

# UUCWI Social Action Committee

## Meeting Notes 7/9/2004 9:00 am, Trinity Chapel

Attending: Nancy, chair; Malcolm, Jack

Absent: Toyon, Bill

### 1. Old Business:

#### a. update on charity contributions

Malcolm reported that the five checks we requested for Hearts and Hammers, Habitat for Humanity, In a Pinch, Whidbey Camano Land Trust and Helping Hands were mailed with explanatory letters. Two or three thank-you notes have been received.

#### b. finances

Nancy is eagerly awaiting our first budget report from Roy. Jack asked why the congregations Treasurer's Reports are not open to all and posted on our website – as a nonprofit, we're required to have open books.

**Action needed:** Jack will try to find a recent posting on the UU Webster's listserv about posting financial statements on websites. Nancy will check with Dave and Roy about posting our financial reports on our website, and she'll also work with Roy to get committee statements each month.

#### c. scope of our reach: South Whidbey or Whidbey Island?

Nancy asked for clarification on whether we view this committee as serving South Whidbey or all of Whidbey Island. The consensus is that we and the congregation serve the whole island.

#### d. Coffee sales: continue? If so, who will manage?

Mavis has asked that the committee take on coffee sale duties. After brief discussion, the committee decided to discontinue coffee sales. While we regret the loss of income, we feel that we have accomplished our main goal of raising awareness of organic, bird-friendly, fair trade coffee options among congregants.

**Action needed:** Nancy will notify Mavis and write an article about the decision for the newsletter. The article will include options for congregants to purchase coffee locally.

#### e. Adopt-A-Road cleanup date

The first or second Saturday of August seemed suitable to those present.

**Action needed:** Nancy will wait to hear if anyone else has input and then will choose one of these dates to be publicized in the August newsletter.

#### f. Amnesty International statement denouncing torture

After hearing back from the majority of the committee supporting signing the AI statement denouncing torture, Nancy asked the Board of Trustees for permission to sign. A majority of the BOT voted in favor, but by that time, AI had removed

the statement from their website.

g. voter registration

Malcolm updated us on our attempts to coordinate a voter registration drive with the League of Women Voters. After brief discussion, we reached consensus that we will continue to work with other organizations to register voters rather than try to organize a registration drive on our own.

**Action needed:** Malcolm will find out about upcoming opportunities to assist with voter registration, such as at the county fair. He'll summarize these in a newsletter article urging congregants to participate. He'll also write a letter to the editor of the South Whidbey Record, but as an individual and not a member of the church.

2. New Business:

a. topic/speaker for Sunday service

Malcolm mentioned that the service on April 24th (the Sunday closest to Earth Day) is reserved for a Social Action Committee presentation. He would like to have a topic related to environmental awareness and/or activism. We can request to provide another service during the year, and Nancy asked that it be on a social justice topic. No specific topics or speakers were presented at this meeting.

**Action needed:** All committee members are requested to bring ideas for topics and/or speakers to the next meeting.

b. CASA support

Malcolm reported that following the excellent service presentation on Court-Appointed Special Advocates by Carla Grau-Egerton on June 28th, at least three congregants have expressed interest in becoming advocates. Training is twice a year, in September and April. Nancy talked with Carla after the presentation about ways that this committee could support the program. Carla suggested that we purchase training materials if we were interested in making a donation.

**Action needed:** Nancy will add CASA to our list of potential charity recipients for this year.

c. Eyes Wide Open exhibit (pages 3 and 4 below).

Nancy shared material about the "Eyes Wide Open" exhibit that Dave brought to her attention for us to host. From the scope of the host group's responsibilities, we determined quickly that we don't have the resources to host. The committee decided to try to find and support an outside host group. Nancy already sent an inquiry about hosting this to the Whidbey Peace and Reconciliation Network (PRN), and they have responded that they have decided not to host but gave Nancy a lead on another host. She is pursuing this.

d. TrueMajority's "Computer Ate My Vote" campaign (page 5 below)

Malcolm requested that we consider action on one of the many vote verification campaigns. Nancy shared material about TrueMajority's "Computer Ate My Vote" campaign and [verifiedvoting.org](http://verifiedvoting.org). The issue is whether electronic-only voting

machines undermine democracy through the potential for vote manipulation. Campaigns advocate producing a voter-verified paper ballot to supplement electronic voting. Nancy pointed out that these campaigns are clearly advocating specific legislation and therefore not appropriate for this committee to address. Individuals in the committee and congregation are free to work on these campaigns on their own. Related to this, Jack expressed deep concern that the League of Women Voters has endorsed paperless voting.

- e. response to church campaigning?  
Malcolm recently sent an email message with information about the Bush-Cheney campaign's tactics involving churches. While we may be outraged by these and other tactics, we didn't see any action for this committee at this time.

### 3. Next meeting

Unless Nancy hears from absent group members about conflicts, our next meeting will be 9:30 on Friday August 6th at Trinity.

## ***Eyes Wide Open***

### **Beyond Fear – Towards Hope: An Exhibition of the Iraq War**

<http://eyes.peacechicago.org/hosting.html>

### **Host The Exhibit**

#### **Overview of the Exhibition**

The Eyes Wide Open exhibition is a multimedia, multisensory journey through the words, images, and sounds of the Iraq war. Visitors move through a vivid memorial to the war's soldier and civilian victims, a searing exposure of the statements told to the U.S. public to justify the war, a compelling outline of what the war is costing us at home, and finally to an interactive, easy way to contribute their voices to changing our country's course toward peace.

In this critical time, Eyes Wide Open speaks directly to our hearts and minds, shattering the claim that the war has made America safer and challenging us to confront our fears and let our dreams, not our nightmares, shape our collective future.

Specifically, the exhibition will include:

16 4'x8' panels of information, much like a museum exhibit

A 10-minute video on the Administration's justifications for war and experts refuting their claims

Memorial to the 10,000+ Iraqi civilians killed in the war, consisting of a 6'x32' wall of names and incidents of deaths. The memorial to the Iraqi civilian victims is the first tribute ever on U.S. soil to victims of a U.S. war

Memorial to the 500+ U.S. soldiers killed in the war, consisting of 500+ combat boots with the soldiers' names tagged on them

Bank of TVs looping images of U.S. news coverage, self-portraits of Iraqis and other video images

Ticker showing U.S. military spending on the war in Iraq

Timeline of U.S -Iraq relationship and events leading up to the war

10,000 spent bullet casings formed into a plowshare, representing the Iraqi civilians killed in the war

Free eight-page newspaper with additional background information

Action Towards Peace section focused on drawing visitors to further explore avenues for civic participation and education

And much more...

Sign up to be a host or request more information.

### **Responsibilities of Host Group**

1. Secure an exhibit space of approximately 30'x40' or 20'x60' (or larger) in a centrally located, high traffic, media friendly location

2. Publicize the event through email lists, word-of-mouth, flyers and posters

We will provide a downloadable flyer and poster with space for the specific time, date and location in your area

Reproduce the flyers and posters and distribute them

3. Raise cost of transporting exhibit to your area (\$500-700) depending upon previous location. Chicago metropolitan area transportation costs will be about \$120.

4. Recruit 8-10 volunteers for set-up and take down of exhibit

5. Have a team of two volunteers at action table and two at entrance to exhibit at all times exhibit is open.

Be willing to assist in collecting donations, securing donations and sending them to AFSC

Sign people up for action and forward all data to AFSC

Obtain 3-4 cell phones with donated minutes for visitors to call Congress from the Action Table

Obtain computer with internet connection (if possible in location) for sending faxes to legislators

6. Recruit volunteers for outreach to media

We will provide a media advisory template and template of a press release, the local group will provide local information and quotes from high profile people to insert in the press release.

Organize a press conference or media event at opening of exhibition with someone who can speak for AFSC and any other local notables, i.e. local faith leaders, public servants, veterans, parents of GIs serving in military, etc. The exhibit

provides the visual backdrop for the press conference and the media advisory will highlight that photo opportunity.

We will assist with faxing press advisories to media but local group is responsible for follow-up phone calling to assignment editors and reporters (very important).

7. Name a contact from local group able to maintain communication with AFSC Eyes Wide Open contact person: Tricia Hackett.

## ***verifiedvoting.org***

VerifiedVoting.org and the Verified Voting Foundation champion reliable and publicly verifiable elections in the United States.

We advocate the use of voter-verified paper ballots (VVPBs) for all elections in the United States, so voters can inspect individual permanent records of their ballots before they are cast and so meaningful recounts may be conducted. We also insist that electronic voting equipment and software be open to public scrutiny and that random, surprise recounts be conducted on a regular basis to audit election equipment.

Volunteer Central We need your skills and your talent and your time – as much as you feel you can give!

Here are some actions you can take right now! If you want to do more, join with us, tell us your experience and talents, and how you want to help.

### **Here are our Action Alerts**

Call your Senators (800-839-5276)  
and urge them to co-sponsor S.1980.

Tell the TV Media to cover this critically important story.

Adopt A Legislator! - Help Pass H.R.2239 and S.1980.

H. R. 2239

To amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to require a voter-verified permanent record or hardcopy under title III of such Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1980

To amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to require a voter-verified permanent record or hardcopy under title III of such Act, and for other purposes.

Organizations, show Congress you support H.R.2239 & S.1980.

Act Now - Send Congress A Letter Supporting HR2239 and send the Senate A Letter Supporting S1980

Endorse Our Legislative Petition (separate sheet)

Do you have fundraising experience or the skills/contacts to develop a TV commercial? We want to run a national TV campaign, and we need help making it happen. Please contact us.