

JUNE 2007

P.O. BOX 250, LEWISBURG, PA CARE NEWSLETTER
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CARE Recent Events and Announcements

Milton Area Homework Club Holds Kick-off Event on May 22

On Tuesday, May 22nd, a gathering of community leaders was held to formally kick off The Milton Area Homework Club. Work on this new initiative began approximately 6 months ago. The "Club" comprises the homework tutoring sites of the three elementary schools (White Deer, Milton and Montandon) along with the Middle School and the YMCA. The YMCA is opening a new tutoring site. Tutoring will be available on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:30 to 6:00pm. Buses will be re-routed so that children can be transported from schools to the YMCA.

The YMCA is donating free passes to their "TGIF" program to homework club members. A student can earn one free pass every two months as long as they attend at least 8 homework sessions. Additionally, area businesses are donating cash and prizes for an end-of-the-year party. Churches are also involved.

The project is endorsed by The Milton Area School District, The Milton Chamber of Commerce, CARE, and the Milton Ministerium. The YMCA won a \$3000 grant from The Guyer Foundation for this project. Additionally, an announcement was made at the kick-off that an anonymous donor gave a \$1000 challenge grant. CARE gave the first donation to help match that grant: \$500. The \$500 check was presented to the executive director and program director of the YMCA by Margie Torres. The Daily Item and the Standard Journal were on hand for pictures and details.

CARE believes that one way to "level the playing field" and reduce poverty in our community is to make sure that all children receive as much support as possible to maximize scholastic achievement. Doing well in school means better economic prospects for the future. Better economic prospects for the future means less poverty; a generation that can do better than the previous one. This is the "equality" part of our name: Community Alliance for Respect and Equality.

CARE expresses thanks to the many folks who have jumped on board to make this project successful: The Milton YMCA, the Milton Ministerium, The school district, The Guyer Foundation, The Chamber of Commerce and local businesses. We look forward to keeping you apprised of future developments.

The service is open to all. We hope you will join us in celebrating our community's GLBTs at St. John's United Church of Christ.

Please come to the Task Force meeting.



The last two installments of this program will be on June 10th (Unitarian Universalism) and June 16th (Hinduism). Stay tuned!

Children's Tour of Religions Completes Jewish Part of Tour; Will Finish with Unitarian Universalism and Hinduism

On May 20th, children and their families met with Rabbi Nina Mandel of Congregation Beth-El to learn about Judaism. Because the synagogue is still under construction, we met at the site where the Unitarian Universalist Church meets in Point Township. Rabbi Nina taught the children the 3 meanings of the word "shalom": peace, hello and good-bye. She taught them how to write "shalom" in English and in Hebrew. She also brought along the Torah, both the books that parishioners use in service and her scroll. The scroll, with its camouflage covering, was used in Iraq to comfort soldiers and conduct Jewish services there. Children were able to see the Hebrew writing and see Rabbi Nina use a "yad", a special device she uses for reading so that her hands don't touch the scroll (the oil from her hands could eventually wear down the writing). She shared that it took over one year for someone to write the scroll by hand, and that the length of the scroll could cover the whole (large) room in which we sat!

Rabbi Nina also gave the children a Tzedakah box. This is a small box into which they can put coins to be given away for charity.

CARE thanks Rabbi Nina for her beautiful lesson.

CARE Seeking Nominations

CARE announced last month that it is seeking nominations for officers: 2 co-chairs, secretary and treasurer. No nominations were received from the general membership.

To date, Lois Passi has agreed to run for chair, and if elected, to serve for one more year. Additionally, David Deibler-Gorman (treasurer) and Iris Rifkin-Gainer (secretary) also agreed to run again and, if elected, to serve for one more year.

If there are any additional nominations, please get them to us right away (care@dejazzd.com , 524-2273 or P.O. Box 250, Lewisburg, PA 17837).

CARE Takes a Break for the Summer

The hard working steering committee of CARE plans to break for the months of July and August, resuming its work in September. Therefore, the next issue of the newsletter will be in September. We hope that YOU also have a happy, healthy and fun summer!

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Susquehanna Valley Makes Donation

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Susquehanna Valley made a \$713 donation to CARE last month. CARE is very grateful for this extremely generous donation. Thanks to all in the congregation for their confidence and support.



Do you have any news or suggestions for us? Please contact us at 570-524-2273 or email to care@dejazzd.com

Upcoming Events

CARE co-sponsors Gay Pride Service on June 3rd

A group of concerned clergy and communities of faith will have an interfaith gay pride service at St. John's United Church of Christ, 1050 Buffalo Road, Lewisburg on Sunday, June 3rd, 7:00 PM. All are welcome. Approximately one dozen clergy of Christian, Jewish, Unitarian, Buddhist, and earth-based traditions worked hard over the past few months to organize this service. Their hope is to honor GLBTs (gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender people) in the Valley, and to let people know that there are houses of worship that welcome them.

For questions, call CARE: 524-2273.

Task Force for African American Concerns Meeting on June 10th

The task force will meet on June 10, 2007 at 3p.m. at the Donald Heiter Community Center, 100 N 5th Street in Lewisburg. The video, "The State of the Black Family" will be shown and discussed.

The task force has been working on two projects. The first is a children's program at the Union County Public Library which will focus on Black history. We need four volunteers for this project, three persons to read stories to the children and one person to do a craft with them. Please consider helping. Your efforts will be much appreciated.

The second project is a newsletter which will highlight several African Americans in our community. The first people to be featured will be Derrick Scott, Harvey Edwards, Quentin Faison, Frances Spiller, Denise Guinn-Bailey and Babbette Rose-Faison.

12th Annual Puerto Rican Picnic on June 10, 2007

ALL CULTURES AND AGES WELCOME TO ATTEND!

Where: Shikellamy State Park at the Marina - # 3

When: Sunday, June 10, 2007 @ 12:00/Noon

Why: SHARING DIVERSITY, FRIENDSHIP & FUN

Rain or Shine

Meal will be served at 1 p.m.

**After entering park, make first left continue to end, look for flags
Mr. & Mrs. Ramirez will provide lemonade, juice, & bacalaitos**

PLEASE BRING THE FOLLOWING:

- A covered dish to share with others. Your choice of meat and a place setting for each member of your family
 - Board games & cards are also welcomed. We will have dominoes.
- **Please do not bring your best pots in case we need to re-heat food on the grill later in the day.**



Thank you for
your generous
support!

Feel free to copy this invitation and pass on to friends and family. This is a cooperative effort; we would like to have enough food for all. We will also be asking all who participate for a donation to help pay for the pavilion for the following year.

Call Louis or Senovia Ramirez @ 286-4715 if you have any questions, comments or concerns. If you took pictures last year, please bring a few so that we may add to our photo collection.

NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES PERMITTED IN STATE PARK

Eastern Delaware Nations' Indian PowWow

Saturday June 16 10am-8:30pm.
Sunday June 17 10am-6pm.
Rain or Shine!
Call 570-928-8083 for more information.

The Eastern Delaware Nations 17th Annual PowWow (co-sponsored by the Sullivan County Kiwanis) is Saturday June 16 and Sunday, June 17th, Father's Day weekend, at the Sullivan County Fairgrounds, Forksville, PA.

Featuring The Aztec Dancers, Traders, Craftsmen, Jewelry, Art, Knives, Furs, Blankets, Books, Food, Displays, Inter-tribal Dances and more.

Admission \$5; under 12 Free. Group rates available.

Independence Day Parade

Saturday June 30th 10am in Lewisburg.
CARE will again march as "Patriots for Peace."
Details about when and where to assemble will follow as soon as they become available.

In the News - from the desk of Doug Sturm

On "an emerging racial generation gap" in the US?

A recent article (New York Times, p. A19) reports that current trends in the makeup of the United States point to a potential split within the nation "between an older, whiter electorate and a younger overall population that is more Hispanic, black and Asian and that presses sometimes competing agendas and priorities."

Estimates by the Census Bureau for 2006 show that clustered in the age range from 40 to 60+ years, 48% are people of color, whereas in the age range from 0 to 39, 81% are people of color.

Furthermore, over 20% of US children are either foreign-born or have a parent from abroad, and "nearly half of the children under 5 are Hispanic, black, or Asian."



The largest minority consists of Hispanic Americans; they account for close to half the population growth in the year ending July 2006. In four states, minority peoples constitute a majority: Hawaii (75%), New Mexico (57%), California (57%), Texas (52%).

The author of the article, Sam Roberts, muses that such a dramatic change has possible “implications for social programs and education spending for youth.”

So, we may ask, how committed is the citizenry in the US, including the older white generation, to genuine democracy? How serious are we in our claim to respect the dignity of all persons, whatever their racial or ethnic identity? How deeply sensitive are we to that common humanity that permeates all our variations? Despite our presences to high principle, are we driven by unconscious tribalistic impulses?

On Pitts on Obama

In a recent column (The Daily Item, May 8), Leonard Pitts reflected on the need for Secret Service protection for Barrack Obama during his run to become the Democratic candidate for the Presidency. The following comment in that column is worth pondering.

“It is fashionable now to speak of systemic racism and the need for black folk to take a greater hand in their own salvation. Those discussions are valid. But it is also occasionally instructive to remember that old-fashioned mean-as-a-snake, thick-as-a-brick hatred is still alive and well and living in the USA.

“....Sometimes, it is dressed in suit and tie and told to sound reasonable by the likes of David Duke....And sometimes, it just rears up on its hind legs and brays that it will commit violence rather than accept a black man as its president.”

Here in PA, sad to say, the old Ku Klux Klan remains active now and then, here and there. What forms of racism can be spotted in our Valley?

Guestworkers in the USA: “Close to Slavery”

Despite all the contention about whether a “guestworker program” should be initiated in the USA, we already have one in place, and it’s so bad the Southern Poverty Law Center declares it’s “Close to Slavery”! That’s the conclusion of a recently released report by the SPLC (48 pages, 2007).

The program (for unskilled workers) “is largely hidden from view because the workers are typically socially and geographically isolated.” In the program, “employers brought about 121,000 guestworkers into the US in 2005” for jobs in forestry, construction, landscaping, etc.



Despite a pretense that the government protects their “rights,” these workers are:

- *routinely cheated out of wages;
- *forced to mortgage their futures to obtain low-wage, temporary jobs;
- *held virtually captive by employers or labor brokers who seize their documents;
- *forced to live in squalid conditions; and,
- *denied medical benefits for on-the-job injuries.”

Charles Rangel calls the program “the closest thing I’ve ever seen to slavery.” The program has been considered a form of “indentured servitude.” Most of the workers come from Mexico and other Latin American lands.

Copies of this scathing report are available with a phone call to (334) 956 8200. The SPLC’s website is <www.splcenter.org>. CARE has one copy on file.

Little Rock 1957, Then and Now

Those of the “older generation” will vividly recall those dramatic days in 1957 when a select handful of bright and courageous black teenagers sought to attend an entirely white high school in Little Rock, Arkansas. Protected by federal marshals, they confronted jeers and threats from a massive crowd of whites opposed to the desegregation mandate of the Supreme Court issued in 1954.

Now, 50 years later, as the New York Times (May 8, A1) reports, the city faces a more complex kind of racial tension in the schools--despite a recent federal judge’s official declaration that, after five decades, Little Rock’s schools are “finally desegregated.”

The following paragraph from the NYT article provides something of the current circumstance in the school system:

“In the latest clash, white parents pack school board meetings to support the embattled superintendent, Roy Brooks, who is black. The blacks among the school board members look on grimly, determined to use their new majority to oust him. Whites insist that test scores and enrollment have improved under the brusque, hard charging Mr. Brooks; blacks on the board are furious that he has cut the number of office and other non-teaching jobs and closes some schools.”

That’s Little Rock. In the Central Susquehanna Valley, what’s happening? Consider: In our school districts, how many teachers and staff, school directors and administrators are “people of color”? What proportion of students in each district are “people of color”? In what ways is the matter of “diversity” factored into the life of the schools, curricular and extra-curricular? Who around here is giving close attention to such questions?