistic missile defenses, a move that has drawn critical response from both Russia and China. Finally, the Bush administration, rather than putting pressure on India and Pakistan to disarm, has ended the sanctions imposed on them for testing nuclear weapons in May 1998. The administration has never put pressure on Israel to eliminate its nuclear arsenal, although this is a major factor in motivating Arab countries to develop their own nuclear arsenals.

The Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty

This treaty has had bipartisan support from every administration and congress for decades. But the preemptive war policy of this administration basically tells any countries that might find themselves declared our enemy that they had better develop an adequate nuclear deterrence.

(Continued on page 4)

The Nuclear Weapons Picture – August 6, 2003

(Continued from page 3)

Mini-Nukes

The Bush administration has lobbied for the repeal of a 10-year ban on research and development of "low-yield" nuclear weapons. Opponents have argued these smaller nukes would blur the distinction between nuclear and non-nuclear weaponry, making nuclear warfare more palatable. In a late May vote Senators Edward Kennedy and Dianne Feinstein were unable to preserve the ban. Republicans stressed that the new types of warheads -- which would be the first developed since the Cold War -- were needed because of the extraordinary threats the country now faces. The warheads are intended as "bunker busters," to destroy underground stashes of prohibited weapons.

What is an Activist to Do?

It is not a happy picture! This is partly due to the ability of the "powers that be" to convince us that we are on track toward a world with fewer nuclear weapons. So we have let the issue fade away. It seems we must find a way to bring it back. Perhaps that election of 2004 is the place

A Peace Prayer
for Hiroshima/Nagasaki
Day

Lead me from Death to
Life,
From Falsehood to
Truth
Lead me from Despair
to Hope, From Fear to
Trust

Patriot Act

Safe and Free Campaign 7

by Tyla Matteson

The Richmond Peace Education Center's Program Committee is working with the ACLU of Richmond and other concerned groups and individuals in the Richmond area to bring attention to the Patriot Act which is chomping away at our constitutional rights.

Shortly after 9/11, a huge document called USA Patriot Act was passed on October 26, 2001, which was opposed or even read by few members of Congress. This Patriot Act has expanded terrorism laws to permit domestic surveillance, wire tapping, and secret searches of ordinary citizens for "intelligence purposes". Non-citizens can now be jailed and deported on mere suspicion. 8,000 Arab and South Asian immigrants have been interrogated based on religious or ethnic background. Thousands of men, mostly Arab and South Asian, have been secretly held without charge, for weeks or months.

The FBI can now track what people read at a library and what websites they visit, without these people having any knowledge of the intrusion into their lives. This sanction by our government of domestic spying into our E-mail conversations and reading selections sends up a chilling red flag to all of us.

Several organizations have been informing the public of our loss of basic rights, and one of them, the ACLU, has been at the forefront. Excellent overviews of the current status of Patriot Act I and II have been presented by Kent Willis and Aimee Perron of the local office and Patrice Webb of the D.C. office of the ACLU, but we need to step up the educational process. We now have a working group to plan a Community Forum in early September. We are seeking outreach to many civic and faith-based groups to join us. Already about 140 towns, cities, and entire states have passed resolutions in opposition to the Patriot Act, and we plan to present a resolution to the City Council of Richmond for their adoption.

We believe it is time for Virginians to lend their voice, and especially for our capital city to become a defender of individual privacy and civil liberty. We ask for everyone's help in our effort. For more information, please contact Tyla Matteson at tmatteson1@mindspring.com, phone 275-6476 or Aimee Perron at aperron@acluva.org.

“What Has 911 Taught Us About Peace and Justice?”

by Kendra Moses

On September the 11th I was in my third period class at Huguenot High School. My principal announced a crisis at the Pentagon, but it wasn't until I got home when I found out the true depth of the situation. In New York City two planes hit the World Trade Center killing a numerous amount of people with no specific prejudice just a determined plan to make a mark on America. Though for any other reason these people may have done this act of terrorism they widely succeeded in clinching on the attention of America. Throughout the entire day and those closely trailing behind it laid an ominous cloud as the blazing flame at the decimated trade center sprawled its thick, gray smoke mixed with the emotions of the nations and the horrid smell of burning corpse.

September 11, 2001 was an horrendous day for America and Afghanistan as well. It would not be justice to exclude this feeling from those in Afghanistan who might have not had anything to do with the act committed, but after this day in blind justice they will stand a chance to lose their lives and families just as those in the twin towers did.

Nine eleven affected us all as a whole but I believe no one was more affected by this tragedy than the family members of the victims. They and only they could begin to imagine the pain of losing their loved ones, and they and only they will have to go on with their lives bearing this burden on their shoulders. Though in my eyes what seems to be more tragic than the disastrous event itself was the unchanging attitude of those not so directly connected with the tragedy of 911. Being an outcast in all of my surroundings I found that nothing was to change in light of the situation. I still was accepted to the same degree, a little below zero, and the same demeaning things spewed out people mouths with the same suffocating thickness as the smoke from the towers. I don't recall seeing anything change much as a nation besides a few more gospel songs and cancelled t.v. programs everything seemed to go back to normal. If it wasn't for the debris floating around in the air I personally may have not noticed the seriousness this country was in. It is indeed true what you stated in the first paragraph of your entry form, within every tragic event there is room to grow and learn from both our mistakes and unexpected victories. Though if you will not allow the mind to expand and see these views, instead of pointing fingers and passing judgement and blame on others, this statement is nothing more than a statement. It holds no ground it just repeats itself if not completely crumbling. 911 was and is a terrible trial still to be held in jury for all of those who at least claimed they cared about the outcome of this day and those to follow it. If we are not unified in body and are not willing to open ourselves to thoughts of unification and communication then we are to remain separatists within our own country, state, being, mind and the list continues.

Until we do this or at least attempt to do this as a whole and not just a community or city but as a whole world we will never accomplish peace. I say this because just as in a regular court of law the jury is not decided and cannot speak of their verdict until all the votes are unified. The same is true of everyday living if we are to make this world a peaceful one.

Of course in order to make this essay one of peace promotion we mustn't allow our minds to go into the negative direction of “not”, “can't”, and outright refusal. I believe the first step towards peace is to gain it within ourselves and our surroundings and if we can't do this it's hopeless, but when we succeed this if having nothing more than the faith of a mustard seed we will be able to make a chain that takes us farther in our accomplishments. Peace is not temporary we can't get only halfway or three fourths of the way and say that is enough or insist on living in an eternal grudge. We will be allowing ourselves to go backwards and we don't want to do that at this point after going so far in the march. You must first ask yourself am I willing to let a painful memory get in the way of all the positive ones that could take majority in my heart? Secondly, you must understand and take into great consideration that no one city, state, nation, or being has not been through a hardship as serious as 911 if not more extreme. Finally you must open your heart and mind to its entirety then and only then can you truly say you have traveled half the way. The other half of the march towards peace is keeping it up trying to never allow yourself to stumble so badly up the steps that you are back at ground zero.

Kendra Moses is the first place winner in RPEC's 2003 Peace Essay Contest for Grades 9-12.

The True Costs of the War in Iraq

(Continued from page 1)

the 1st eight months of the 2003 budget year was almost twice the total for the same period a year ago.) “The Bush administration has blamed the deficits on lingering effects of the 2001 recession, efforts in the war on terrorism, and the cost of the war in Iraq.”¹

The true costs of the war cannot be measured in dollars alone, however, but must also take into account the loss of life of both military personnel and civilians, the impact on world politics and the international balance of power caused by America’s introduction of the concept of preemptive force, damage to U.S. credibility as there continues to be no evidence of weapons of mass destruction stockpiled in Iraq and nothing linking Iraq to the 9/11 attacks (both contrary to the claims of the Bush administration in launching the war), the status of the U.N. and its ability to intervene in world conflicts, and a host of other concerns.

According to an article by Peter Ford from the May 22 edition of the Christian Science Monitor, between 5,000 and 10,000 Iraqi civilians may have died in the recent war. Ford quotes the head of the tracing department of the Iraqi Red Crescent in Baghdad, Haidar Taie, as saying, “Thousands are dead, thousands are missing, thousands are captured.” and cites one instance where nearly 100 residents of Rashidiya, a peasant village half an hour north of Baghdad, were killed by U.S. bombing and strafing on April 5, including 43 in one

house.

So far there are no reliable estimates of Iraqi military casualties, while coalition forces have reported over 200 losses. Of that number, more than half were U.S. troops, nearly a third of whom have died since the May 1 declaration of victory in Iraq by President Bush. Sadly, the total, like the dollar estimates for the war, increases daily. Just as sadly, those service men and women who survive the war face life-threatening problems equal to being in combat when they return to the U.S., including a documented increase in cases of domestic violence among recently deployed armed forces and possible psychiatric side effects caused by an anti-malarial drug the Army gives its soldiers.²

Finally, there are costs of the war in Iraq that won’t be fully realized for some time to come. These costs, erosions of the basic freedoms of all Americans, have been subtly buried in a quagmire of Federal legislation dealing with anti-terrorism measures and homeland security, fanned by a new patriotic fervor that borders on nationalism. The most notable of these, the USA PATRIOT Act, was passed by Congress on October 26, 2001. This predates the war in Iraq, I admit, yet I refer to it here for two reasons: 1) it was fostered on Congress and the American people as part of the war on terrorism in response to the 9/11 attacks (just as the war in Iraq was promoted) and 2) it gives the Executive Branch of the Government “sweeping new powers that undermine the Bill of Rights

and are unnecessary to keep us safe.”³

It is hard to imagine that Bush could have pulled off the war in Iraq, in the face of worldwide opposition, without these new powers. Therefore, RPEC has decided to continue its campaign to question the war in Iraq and is working with other groups, like the ACLU, to sponsor programs that address the ongoing costs of the war, including the effects of the War on Terrorism on basic civil liberties. Details will be announced in local media, on the RPEC web page, and here in the pages of rpecNEWS.

I urge you to be supportive of these efforts and wish you a safe and enjoyable summer.

In Peace, Ken

¹ Figures cited and quote from: “U.S. deficit nearly doubled from same period last year”, Richmond Times-Dispatch, 6/20/03, p.A2.

² See “Hidden Casualties” by Jon Elliston & Catherine Lutz in *Southern Exposure*, Spring 2003.

³ The USA PATRIOT Act and Government Actions that Threaten

"Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies in the final sense a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed."

President Dwight D. Eisenhower, April 16, 1953

Volunteers Needed

**Want to raise funds for
RPEC while also helping
another organization?**

**Volunteer today to work
at the Diversity Thrift
store sorting, pricing,
and shelving donations.**

**The store will make a
contribution to the
Peace Center in return
for your labor, a true
all around win-win
situation.**

**Call today for more
details: 804.358.1958.**

New Program Raises Funds, Is Good for Environment

Each year, more than 750 million dollars worth of used printer cartridges end up in U.S. landfills. Recovering just 2% of those discarded cartridges could mean up to 15 million dollars in new revenue for nonprofit groups. In an effort to tap into this potential source of funding and benefit the environment, as well, RPEC has partnered with the GreenFund Network to launch a printer cartridge-recycling program.

You can help. Please donate your used printer cartridges (from home or work, if possible) to RPEC, instead of throwing them in the trash. Urge your family members, friends, business associates, members of your faith community, and others to collect cartridges also and turn them in to the Peace Center and/or consider setting up a collections display (available from RPEC) in your workplace, local civic center, house of worship, etc. We will receive \$2.00 for every inkjet cartridge recycled, plus monthly bonuses for 100 or more units.

Cartridges must be OEM (original equipment manufactured) cartridges which have not been refilled and/or remanufactured and that display the original manufacturer's label. Currently accepted OEM cartridges include: **Apple** M4609G/A, **Canon** BC01, BC02, BC05, BC20, BX2, BX3, **Compaq** 33709, 33710, **HP** 51625A, 51626A/D, 51629A/G, 51640A, 51641A, 51645A/G, 51649A/G, 51633M, C6578A/D, C6614A/D, C6615A/D, C6625A/D, C1816A, C1823A/D/G, **Lexmark** 13400/HC, 1380619/620, 12A1970, 12A1975, 12A1980, 12A1985, 12A1990, 15M0120, 17G0050, 17G0060, 10N0016, 10N0026, **Xerox** 8R7879, 8R7880, 8R7881, 8R7882, 8R12591.

There is no cost to RPEC for participating in this program, it saves valuable materials from waste, conserves landfill space, and provides an unlimited potential for raising much-needed income. Please call the Peace Center office today (804.358.1958) for more details.

Summer Special from RPEC!

What a deal! 2 RPEC logo mugs & a copy of the Peace Center's "20 Years and Still Cooking" cook book.
Only \$12 (a \$20 value)
Order today @
804.358.1958

**We want to hear from you!
Do you have something to say?
Opinions, Criticisms, Whatever**

Send email to:

mbgerow@comcast.net

Send mail to:

**RPEC, 14 N. Laurel St.,
Richmond, VA 23220**

Richmond Stopwar - for a Just Peace

by John Gallini

In May of this year, RPEC received a communication from a peace group in one of our sister cities, Richmond, UK (which is in the London area). They asked if we would be interested in connecting in our common work of peacemaking, and we responded positively. As a beginning we sent some information about our work, and asked if they could describe theirs. The following is their response.

The Richmond Stopwar group was formed in January 2003 as a response to the threatening international situation, and to prepare for the big London march of 15 February. The initiative came from a small group of like-minded people, including our Chairman, the Rev. Julian Reindorp, team Vicar of Richmond. (Our group consists of people of all the main religions and all the mainstream parties, as well as a lot of non-aligned people).

Everything happened in a rush. We ordered banners, lapel buttons and petition forms from the national Stop the War Coalition, and set up a stall in the town centre on 25 January. We were overwhelmed by the response. Thousands signed the petition forms, and we handed out home manufactured leaflets telling people that if they wanted to join us, to meet at Richmond station. We also collected a small band of committed people. We then set ourselves up as an informal organization dedicated to one theme - stop the war.

There was intense activity during this period - two further big marches, a public meeting here addressed by our local MP, who has strongly supported us, (The meeting and the subsequent march was televised by a German television network). Throughout, we have been supported by two of the three local papers, the "Richmond and Twickenham Times" and the local "Guardian".

After the war ended, we added "For a just peace" to our title and issued a statement which said, inter alia, "-----we have a new brief- to campaign against war, to create a just peace, to support the United Nations, to campaign for peace in the Middle East and to put forward our views about who should pay for the reconstruction of Iraq". We keep ourselves before the public by holding a weekly vigil in the town centre.

We have now joined a County-wide stop the war coalition, (soon to be appropriately renamed) which held a conference on 29 May. More than 50 people from 16 groups met and resolved to conduct campaigns to uphold the rule of law and restore order in Iraq so that the humanitarian agencies can carry out their task. A formal Surrey Coordinating Organization was set up to link the activities of the Surrey groups and to meet regularly to discuss progress.

Reading the material you sent me, I would say that we share your views, although we are nowhere near as well organized as you. In particular we do not work formally in schools and religious organizations, but we have extensive support from local clergy, Council members and individuals, including a large number of local school students.

We have had extensive publicity in the local papers and have already had a piece about our contacting you. We regard it as fortuitous that our twinned towns are in the USA, Germany and France because we want people to realize that we can all work together in a common cause. We shall continue to publish news of our links, both local and international. We have a number of other ideas about how we could cooperate and will be discussing them at our next meeting on 24 June. We will let you know and ask for your views.

Rev. Julian Reindorp, Chairman, Jill Grist, Organizer, Penny Lee, Treasurer

Outside Mainstream Media

'Understanding Power: The Indispensable Chomsky'

by Dave Depp

For many years Noam Chomsky has been a leading critic of American governmental policies and actions. His many lectures, essays and books have exposed the intrigue and underlying imperialist motivations of American foreign policy throughout the 20th century. Since 9/11, the usual government and media created and maintained façade of America as the benevolent, human rights loving, and democracy-promoting giant, has been stripped away revealing the naked desire for economic, political and military control of the world. In these new circumstances, the importance of Chomsky's writings is growing and the truth of his analysis is ever more apparent.

In 2002, the New Press published Understanding Power: The Indispensable Chomsky, edited by Peter Mitchell and John Schoeffel. This 400 page paperback book is supported by footnotes of even greater length than the book which can be accessed at the web site, www.understandingpower.com The amazing depth and breadth of Chomsky's military, economic, political, and social facts will surprise any reader who is new to his work, and none of the world's powerful institutions are spared his probing analysis.

While it is true that Chomsky doesn't provide a program for solving the world's problems, he does reveal a considerable optimism about the positive change derived from past activism. This book also provides a clear description of what is wrong with how power is presently being exercised worldwide and points the way for present and future activism. Read this book, because Chomsky's voice is not heard in mainstream media.

"Save the Mattaponi" Victory

King William Reservoir Halted

by Tyla Matteson

Thanks to incredible efforts, the Mattaponi River is presently safe and flowing free. The proposed King William Reservoir would withdraw up to 75 million gallons of water per day from the Mattaponi to create an unneeded drinking water reservoir in King William County. Many thousands of citizens have fought the injustice of this project since 1996.

The Colonel of the Norfolk Corps of Engineers determined after a long study that the project would be detrimental to the environment, and to the Mattaponi Tribe, and that the need for water was unsubstantiated. However, then Gov. Gilmore elevated the decision to the NY Corps, who reversed the colonel's recommendation. Fortunately under Gov. Mark Warner, the permitting procedure was allowed to continue without interference.

On May 14, after listening to two marathon days of testimony from citizens, plus the advice from both scientists of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science and the staff of the Virginia Marine Resources Commission who urged denial, the VMRC Commissioners voted 6-2 to deny the permit. Since the project cannot continue without the VMRC permit, the applicant, Newport News, asked for a re-hearing, and on June 24, the VMRC again denied the permit.

We are delighted that the people have won, despite strong political pressure. Newport News has filed in circuit court to appeal, but we believe this will be an uphill effort for them. This project is unjust to the citizens who depend on the river's resources for their livelihood and cultural connection, and unjust to the river's delicate ecology, one of Virginia's last pristine rivers.

A few folks to thank for their stalwart stewardship:

Governor Mark Warner, State Capitol, Richmond, Va.
23219, phone 786-2211

Mr. Taylor Murphy, Secretary of Natural Resources, phone
786-0044

State Del. Albert Pollard, apollard@albertpollard.org

State Del. Harvey Morgan, del_morgan@house.state.va.us

State Del. Ryan McDougle,
del_mcdougle@house.state.va.us

VMRC, % Ms. Chappell, gchappell@mrc.state.va.us

For further information, contact Tyla Matteson, at

Consumers Corner

Lawn Care, AAA and a Local Ecology ListServ

by John Gallini

No, I am not going to demonstrate how these three issues are connected! I just wanted to make brief mention of each.

- The lawn care issue is primarily about reducing the use of gasoline powered lawn mowers and weed trimmers. According to the "Lawn Care for Cleaner Air" campaign, operating a typical gasoline-powered lawnmower for one hour produces as much smog-forming compounds and carbon monoxide as driving about 200 miles in a late-model compact car. And gasoline-powered string trimmers are actually more polluting than lawn mowers. This campaign is the product of the Louisville Metro Air Pollution Control District (See <http://www.apcd.org/lawncare/>).

The focus of the campaign is to convert shrubs, flowers, ground cover etc., which do bed vegetable garden can take a substantial consuming project. I have been slowly shrubs (azalea, hydrangea...) and bark mulch.



expanses of grass lawn to diverse combinations of not required gas-powered maintenance. A raised area – with obvious benefits – but this is a time converting my lawn to areas with a variety of

The goal would be a grass area small enough to maintain with a push mower. The next choice would be an electric powered mower (even the dirtiest coal power plants are required to clean up their air emissions more effectively than small gas engines). The Louisville campaign provides rebates for people turning in their gas mower for a push or electric mower.



- The AAA issue relates to the lobbying practices (and clout) of this venerable, 45 million member organization. In recent years, AAA spokespeople have criticized open-space measures and opposed U.S. EPA restrictions on smog, soot, and tailpipe emissions. According to a 2001 report by the Natural Resources Defense Council, the AAA even bashed the 1990 Clean Air Act, saying the law served to "threaten the personal mobility of millions of Americans."

There is now an alternative organization that provides the services provided by AAA - Better World Travelers Club. Better World gives 1 percent of its annual revenues to environmental causes and currently donates \$11 to its "carbon offset fund" each time a club member makes a plane reservation. Money from this fund is now helping to replace outdated boilers in the Portland public schools, and it will eventually go toward environmental cleanup efforts in members' destinations. Through discounts and promotions, Better World also encourages its members to rent hybrid vehicles, stay in environmentally responsible hotels, and sign up for eco-tours. You can check them out at <http://www.betterworldtravel.com/>

Finally, as I saw Copper River salmon in the market, I remembered that this ecologically friendly fish is available only for a few weeks each year – and wanted to be able to spread the word. A ListServ or e-mail network would allow folks interested in such local consumer issues to stay in touch. It would be great to know when a CSA was looking for members, or a new vegetarian restaurant had opened, or about an especially good farmers market, or the City of Richmond was accepting hazardous waste... If you would be interested in such a network, send me an e-mail at gallinjb@aol.com.

CALENDAR July/August 2003

Meetings of Local Groups

- Every Sunday** **Food Not Bombs, Richmond Meal Sharing**, 4:00 P.M. in Monroe Park. Hotline # 359-4880 for details
- Every 3rd Wed.** **Amnesty International**, 7:00 PM at Friends Meeting. 4500 Kensington Ave. Call 320-9488
- Every 2nd Thurs.** **Virginians Against Handgun Violence**, 7:15 PM., Jewish Community Center, B. Phillips-Taylor, 737-2975
- Every 3rd Friday** **Sufi Dancing: Dances of Universal Peace**, 7:30-9:30 PM except Oct. Round House, Byrd Park. 353-4901
- Every Thurs.** **Richmond Organization for Sexual Minority Youth (ROSMY)**, 7:00-9:00 PM. Call support line: 353-2077 for more information; 353-1699 for the administrative line.
- Every 3rd Sat.** **Equality Virginia**, 12:00 noon at the office. A political advocacy group working towards equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender citizens of Virginia. Open to the public. Contact number is 643-4816.
- Every 3rd Sun.** **Richmond Community for Ethics and Meaning**, at First Unitarian. 1000 Blanton Ave., 5-8 PM, Susan at 784-4069.
- Every 4th Sat.** **Pax Christi Peace Community** - Call Paula Powdermeyer for details - 355-7395.
- Every 1st Mon.** **Virginia People of Faith for Alternatives to the Death Penalty**, 4:45 PM
Catholic Diocese Conference Room, Floyd and Cherry, Kathleen Kenney, 359-5661

UPCOMING EVENTS

- August 22-24** **20th Annual Women's Gathering - Women Celebrating Ourselves in Community** At Twin Oaks Community, 138 Twin Oaks Road, Louisa, VA.. For information call 540-894-4112; or email gathering@twinoaks.org; or register at website: www.twinoaks.org.
- August 22** **You are invited to our Open House where the ROSMY Youth Center will be open to the community for the first time. This marks a significant change for our agency and the unveiling of the first Youth Center dedicated to GLBTQ youth in the state of Virginia.** Join us on Friday, August 22, 4 PM-7 PM, to celebrate this milestone. Call 644-4800 for directions or more information.
- Aug. 29 - Sept. 1** **Twin Oaks Community Conference - 4 Days of Sharing and Celebration** - Louisa, VA. For information call 540-894-5126; or email conference@twinoaks.org; or visit web site at www.twinoaks.org/conference/



**For September
Issue
August 15**

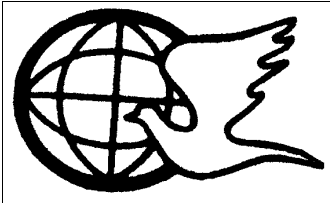
**RPEC World Wide Web Address:
<http://www.rpec.org>**

RPEC Fundraising Events

by John Gallini

*Each year, RPEC holds several events and undertakes several projects to raise funds for the Center.
Below is a list of those events/projects along with the funds that were raised.*

Special Fund Raising Events - 2002			
	Proceeds	Expenses	Net
Annual Dinner/Auction	\$ 3,800.00	\$ 375.00	\$ 3,505.00
Spring Concert	\$ 4,692.00	\$ 2,168.00	\$ 2,524.00
Ukrops Receipts	\$ 115.00	\$ -	\$ 115.00
Diversity Thrift Workday	\$ 365.00	\$ -	\$ 365.00
Benefit Concert	\$ 580.00	\$ -	\$ 580.00
Yark Sale	\$ 225.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 125.00
Cookbooks	\$ 63.00	\$ -	\$ 63.00
Special Fund Raising Events - 2003			
St. Patrick's Day Party	\$ 628.00	\$ 260.00	\$ 368.00
Spring Concert (estimate)	\$ 3,800.00	\$ 1,900.00	\$ 1,900.00



**Richmond
Peace
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Center** 14 N. Laurel St., Richmond, VA 23220

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