OMNI CENTER---UPCOMING EVENTS, MEETINGS and CALENDAR

SPECIAL UPCOMING EVENTS

--August 24, Friday, 6:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m., Summer Member Forum, United Campus Ministries, 902 W. Maple - This is a quarterly meeting where Omni members come to hang out and get to know each other. We held the first one earlier this year. It was a great picnic in April – during that late freeze. Had a beautiful bonfire, great potluck and veggie dogs!

The goal is to find out what’s going on, and getting to know our community. The format will be kind of like the Annual Membership Meeting that happens in January. There’ll be a potluck meal, entertainment, and breakout sessions about interesting things. We’re trying to get to know each other . . . what our community passions are. Several Omni members and friends have attended some pretty interesting conferences and meetings, and others are involved in new and exciting projects. Folks will share what they’ve learned in the breakout sessions. Look at some of the interesting events and issues that Omni members are talking about:

- Amherst Student Activism Conference – Stephen Coger
- A Touch of Love -- Joe Bender
- Darfur Update - Sam Totten
- Mushrooms and the Environment - (micoremediation etc) -- Matt Petty
- Santa Fe Culture of Peace Conference - Gladys & Richard Tiffany
- Spiritual Activism Conference -- Josh Newman
- United for Peace & Justice Report - CJ Atkins/Greg Moore

You don’t want to miss this fun and informative evening.

Omni/Community Access Television (C.A.T.) Connections

Omni C.A.T. Forum Schedule:

- Tuesdays, 8/7 and 8/14  6:00 p.m. Democracy NOW!
- Thursdays, 8/9 and 8/16  6:00 p.m. Democracy NOW!
- Friday 8/10  6:00 p.m. Democracy NOW!

Free Speech TV (FSTV) sponsored by Omni - 3:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. – FSTV: the world’s largest collection of alternative TV and numerous ideas for organizing, protesting, celebrating, researching, investigating, speaking, raising hell. www.freespeechtv.com

For a complete FSTV broadcast schedule...
1 click here
2 select your time zone
3 watch more FSTV!
Democracy NOW with Amy Goodman: Daily 7:00a.m., Sundays 6:00p.m. From Amy Goodman, we hear the news that will never be reported in the mainstream media.

Amy Goodman Online - You can listen/watch previous Democracy Now programs by internet streaming from Democracy Now website http://democracynow.org Previous programs (going back many years) are archived there. You can watch the current program (after they post it about noon) by going to http://democracynow.org/streampage.pl

Omni Book Samplers: Book Samplers give a five minute book report or read a five minute excerpt from a book. Omni Book Samplers include Dick Bennett, Jon Zimmer, Mendy Knott, Tom Kennedy

Short Takes: Taping at C.A.T.

Taping Schedule:

Every Monday night, from 5:00p.m.-6:00p.m., C.A.T. will be doing Short Takes live. This will be a great opportunity for time sensitive material, live entertainment, or anything else that is expressive.

For the folks who don't want to go on camera live, you can still record your short take from 6:00p.m.-6:30p.m Mondays, and on Tuesdays from 12 noon - 1:30p.m. Both the live and recorded short takes will air the following week as usual. If anyone has any comments or questions, please feel free to contact C.A.T.

Viewing Times: 11:00a.m., 5:00p.m., 11:00p.m.

Omni News and Current Events featured on Short Takes:

Presented by Cliff Hughes, Dick Bennett

Other Viewing Opportunities: Bill Moyers Journal on PBS, Fridays, 9:00p.m. http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/index-flash.html

-- Video Underground on Hiatus - Omni Center's Video Underground will be on hiatus July and August. Check this space in the next newsletters for the fall schedule. Video Underground shows FREE political, social, and current event videos every second and fourth Sunday of the month. These movies are shown at the OMNI CENTER FOR PEACE, JUSTICE, AND ECOLOGY located at 902 W. Maple in Fayetteville, on the main floor of the Presbyterian and Disciples United Campus Ministry. Visit us: http://www.northwest-ark.com/vu/

---August 7, Tuesday, 6:00p.m. Critical Thinking Committee Pot Luck Dinner - We’ll meet at Jo Bennett’s, 2473 Jimmie Ave., Fayetteville to welcome Lynda Haley-Brothers and Carole Westby as our new facilitators for the Omni Center Critical Thinking Award.

---August 14, Tuesday, 6:00p.m., Free Speech TV / Democracy Now dinner, Jo Bennett’s, 2473 Jimmie Ave., Fayetteville.

---August 16, Thursday, 5:30p.m. Potluck, 6:00p.m. meeting - Omni Center Steering Committee Meeting. Deep End of United Campus Ministries, 902 W. Maple, Fayetteville

---August 19, Sunday, 6:30p.m., HOWL: Women's Open Mic, Nightbird Books, Fayetteville

- HOWL happens the third Sunday of each month at Nightbird Bookstore. At HOWL, women are invited to read poems (their own or another woman writer's), share short prose or sing at an open mic forum hosted by Mendy Knott. So come read, sing or play your work to a really receptive
audience. It’s a great place to "try out" new work, share your masterpieces, or read for the very first time. Men and women are warmly invited to attend this celebration of women’s words. Nightbird Books is located in the old mill buildings at the corner of School and 6th ST. Their phone number is 443-2080. Reading starts at 6:30 but come early to sign up to read, browse the books Be sure to put this one your calendar and enjoy the good company. For HOWL questions or to join our mailing list, email howl@herwords.org. HOWL is a collaboration between Herwords and Omni, supported Nightbird Books.

-- August 24, Friday, 6:00p.m., Omni Center Summer Member Forum - (See details at top of Newsletter).

-- September 4, Tuesday, 7:00p.m, United Campus Ministries Chapel, 902 W. Maple, Fayetteville, Faith Communities, Peace Traditions - OMNI seeks coalition with all who embrace our nonviolent goals for peace and justice, and of special importance are the faith traditions. In this time of preemptive attacks and retaliations, of invasion and war, of weapons of mass destruction, and of pandemic hunger and disease, a potential bastion of wisdom and practice for peace resides in our faith communities. In these roundtables and symposia, we meet in the spirit of peace, seeking to increase our own understanding of our own faith’s peacemaking and to share that knowledge with others. Participants for the Fall, 2007 Forum include Hameed Naseem from the Muslim community, Rev. Lowell Grisham, Rector of St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, as well as others. For more information, contact Dick Bennett 442-4600 or jbennet@uark.edu

-- September 14-15, BUILDING A CULTURE OF PEACE: 2nd Regional Peace Conference, Ferncliff Center near Little Rock - Who else does peace around here? Omni Center wants to be part of the solution. We’re always looking for other people and groups like us, who are working for a culture of peace in an earth restored.

Last year we helped start a regional peace conference that drew people from organizations in Little Rock, Fort Smith, Memphis Tennessee, Springfield Missouri and Tulsa Oklahoma. It was a good beginning. Everybody got new ideas by finding out what’s going on in each other’s hometowns.

This year, Arkansas Coalition for Peace and Justice in Little Rock is taking a turn organizing the conference. It’s a great place to make connections and get inspiration. The conference is intended to be low-cost and high-impact. Are you interested in attending? We’d love it if you’d go. If you’re interested, email Gladys at ‘gladystiffany@yahoo.com’. Peace people are interesting folk. This will be worth your time.

-- October 26 – United for Peace and Justice - Regional mobilization in a city somewhere near us (watch for details in upcoming newsletters).

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS---UPCOMING EVENTS AND MEETINGS

-- August 8-14, Asheville, North Carolina, Southwest Covergence for Climate Action - The Nuclear Information and Resource Service (NIRS) is proud to invite you to participate in the Southeast Convergence for Climate Action, www.climateconvergence.org (select Southeast) at a secluded site near Asheville, NC. You’ll have a chance to learn more about Social Justice, Energy Justice, Climate Justice, Non-violence and Democracy skills. The week-long intergenerational training retreat (“Action Camp”) offers education about false solutions to climate change (“clean coal” and nuclear) and how to build real-world skills for real climate solutions; organizing; action.
Registration required - come for all or part. Low cost ($50 -- $100, sliding scale)...scholarships available. Meals and tent camping included in registration OR stay in area motels; limited Asheville home-stays possible. To register please visit: http://www.climateconvergence.org/southeast/index.php

Daily:

Intensive workshops on anti-oppression, basics and advanced issues in energy, environment, climate, local/global sustainability, democracy skills. All issue sessions will include strategic thinking and planning, spanning local to global community time, shared chores, yoga, evening campfire, music

Panels/Workshops include:

- Confronting False Solutions to Climate Change including “clean coal” and nuclear power
- Anti-oppression leadership training
- Strategic Campaign building
- Grandparents of our movement telling stories of past victories
- Nukes 101, Fossil Fuels 101, Organizing 101
- Global Nuclear Energy Partnership and its Global Mobile Chernobyl
- Countering mountain top removal and challenging expanding coal energy plans
- Principles of non-violent activism
- Climbing and other action skills
- Making big puppets
- Homegrown sustainability - wind, solar, energy efficiency, permaculture, small hydro, small biofuels
- ...and more!

More information: Mary Olson NIRS Southeast Office 828-675-1792 – or nirs@main.nc.us

NIRS is now on myspace! Join us at http://www.myspace.com/nonukesnirs

Nuclear Information and Resource Service, 6930 Carroll Avenue, #340, Takoma Park, MD 20912, 301-270-NIRS; nirsnet@nirs.org; www.nirs.org

-- August 9, Thursday, 8-9p.m. CDT, Presidential Candidates In First Ever Gay Debate

- For the first time the leading candidates for the presidency will hold a televised debate devoted solely to LGBT issues. The one-hour event will be broadcast on gay network LOGO and through live streaming video at LOGOonline.com.

-- September 19, Monday, 1-4p.m., “Diversity: Gender and Sexual Orientation” ARKU 507-508

- Dana Collins will facilitate this class that focuses on differences in communication styles between men and women in an effort to communicate more clearly and work more productively. Sexual orientation is also discussed in order to understand fears experienced by gays and straights, clashes of values regarding this issue and the economics of tolerant communities. This session will serve to fulfill requirements for the Diversity Certificate Program and will benefit any faculty or staff member who wishes to create a more productive work environment through better understanding of students, colleagues, and other members of our community.
WHAT'S GOING ON?—CURRENT EVENTS

LOCALLY:

LOW PRIORITY MARIJUANA INITIATIVE FAYETTEVILLE:

A proposed law for Fayetteville would require that law enforcement treat marijuana offenses as their lowest priority. Several such laws have passed nationwide, and last fall in Eureka Springs. While not actually changing the state and federal marijuana laws, such initiatives are an effective method for the public to use in sending a strong message to their elected lawmakers that marijuana laws should be changed. Signatures of registered Fayetteville voters would be gathered on petitions through August 2008, with the expectation of gathering twice as many as the 3600 needed for certification. The measure would then appear on the November ballot for the general election. The measure would also require the mayor and city council members to annually send letters to the state and federal legislators, governor, and president urging support for marijuana law reform. The measure requires that a committee be formed to monitor marijuana law enforcement.

Why should OMNI get involved? OMNI's mission in support of peace and justice fits well with any effort to reduce the harm caused by America’s longest war, the so-called War on Drugs. It is unjust to arrest persons who chose to become intoxicated on marijuana while allowing similar if not more harmful intoxication on alcohol. Waging war on Americans by criminalizing private activity not only violates Constitutional rights but also reduces vital resources to provide appropriate medical treatment for persons suffering from addictive illness. Arrests of persons in possession of marijuana cost not only taxpayer dollars for the time and resources of law enforcement, public defenders, prosecutors, and courts, but also results in permanent damage to the individual arrested. Loss of employment, loss of student loan benefits, and stigmatization are only a few of the long-term damages which may occur even for the most minor charge. The War on Drugs, now in its fourth decade, has caused America to build more prisons than schools, incarcerate more people than any other nation on earth, and interfere with the governments and environments of many foreign nations without reducing the use of drugs. But lawmakers are frozen in fear that support for reform would convince voters that they are "soft" on drugs. Only through voter initiatives can voters send the clear message that drug policy must change.

Over 400 persons were arrested for marijuana offenses in Fayetteville in 2005, more than for any other offense. As a first step toward a more reasonable, compassionate drug policy statewide, the proposed initiative would send a clear message to lawmakers that this waste of public resources will no longer be tolerated. It is time to stop waging war on our fellow citizens. It is time to put "Justice" back into our justice system. It is time for OMNI to work for peace and justice in its own backyard.

The Alliance for Reform of Drug Policy Inc. asks that OMNI endorse the campaign and designate representatives to serve on a coalition committee in support of this initiative effort. Other coalition partners are being sought from the Green Party, campus groups, and the Democratic and Republican parties. Once fully formed, by September the coalition committee will develop campaign strategy, timelines, identify spokespersons, and call for volunteers. The Alliance has previously conducted three statewide initiative efforts to legalize medical use of marijuana.
Ryan Denham, current Alliance president and head of the successful Eureka Springs initiative effort, will serve as coordinator for the Fayetteville campaign.

For more information, a review of a similar law in Santa Barbara as discussed in a court challenge is instructive. See: http://www.aclu.org/images/asset_upload_file805_30447.pdf

A word about hemp: Hemp is a term generally used to refer to the non-drug cousin of marijuana, whose fibers are used for textiles and other materials, whose seeds are used for oil and food, and whose field cultivation serves as a nutritious, weed-eradicating cover crop. Over 32 nations’ farmers grow hemp, and millions of dollars of imported hemp are manufactured into American goods. Several states have passed laws allowing farmers to grow it, but the federal government remains opposed. More info on hemp at http://www.dpeg.org/hemp.html

Submitted by E. Ryan Denham,
www.arkansasalliance.org
http://norml.uark.edu

YOU’RE A PART OF UNITED FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

This year, Omni Center joined United for Peace and Justice, a national coalition of 1400 groups who are focused on peace and justice issues. UFPJ is responsible for most of the large-scale peace marches that have happened in Washington DC, New York City and California. The 3rd national convention was held in Chicago in mid-June. Omni sent representatives to it for the first time; C.J. Atkins and Greg Moore represented us well at the conference.

OMNI was elected to serve as one of five members of the UFPJ Elections Committee, which oversaw the balloting and elections procedure for new national leadership of the coalition. Judith LeBlanc, one of the UFPJ co-chairs, and our guest speaker at M-11 this year, nominated CJ to be OMNI’s representative. It was an important role for us to play, as it served to let the rest of the peace movement know that we exist and are active here in Arkansas.

The Assembly re-affirmed that the central focus of the coalition is our work to end the war in Iraq and bring all the troops home. There was agreement that UFPJ, as the nation’s largest grassroots antiwar coalition, will have as our primary work a Campaign to End the War that includes a number of component parts:

• work to end congressional support of the war;
• counter-recruitment, support for military resisters as well as veterans and military families;
• projects to expose the economic costs of war and the military budget;
• engaging in the 2008 electoral season to project a peace and justice agenda;
• developing skills and organizing trainings for local groups;
• challenging war profiteers;
• a nationwide public education project.

Omni members may choose to participate in the major regional mobilizations that are planned for October 27. The goal, of course, is to pressure Congress to end the war and take public sentiment about it very seriously as the election season moves into high gear. Our regional mobilization will probably be in New Orleans or Texas. Plans will begin to gel soon. Regional mobilizations will allow accessibility to more people. We hope that many of you will be interested in making a trek to where the action is. You’ll hear more about it soon.
Networking with likeminded groups is an important part of what Omni is about. We need input from them, and they need input from us. With these kinds of good connections, we look forward to learning, and expanding our role in developing the culture of peace.

OPEN SPOT ON THE TELCOMMUNICATIONS BOARD

There is an available position on the Fayetteville Telecommunications Board. Anyone interested in filling this post needs to get an application from the city clerk.

WEBSITE TO SEND MESSAGE TO THE ARKANSAS PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

The Arkansas PSC wants to hear from you. They have extended their deadline to receive public comment regarding the building of a coal plant near Texarkana.

Just go to http://www.sustainablearkansas.info, where you'll find a brief explanation and the message. You'll need to fill out your name and address.

You can send the message even if you've already signed our local petition—the petition and the email are different. Try not to send the email twice from the same person, but DO use the same email address to send messages from you and your friends or family, each person filling out their own name. You can be any age, from any state in the country (but we’re focusing on Arkansas).

This power plant will emit as much CO2 as half the cars and light trucks in Arkansas. We’re nearing a global "tipping point" that could melt the polar ice caps. We’ve GOT to get moving on this.

Go to http://www.sustainablearkansas.info

NONVIOLENCE CIVIL DISOBDIENICE TRAINERS - ARE YOU OUT THERE?

Are there Omni members or friends out there who have training in nonviolent civil disobedience techniques? We need you. We’ve had a request for a volunteer to offer training at the next Regional Peace Conference that will happen September 14-15, 2007 at Ferncliff Center near Little Rock. We’d love to talk to you about it. Please email Gladys at gladystiffany@yahoo.com.

NATIONALLY

CODEPINK UPCOMING ACTIONS

-- September 4th
Tell Congress "No More Excuses! Lead Us Out of Iraq NOW!"
Join CODEPINK in welcoming back Congress from their summer vacations.

-- September 15
Mass March on Washington & Die-In led by Iraq Veterans

-- September 17
Peoples March Inside Congress Assemble at 9:00 am in the cafeteria of the Rayburn House Office Building (House of Representatives).
-- September 18
   Congressional Challenge Day

-- September 19
   "Let's Whip Congress Into Shape"

-- September 20th
   Day of Decision: No More Money for War and Endless Occupation
   Get ready to represent yourself on Sept. 20th! The Declaration of Peace and the National Campaign of Nonviolent Resistance are joining up in organizing a massive nonviolent direct action on Capitol Hill. This will be the same week the Pentagon will be presenting its report on Iraq to the Congress.

-- September 21st
   Iraq Moratorium www.iraqmoratorium.org

-- September 22 - 29
   Encampment in Washington DC September 22-29 September 29th, march from the Capitol to the White House
To Find Out How to Get Involved, visit: http://www.codepink4peace.org

HAPPENINGS THAT HAVE HAPPENED

FIRST EARTH SCOUTS GET-TOGETHER

   About a dozen families got together in Walker Park for a Potluck Picnic and introduction to Earth Scouts, Sara Milford explained the mission of Earth Scouts which draws its structure for the United Nations Earth Charter.
   Earth Scouts is meant to empower youth ages 3-13 to learn about the Earth Charter, spread its message, and participate in fun activities that will benefit themselves and the earth.
   Entertainment was provided by “The Singing Froelichs,” with everyone have a chance to sing along.
   After a question and answer period, and a discussion of facilitators’ duties, it was decided to organize a meeting for the newly volunteered adult facilitators. Then the kids had an opportunity to finger paint the globe. If you are interested in finding out more about Earth Scouts, call Sara at 479-799-1890, or 'sara@everydaysimple.org'

THE COST OF WAR
Casualties in Iraq
The Human Cost of Occupation
Edited by Margaret Griffis :: Contact

American Military Casualties in Iraq

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>American Deaths</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3037</td>
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<tr>
<td>Since &quot;Mission Accomplished&quot;(5/1/03) ([the list])</td>
<td>3530</td>
<td>2929</td>
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<tr>
<td>Since Capture of Saddam (12/13/03):</td>
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<td>2731</td>
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<tr>
<td>Since Handover (6/29/04):</td>
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<tr>
<td>Since Election (1/31/05):</td>
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<td>2147</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Wounded</td>
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<td>Total Wounded:</td>
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Latest Fatality August 5, 2007
Page last updated 08/5/07 4:55 pm EDT

Source for Casualties of War: http://www.antiwar.com/casualties/

IRAQI CIVILIAN BODY COUNT
Civilians reported killed by military intervention in Iraq

<table>
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<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
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<tr>
<td>68470</td>
<td>74900</td>
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Source of Iraqi Civilian Body Count: http://www.iraqbodycount.net/

Cost of the War in Iraq

$449,521,920,531 and counting

Source of Cost of War: http://nationalpriorities.org
OMNI SEeks a world free of war and the threat of war, a society with liberty and justice for all, a community where every person’s potential may be fulfilled, an earth restored. Grassroots nonviolence, world peace, human rights, social and economic justice, environmental stewardship protecting species and the Earth.

CONTACT YOUR CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

    Phone: (202) 224-4843  Fax: (202) 228-1371.
  · Fayetteville office: 251-1380
---Senator Mark Pryor: Web Site (see contact link): www.pryor.senate.gov; http://pryor.senate.gov/contact/
    Phone: (202) 224-2353  Fax: (202) 228-0908
  · Main District Office: 500 Pres. Clinton Ave., Suite 401, Little Rock, AR 72201
    Phone: (501) 324-6336 Fax: (501) 324-5320
---Congressman John Boozman, District 3, 12 counties from Benton to Washington
  Lowell office: 479-725-0400. Fax: 479-725-0408, 213 W. Monroe, Suite K, 72745. Stacy McLure, Deputy Chief of Staff (STACEY.McCLURE@MAIL.HOUSE.GOV) Web site (with contact link): http://www.boozman.house.gov/ Boozman’s new office in Lowell is located at 213 West Monroe in Lowell between I 540 and Business 71. To reach that office take Exit 78 off I - 540 and go east. You will be on Hwy 264 which is also West Monroe. The office is in the Puppy Creek Plaza, past the McDonald’s on the right. His suite is in the back of the complex to the left.
  Harrison office: 870-741-6900; 402 N. Walnut, Suite 210, Harrison 72601.