This strange and worrying moment in the history of capitalism presents an opportunity for those engaged in economic justice work. Between a collapsing dollar, soaring fuel costs, the implosion of credit markets and the recent, breathtaking display of rapacity by mortgage lenders and their Wall Street backers, the excesses of corporate capitalism have made repeated headlines. With the flaws and inequities of the present system unusually exposed to public scrutiny, we should take the opportunity — while the civic dialog about the economy briefly widens and financial literacy hits a modest high — to press a much more revolutionary vision of economic justice.

While progressive movements have become adept at identifying institutions, rather than individual motivations, as the primary perpetrators of societal ills like racism and patriarchy, we continue to suppose that a sort of blind worship of mammon is the force that propels the wealth-concentrating trajectory of capitalism. Capitalism certainly makes a virtue of greed, and while it’s easy to point fingers at Wall Street’s brokers and fund managers as the very embodiment of that vice, it was indisputably you and I who — through opening that checking or savings account, or choosing to participate in the retirement plan at work — provided the suits the raw material with which they work (in part, on our behalf, we must add). Complicity in capitalist accumulation runs uncomfortably wide.

Wisconsin cities and small communities were privileged this summer to host the Walkers for Witness Against War in their 450-mile trek across our region. This effort was made to challenge and nonviolently resist our country’s continuing war in - and occupation of - Iraq. The Walk left Chicago on July 12, and will reach St. Paul, MN August 31st, as the Republican National Convention opens.

There have been 10 – 12 core walkers, plus scores of day-walkers joining in. The originating group includes Kathy Kelly (photo - 5th from left) and her colleagues from Voices for Creative Nonviolence www.vcnv.org. We followed their progress through Illinois, Wisconsin, and up the Mississippi River to Minnesota, watching the maps and photos on the WNPJ website www.wnpj.org and with regular e-bulletins from the WNPJ office on their progress. This collaborative project provided benefits for WNPJ – energizing our member groups along the route – and for VCNV, with the Network providing the contacts for hosts and other resources to make this journey possible. Kudos to all!

Thirteen activists were arrested at the gates of Ft. McCoy, August 10th, as they protested the use of the WI National Guard being deployed for wars abroad.

WNPJ – energizing our member groups along the route – and for VCNV, with the Network providing the contacts for hosts and other resources to make this journey possible. Kudos to all!
**REPORT FROM THE WNPJ OFFICE**

*From Judy Miner, Office Coordinator*

Thanks to all our volunteers who have helped recently with literature tabling in Madison and Milwaukee – Barb B., Terry T, Fred B, Chuck, B, Rick G. and Bill C.…and to all the volunteers from across the state who helped make the Pancakes for Peace event a success — at the Midwest Renewable Energy Fair!

The staff at WNPJ has been supporting the work of the “Witness Against War” walkers, en route from Chicago to St. Paul this summer, organized by Voices for Creative Nonviolence. Their voice of peace has been heard across our state. In large cities and small villages. Their trip has highlighted the misuse of the National Guard in military operations overseas. WNPJ is part of a national “Bring Our Guard Home” campaign. Learn how you can get involved, by contacting Steve at outreach@wnpj.org or Todd at todd@ivaw.org.

WNPJ supports the work of our Immigrant Reform member groups, providing yard signs for statewide distribution that read “Immigrants Welcome” and accompanying the activists on the bus to Postville, IA to protest a government raid that swept up more than 400 immigrant workers. And we issued ALERTS about the WI Department of Corrections banning books for prisoners. Learn more from maha@chorus.net.

WNPJ is working with others to coordinate efforts for peaceful resolutions — using diplomacy, not war — with Iran. To learn more, contact Bonnie Block at bbloc@charter.net or Joy First at jsfirst@tds.net.

Other projects: 1) Our WNPJ website has been upgraded! See a difference at www.wnpj.org? Thanks to several donors who have helped pay for this expensive and necessary upgrade. 2) Our WNPJ BOARD RETREAT in August focused on RACISM, with an intensive workshop provided by Groundwork and experienced trainers, Marilyn Miller, Barb Munson, Tom McGrath, and Carol Lukens. The racial diversity survey of WNPJ member groups was at the heart of this workshop. Details will be distributed in a future newsletter. 3) Plans are now being developed for the Fall Assembly in Milwaukee, Oct. 4th—“Want REAL Security? Try Grassroots Organizing!” Look for registration materials as an insert in this newsletter, as well as the proposed 2009 budget and slate of new BOARD members for 2009. WNPJ will be presenting the Peacemaker of the Year 2008 Awards at this Assembly. Join us as we celebrate their work!
If there was an odometer on every apple, bunch of lettuce, or hamburger that shoppers pick up at a supermarket, they would probably be shocked. In an era of peak oil and global food crisis, people may want to get acquainted with the concept of food miles.

A typical U.S. food item now travels 1500 miles from where it is produced to where it is consumed. This represents a 50% increase in food miles since the 1970s, mostly due to the rise of agribusiness and globalization. Much of this mileage is concealed, because the U.S. has yet to implement country of origin labeling (COOL), even though it has now been passed by Congress TWICE as part of the Farm Bill. While it is relatively easy to find out that 80% of all toys sold in the U.S. come from China, it is virtually impossible to find out where food comes from. Such consumer ignorance can be fatal - as demonstrated last year when 20,000 dogs and cats died in the U.S. from Chinese pet food contaminated with melamine, a waste product of the coal industry. After being recalled, this same toxic pet food was still rerouted into livestock feed and ended up on U.S. consumers’ plates anyway. The U.S. has been a food deficit nation for many years now as we import over 13% of what we eat – 260 pounds of food per person per year on average. That’s a lot of grapes from Chile, milk protein concentrate from Ukraine, melons from Madagascar, and frozen jumbo shrimp from Vietnam. The rule is “as cheap as possible” whether conventional or organic - in fact, the U.S. imports ten times as much organic food as it exports.

When food riots broke out in 30 countries this spring and U.S. retailers started rationing staples like rice, not everyone was caught by surprise. World Bank economists and Chicago commodity speculators knew full well that the agrofuel boom would have ripple effects across the global food chain. When half of the U.S. corn crop is being siphoned off into gas tanks thanks to taxpayer subsidies of $1.35 per gallon, one should expect to see egg prices rise 36% in the U.S., tortilla prices jump 60% in Mexico, and bread prices skyrocket 100% in Pakistan. For every 1% increase in world food prices it is estimated another 16 million people become hungry. Food bank demand in the U.S. has already climbed by 20% this year, and according to the USDA there are already 36 million “food insecure” (i.e. hungry) people in the country.

Sadly, these rising food prices do not translate into fairer prices for small family farmers. Instead, the grain giants are reaping record profits: ADM’s profits are up 42%, Cargill 86%. This exploitative

**AN ORCHID TO**

Peace Action – Wisconsin and Vets for Peace who successfully organized against Army recruiters use of a virtual urban warfare game at Milwaukee’s Summerfest. The game allowed festgoers as young as 13 to hop into a Humvee simulator and fire machine guns at life-size people on a computer screen. The Army shut down the game, temporarily, at the request of Summerfest officials.

A coalition led by 9 to 5, the National Association of Working Women, that succeeded in collecting more than 40,000 signatures to place a law mandating paid sick leave for all Milwaukee workers on the November 4, 2008 ballot. Amy Stear, director of 9 to 5 Wisconsin said, “There’s nothing more concrete than being able to vote on your interests. It’s what democracy is all about.”

The members of UNITE HERE Local 229, workers at the Aramark industrial laundry on Madison’s east side, who stood up to union-busting tactics by Aramark management and won decent wage increases as part of a new contract. When Aramark management took a hard line in negotiations, the workers voted unanimously in favor of a strike. The strike threat, combined with strong support from other local unions and WNPJ member group South Central Federation of Labor, forced Aramark management to drop its demands for concessions and agree to real gains for the workers - including a $1,250 bonus in the first year, wage increases of 3 percent in the second year, and 2.5 percent increases in third year of the three-year deal.

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The members of the WI Congressional Delegation (Kind, Ryan, Petri, Sensenbrenner and Senator Kohl) who voted for the Foreign Intelligence Security Act Amendments violating the citizens’ constitutional right to privacy, and providing immunity from lawsuits to major telecommunications corporations that participated in President Bush’s illegal wiretapping program.

Wisconsin Representatives Kind, Kagen and Ryan, who have signed on as cosponsors to a bill, House Concurrent Resolution 362, that calls for a naval blockade of Iran – considered an act of war under international law. Thanks to strong opposition from the public, the bill, originally placed on a fast track for quick approval, has been shunted to the Foreign Relations Committee, and several of the bill’s cosponsors have withdrawn their support.
Calendar for September and October, 2008

9/6 Sat All Day Fighting Bobfest - Baraboo. At the Sauk County Fairgrounds. Keynote speakers include: Bill McKibben, Jim Hightower, Phil Donahue, Rep. Gwen Moore, Rep. Tammy Baldwin, among many others. WNPJ will have a table - come find our new yard signs - and volunteer to sit at the table! info@wnpj.org or www.fightingbobfest.org.

9/6 Sat 12 noon – 1 pm Stand for Peace Weekly Vigil – Milwaukee. Capitol and Oakland. All welcome. info@peaceactionwi.org.

9/7 Sun 8am- 4pm Harvesting and Storing Food Workshop – Amherst. $75 At Artha Sustainable Living Center www.arthaonline.com.


9/11 Thurs 7:30 - 9 pm “Speak for Justice: U.S. Veterans & Iraqis Creating the Way Forward.” - Green Bay. Harmony Cafe, 1660 W. Mason St. Co-sponsored by the St. Norbert Abbey Justice and Peace Committee and Harmony Cafe. Meet Iraqi political analyst Raed Jarrar and honorably discharged Iraq War veteran Eugene Cherry to learn about the effects of the Iraq War on civilians and soldiers fighting in Iraq. Speakers brought by the American Friends Service Committee. Contact: Jessica Flores, 312-427-2533, jflores@afsc.org or Steve Herro, 920-337-4345 or steve.herro@snc.edu.


9/14 Sun Returned Peace Corps Volunteers Annual Picnic and General Meeting – Madison. At Tenney Park on East Johnson Street. Contact Char Thompson at chartk@charter.net.

9/14 Sun MFIS Fall Picnic for International Students – Madison. For more than 40 years, MFIS has been hosting a fall “Welcome to Wisconsin” Picnic event for international students. Volunteers needed. 608-213-2598 or jschimek@yahoo.com.

9/17 Wed Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence (WCADV) Annual Luncheon – Madison. Monona Terrace. Commemorate the past 30 years of WCADV’s work and to mobilize others to join them to end domestic violence. www.wcadvo.org/.

9/19 Fri 7 pm Prayer for Peace as part of the Iraq Moratorium - De Pere. St. Norbert’s College, OSJ. Contact: The Peace and Justice Center at (920) 403-3881, www.snc.edu/pjc or pjc@snc.edu.

9/20 Sat 12 – 3 pm Ride for Renewables – Custer. MREA. Ride 15, 30 or 60 mile routes in central Wisconsin. Followed by Harvest Fest. Cost: $30 adults; $10 for kids; free under 13. amy@the-mrea.org.

9/20 Sat 2 pm Harvest Fest – Custer. MREA’s annual Harvest Fest features cider pressing, pumpkin carving, guided tours of the MREA grounds to learn about renewable energy, permaculture, music, local food and bonfire. amy@the-mrea.org.

9/27 Sat Winter Soldier - Madison. Contact todd@ivaw.org.

10/4 Sat. 8:30 – 5 pm WNPJ ASSEMBLY “Want REAL Security? Try Grassroots Organizing”– Milwaukee. Registration - see insert flyer.


10/11 Sat Walk/Run/Eat Event Sponsored by GSA for Safe Schools - Madison. In Warner Park. Contact: 608-661-4141, cindyc@gsaforsafeschools.org; or www.gsaforssafeschools.org/

10/12 Sun 12 noon – 8 pm Pre-Parliament Event of World Religions “Come to the Waters” – Madison. At Edgewood College. http://religst.edgewood.edu/Conferences/Waters08.html. Bob Koshin Hanson, koshin@centurytel.net.

10/19 Sun First Annual Run/Walk for Peace – Milwaukee. Whitnall Park. Sponsored by Peace Action WI. info@peaceactionwi.org.


10/26 Sun 12:30 pm Annual United Nations Dinner – Madison. Monona Terrace. Celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. SPEAKER: Micheline Ishay. Bonnie Block, bbblock@charter.net.
Progress and Challenges on Wisconsin’s Global Trade

Steve Watrous

Wisconsinites have been busy on economic globalization in the past few months, with good news and projects that could use your help. In brief:

§ Pressure is building on Gov. Doyle and other local units of government to stop buying garments from sweatshops.
§ Consumers are buying more fair trade products, the focus of World Fair Trade Day events in Milwaukee and around the state.
§ Support is spreading for national legislation to prevent future “free trade” agreements like the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

On the down side, Wisconsin has lost over 70,600 manufacturing jobs since May 2001. Some of these disappeared to the Southern U.S. or were due to greater worker productivity, but other factories shifted production to low-wage countries. Below are some ways to slow the “off shoring” of Wisconsin jobs.

The Milwaukee Clean Clothes Campaign helped release a new report about U.S. units of government buying from factories that exploit their workers. The report, by the national organization SweatFree Communities (SFC), is titled: “Subsidizing Sweatshops: How our tax dollars fund the race to the bottom, and what cities and states can do,” and is available at www.sweatfree.org/subsidizing. This expose’ of several dismal factories included one of special interest to Milwaukeeans: the Charming Garments factory in China. Five years ago, Milwaukee passed an “Ethical Purchasing” ordinance requiring disclosure from companies wanting to sell garments to the city. The Blauer company’s successful 2003 bid revealed that it would make police uniforms at Charming and pay 62 cents per hour.

The report, based on May 2008 interviews with workers, found that Charming is violating Chinese law with 15 hour shifts, child labor, and unpaid overtime. Charming managers also coach the workers on how to lie to inspectors. Blauer says it has shifted production out of that factory and will complete a new affidavit on where the uniforms are now made. Sweatfree Communities requests that companies not “cut and run” when worker abuses are exposed, but rather work to make the factories into non-sweatshops.

Gov. Doyle, with some prompting, wrote a letter July 12 to SFC declaring, “I am committed to protecting the rights of workers and ensuring safe and humane factory conditions. Subsidizing Sweatshops is a report that all state and local governments must take seriously in our efforts to end human and labor rights violations. We have asked four state contractors to look into whether their suppliers produce sweatshop goods.”

The Milwaukee Clean Clothes Campaign intends to follow up on those contractors’ reports and ask the governor to join the Consortium. The City of Madison has already agreed to do so, and Milwaukee Alder Tony Zielinski said he will urge that city to join. Also, the Milwaukee Area Technical College in June became the fourth unit of government in this area to adopt an anti-sweatshop purchasing policy.

Government purchasing is changing for the better and so are individual consumer preferences. World Fair Trade Day, celebrated May 10, highlighted the growing number of shops that sell some kind of fair trade product.

In Milwaukee, 22 shops participated in the First Annual Fair Trade Crawl. Most took part in the “World’s Largest (fair trade) Coffee Break,” 1,000 fair trade roses supplied by TransFair were sold, and several shoppers won prizes for crawling to at least eight shops. Many of the stores are along Kinnickinnic Ave. near the Bay View Outpost Natural

See Global Trade, page 11
New Economy, from front page

across the land, and even the best-intentioned of us are often implicated.

If we believe justice demands addressing the inequities of the present system, then we’d better look further than simply reordering tax codes to shift more wealth from rich to poor, or empowering those marginalized by capitalism to withstand its perditions, or to flourish by mastering its tools. We must look instead at what might otherwise seem an incidental detail – the money-system we use everyday for procuring our basic necessities.

Capitalism’s most malign deception is that inequity results from the actions of markets, or from supply and demand, or from individual greed. While all of these have their minor roles to play, it is the central bank-based, positive interest-rate money system which fundamentally drives concentration of wealth, turning acquisitiveness from an option to a necessity, setting each of us in competition for money against every other, and coding constant expansion into the economy at every level.

Money is an information-carrying device which human beings invented to measure the value of the goods and services we trade, and to store that value between trades. Because it therefore acts as a sort of language, money’s one essential requirement is that the size and meaning of its units be transparent to all, and invariant across time.

But, while it’s seldom remarked upon, how money is issued affects – and potentially corrupts — the way it measures. Central banks originate all money in capitalist economies, and they do so by loaning it into circulation at interest, mostly for the sort of quotidian purposes that are the stuff of everyday life: housing, education, business start-up, etc. As loan principal, each dollar represents a net debt owed back to the banking system (the dollar, plus some amount of interest), but as money, it conveys the information during its circulation that it is only worth a fraction its face value. In other words, the dollar has a permanent interest-cost attached to it, and every user — from the initial loan recipient forward — has the incentive to try and pass that cost on. What results is the creation of ubiquitous (and generally automatic and unconscious) behavior among users of central-bank money to somehow collect additional value without laboring; this is what compels us to be slaves to price (advantaging the Wal-mart model of production), even if — morally – we’d rather pay those that labor for us a living wage.

It’s also what drives us to invest any idle money we’re able to amass, violating the progressive precept that only labor (not provision of money) creates wealth. In a debt-based monetary system with its chronically “short” money supply, all money has a cost, and any aggregation of money can therefore potentially earn money by being lent out or supplied as equity for a productive enterprise. The financial services industry — which devotes itself to this iniquitous trick of producing more money from less — now accounts for an astonishing 98% (by some estimates) of all daily financial transactions, when currency speculation is added to the money changing hands on the stock, bond and futures markets. No system which permits (much less demands) money be made from money can ever pass muster with a progressive vision of commerce. Only by reclaiming democratic control of money - of the very language of exchange, of its definition of measure - can we create a system of trade, both locally and internationally, which we can guarantee to be non-exploitative.

Somewhat remarkably, we are perfectly free to do this, and several dozen communities in the U.S. have taken the opportunity (thousands of systems operate globally). Whether set-up as electronic credits or paper notes, local currencies are generally denominated in hours-of-labor (usually cross-denominated in the U.S. at $10 or $12/Hour), cannot be lent at interest, and are democratically controlled by their users. Establishing a system is no more complicated than organizing a barter network — individuals and businesses are recruited to become members, a paper currency is printed, and all who join are simply issued a small amount (say 3 Hours worth) to get the money into circulation. The local scrip is then used, and circulates, just like “regular” money.

Local currencies were conceived to supplement national currencies and are issued with the object of expanding local money-supplies to sufficiency. This drives up wages, encourages re-localization of production, shrinks the excess labor pool and redistributes wealth more equitably. Local currencies also present an ideal opportunity to focus a much wider audience on the fundamental problems of capitalism, and they constitute an important step toward re-democratizing society. Because of the world-wide commonality of their denomination (ie., the labor-hour), geographically disparate systems can ideally be linked for development of national and international trade. Most importantly, local currency use ultimately pushes us toward a trading system where an hour of labor in every corner of the world produces an equivalent standard of living, a feat inconceivable under a trade regime based on central-bank currencies and floating exchange rates.

Local currencies are potentially powerful tools, partly because they do their work simply in the course of people spending money. Widespread, well-developed systems around the U.S. could be pulling hundreds of millions of dollars out of chain-stores and permanently re-localizing that spending-power; but this requires a commitment to build a common vision of fair trade at the local level. Madison Hours, south-central Wisconsin’s local currency system, is always looking for volunteers to help further such a vision, both locally and by assisting other communities. They can be contacted at www.madisonhours.org or Rob at 608-257-6729. Madison Hours is a member group of WNPJ.
There is a growing skepticism about the safety of our food system, compelling consumers to seek out alternatives. According to an Associated Press-Ipsos poll, the recent salmonella outbreak linked to contaminated tomatoes has left many Americans reconsidering where they get their food. In the past six months, nearly half of consumers have changed their eating and buying habits because they are afraid they could get sick by eating contaminated food.

Many are turning to farmers markets, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farms, and farm stands to find local food that they can trust.

What is local food, you may ask? Definitions vary, but for most eaters local food means having a connection to the place and the farmers who raise their food. It is fresh, healthy, tasty food that is produced close to home.

Eating within the foodshed
The concept of eating food produced close to home took root in the United States in the 1990s. Farmers markets were going through a renaissance. And new models of connecting farmers directly with consumers were taking hold, including Community Support Agriculture (CSA) farms, where consumers buy shares in a farm in return for weekly or bi-weekly boxes of farm fresh food.

UW-Madison Professor Jack Kloppenburg was among those calling for a new food system. With colleagues, he developed the concept of the “foodshed”. Borrowing from the environmental concept of bioregionalism, the foodshed is based on decreasing the geographical and personal distance between farmer and consumer. The goal is to support local, small-scale producers instead of distant, input-intensive agribusiness.

Wisconsin: Local Food Leader
Wisconsin is well positioned to be a leader in the local food movement. The state boasts the third highest number of farmers markets in the country, with nearly 200 markets spread throughout communities large and small. Wisconsin farmers and food advocates were also among the first in the country to develop CSA farms. Our state is now home to over 70 CSA farms, more than any of our Midwest neighbors.

Local food markets are expanding beyond farmers markets and CSA farms. Farmers with local partners are seeking out new, institutional markets for their locally produced products.

In Dane County, county planners have teamed up with public and private institutions and farmers to increase institutional purchases of produce for local farms. Working with the Badgerland Produce Auction, based in Montello, four institutions in the last six weeks of the auction last year purchased 20,000 pounds of local produce, totaling $12,000. Based on a survey of Dane County institutional buyers, county planners estimate that local food purchases from the auction will rise to 250,000 pounds in 2008.

Agriculture of the Middle
Developing institutional markets for local products can present important new opportunities for farm businesses. Nationally and in Wisconsin, the numbers of small and large-scale farms are increasing, but it is the farms in the middle that are disappearing. These “middle” farms are too large to depend solely on direct marketing and too small to compete on the global market. Accessing larger, locally based markets, such as supermarkets, schools and hospitals, can allow mid-sized farmers to diversify, improve their bottom lines and stay on their land. But getting access to these markets can present some challenges.

Wisconsin lacks key infrastructure in some parts of the state to effectively connect farmers and their products with new, local markets. In Northwest Wisconsin, for example, farmers must go to Minnesota to find a USDA inspected meat facility to process their animals for sale across the border in the Twin Cities. Many parts of the state also lack affordable distribution systems that allow producers to pool product and move it local markets. Additionally, some producers lack access to marketing expertise to help promote their products.

Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin
To address these issues, farmers, industry leaders and food advocates pushed for a new state program to provide technical and financial assistance to deepen local food system development in the state. The new program, called “Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin”, was funded for the first time in the 2007-9 state budget.

Coordinated by the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), “Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin” provides grants and technical assistance for local food initiatives throughout the state. Farmers and business leaders no longer have to reinvent the wheel when it comes to developing local food systems that work.

The “Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin” program goal is to shift 10 percent of Wisconsin’s $20 billion annual food expenditures to locally produced food. It is an ambitious goal, but a needed one. By developing stronger linkages between farmers and eaters, we can strengthen our economy and work to improve our health.

For more information on the “Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin” program, please go to: http://datcp.state.wi.us/mktg/business/marketing/val-add/direkmtg/blbw.jsp or contact Teresa Cuperus with DATCP: 608-224-5101

Jeanne Merrill
Jeanne Merrill is a resident of Troy Gardens Cohousing Community, an urban agriculture cohousing community on the Northside of Madison, WI.
scenario is not just limited to the farmer - it pervades the entire food chain, from the undocumented farm worker, to the non-unionized meatpacker, to the part-time minimum wage cashier. For every dollar spent on an apple at Walmart, only 4 cents go to the apple picker and 7 cents to the apple farmer, compared to 68 cents for the mega retailer.

Even in a farm rich state like WI fresh local food can be very hard to find. Taxpayer subsidies discriminate against family farmers and distort what’s “profitable” to raise. The result is that many vegetables, fruits, and grass-fed animals are economically marginalized in favor of just a few commodity crop monocultures that mostly feed ethanol plants, factory farms, and junkfood makers. In WI, for example, over half of ALL cropland is now devoted to just two crops - corn and soy - with most of that being nutritionally inferior low quality genetically engineered varieties. Even in Dane County, which is home to 279 dairy farms, only a few are organic. Organic milk is trucked into Madison from as far away as Colorado.

In 2007 Sen. Lassa (D- Stevens Point) introduced the Buy Local Buy Wisconsin bill with the admirable goal of shifting 10% of the state’s consumer food dollars back into the hands of WI family farmers. Wisconsinites may spend $20 billion annually on food, but when 98% of that amount goes towards out-of-state foodstuffs there is no local economic multiplier effect. Unfortunately, Gov. Doyle only budgeted $600,000 over two years for the Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin bill - less than what a single factory farm can receive in herd expansion grants from the state.

Thankfully, many people help themselves to re-localize their food/farm economies. These grassroots efforts fall under the broader theme of food sovereignty - a concept coined back in 1996 by Via Campesina, the largest umbrella organization for farmers, farmworkers, pastoralists, hunter/gatherers, fishers, and foresters in the world. Food sovereignty valorizes common sense principles of democracy, cultural integrity, and stewardship, with people determining for themselves at the local level just what they plant, what animals they raise, what type of agriculture occurs, and what they will eat for dinner.

To give but a few U.S. examples of food sovereignty in action: there are now more than 3,700 farmers markets, twice the number in 1994; over 9 million acres are protected from development through 1,500 landtrusts; there are over 1000 community supported agriculture (CSA) operations, directly providing fresh food from farmers to eaters each week throughout the growing season; there are over 400 farm to school projects, getting healthy local food back into cafeterias, as well as over 30 local food policy councils that are reasserting democratic control over agriculture. Millions of people in the U.S. are engaged in various forms of agricultural civil disobedience, whether buying fresh raw milk direct from dairy farmers or keeping unregistered livestock in defiance of the National Animal Identification System (NAIS).

Wisconsin is high on food sovereignty activity. For instance, the Oneida Tsyunhekwa Project is rediscovering the benefits of “Three Sisters” (squash, corn, beans) gardens, while the Ho Chunk nation has done the same with its bison herd. Dane County boasts the largest farmers market in the U.S., with over 10,000 people converging each Saturday to support hundreds of vendors and keep millions of dollars in the local food/farm economy. The fastest growing segment of the state’s dairy industry is now organic and/or grass-based, led in large part by the Amish and other unconventional farmers. Hundreds of people in Madison now have backyard chickens and fresh eggs daily. Drumlin Community Garden on Madison’s southside is gaining more and more public support in its David vs Goliath struggle with the Alexander Company to defend urban agriculture from encroaching sprawl - in this case a taxpayer subsidized luxury hotel complex.

Being able to grow and enjoy healthy affordable nutritious food from your own bioregion should be a right, not a privilege. By bringing together the buy local, fair trade, slow food, and organic movements, we can restore community-based agriculture that puts people before profit.

John Peck - co-chair of WNPJ & director of Family Farm Defenders familyfarmdefenders@yahoo.com.

Making the health connection

Our food travels an average of 1,500 miles from farm to plate and much of our food is highly processed. To support consumers in eating more fresh, locally produced whole foods, health insurance companies are getting into the business of food.

Physicians Plus, the Madison-based health insurance company, was the first in the country to offer families a cash rebate of $200 to go towards their CSA farm subscription. Now 4 insurance companies and HMOs in the Madison area offer some kind of cash incentive for their members to sign up for a fresh box of weekly or bi-weekly produce. For more information go to: http://www.macsac.org/rebates.html.

Kaiser Permanente, the large HMO based in California, sponsors farmers markets in its hospital parking lots. Started in 2003 in Oakland, CA by Dr. Preston Maring, the hospital market became an instant success with hospital staff, patients and visitors taking advantage of easy access to fresh produce. Kaiser now hosts farmers markets at 25 of its hospitals in 6 states. For more information go to: http://www.pps.org/markets/info/market_profiles/food_insecurity/kaiser.
**Bits & Peaces**

**Colombia Support:** When Presidential Candidate John McCain visited Colombia at the end of June, he commented that all was well with the Government’s War on Drugs. But in the name of the War on Drugs, much indigenous land in southern Columbia is being fumigated—destroying the livelihood of indigenous people who grow basic food crops such as plantain, corn, cassava, and rice. The toxic fumes also cause major health problems, forcing people to leave the land—which may indeed be the intended purpose of the fumigation policy. The Embera-Chami people have vowed to resist. For more on the human rights abuses in Colombia, see the Spring 2008 issue of *Action on Colombia*, the newsletter of the Colombia Support Network, csn@igc.org.

**In the Nation:** Up to the first quarter of 2008, the government has spent more than $522 billion on the invasion and occupation of Iraq, with another $70 billion already allocated for 2008.

With just the amount of the Iraq occupation budget of 2007, $138 billion, the government could instead have provided Medicaid-level health insurance for all 45 million Americans who are uninsured. What’s more, we could have added 30,000 elementary and secondary schoolteachers and built 400 schools in which they could teach. And we could have provided basic home weatherization for about 1.6 million existing homes, reducing energy consumption in these homes by 30 percent.

But the economic consequences of the Iraq occupation run even deeper than the squandered opportunities for vital public investments. Spending on war is also a job killer. Every $1 billion spent on a combination of education, healthcare, energy conservation and infrastructure investments creates between 50 and 100 percent more jobs than the same money going to war. Taking the 2007 Iraq budget of $138 billion, this means that the opportunity to create upward of 1 million jobs was lost.

For more on the myth— that war is good for the economy—see the article by Robert Pollin and Heidi Garrett-Peltier, in *The Nation*, March 18, 2008. http://www.alternet.org/story/79988/

**IRAQ VETS, STUDENTS WORK TOGETHER FOR WISCONSIN “WINTER SOLDIER”**

Members of Iraq Veterans Against the War, including WNPJ’s Todd Dennis and students with UW-Madison’s Campus Antiwar Network are joining together to organize a Wisconsin version of IVAW’s “Winter Soldier” hearings.

The original Winter Soldier hearings, organized during the Vietnam war by Vietnam Veterans Against the War, drew their name from a quote by American founding father Thomas Paine, who said, during the darkest days of the American revolution, “These are the times that try men’s souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands by it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman.”

Iraq Veterans Against the War followed in this tradition by organizing their own Winter Soldier hearings at Silver Spring, Md. on the 5th anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Iraq, bringing together dozens of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans to give eyewitness testimony of their experiences as an occupying army.

Since then, regional Winter Soldier hearings have been organized, the most successful being an event in Seattle that drew over 800 people. Wisconsin vets and students hope to follow this example, and are working to build public interest and support for hearings to be held at the UW-Madison campus in September. To help with the organizing, or for more information about Winter Soldier, please contact Todd at: todd@ivaw.org.
Peace and Justice Resources

The movie, The War On Democracy, by John Pilger, examines the false democracy that comes with western corporations and financial institutions. It is the story of the people of Latin America who have begun a mighty political movement, reclaiming concepts distorted by corporatism. They are defending the most basic human rights in a war being waged against all of us. In The War On Democracy, the camera sweeps across the Andes in Bolivia to the highest and poorest city on earth, El Alto, then follows Juan Delfin, a priest and a taxi driver, into a cemetery where children are buried. Bolivia has been asset-stripped by multinational companies, aided by a corrupt elite. In this epic story described by one man, you will see the people of Bolivia stand up, expel the foreign consortium that took their water resources, as the camera pans across a giant mural that Juan Delfin painted. This is cinema in its finest form, a moving mural that Juan Delfin painted. As a progressive group, FAIR believes that structural reform is needed to break up the dominant media conglomerates, establish independent public broadcasting and promote strong non-profit sources of information.

Gaveling Down the Rabble: How ‘Free Trade’ is Stealing Our Democracy, by Jane Anne Morris, Apex Press, ISBN13: 978-1-891843-39-6, Copyright 2008, 200 pp. Price: $18.95 - www.gavelingdowntherabble.org. In “Gaveling Down the Rabble”, author/activist Jane Anne Morris explores a century and a half of efforts by corporations to subvert local authorities and the courts to undermine local democracy in the United States by using a “free trade” model. It was that very model that was later adopted globally by corporations to subvert local attempts at protecting the environment and citizen and worker health. Jane Anne Morris is a corporate anthropologist with a Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Texas.

The BBC reported startling economic equality figures in a recent documentary: the top 200 wealthiest people in the world control more wealth than the bottom 4 billion. The United States is the most economically stratified society in the western world. As THE WALL STREET JOURNAL reported, a recent study found that the top .01% or 14,000 American families hold 22.2% of wealth - the bottom 90%, or over 133 million families, just 4% of the nation’s wealth. This statement from the BBC was one of the introductions to Bill Moyer’s Journal interview of June 13, 2008 with Steven Fraser, author of Wall Street, America’s Dream Palace. Both the book and the interview give insights into our money culture and the widening gap between rich and poor. The book is published by Yale University Press, April 2008, ISBN-13: 9780300117554; the interview is available at http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/06132008/profile2.html.

Years before Phil Gramm was a McCain campaign adviser and a lobbyist for a Swiss bank at the center of the housing credit crisis, he pulled a sly maneuver in the Senate that helped create today’s subprime meltdown. David Corn explains the deregulation fiasco in Mother Jones, May 28, 2008, www.motherjones.com/news/feature/2008/07/foreclosure-phil.html. An interview of David Corn by Amy Goodman can be read/heard/seen in www.Democracynow.org.

Dr. Peggy Wireman, a WNPJ member, has just published Connecting the Dots: Government, Community and Family. The book includes a foreword by John Nichols Washington correspondent for The Nation, and carries recommendations from Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin and Lt. Governor Lawton. As one reviewer comments: “an essential tool for all of us committed to building community...a clear blueprint for building stronger communities and families...chapter on race, class, age and ethnicity is a must read for practitioners and students.” Dr. Wireman is available to talk to member organizations or hold a book signing in local bookstores or libraries. She can be contacted at wireman1234@sbcglobal.net. The book, published by Transaction Publishers can be ordered through your local bookstore or directly from the publisher. An interview by John Colbert with Dr. Wireman on the fate of the working family can be downloaded from Peggy’s website www.connectingdots.us.

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities http://www.cbpp.org is one of the nation’s premier policy organizations working at the federal and state levels on fiscal policy and public programs that affect low- and moderate-income families and individuals. Its research and analysis informs public debates over proposed budget and tax policies and helps ensure that the needs of low-income families and individuals are considered in these debates. It also develops policy options to alleviate poverty. The Center’s materials are used by policymakers and non-profit organizations across the political spectrum, as well as by journalists from a variety of media outlets.

Vital in the final sprint towards the elections is Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting, FAIR, http://www.fair.org, the national media watch group. It has been offering well-documented criticism of media bias and censorship since 1986. FAIR advocates for greater diversity in the press and scrutinizes media practices that marginalize public interest, minority and dissenting viewpoints. As an anti-censorship organization, it exposes neglected news stories and defends working journalists when they are muzzled.

http://articles18236.htm
Global Trade, from page 5

Foods Cooperative, but they stretch from Four Corners of the World on the west side to Brewing Grounds for Change on the east side.

The organizing group, the Milwaukee Fair Trade Coalition, was formed a year ago when Milwaukee became an official “Fair Trade Town,” part of a movement that started in Europe and growing in the U.S. This group and others around the state are already planning for Fair Trade Month activities in October (more at www.milwfairtrade.org).

One reason local governments have taken the initiative on fair trade and anti-sweatshop ordinances is to respond to harmful “free-trade” policies enacted at the national level. NAFTA, the World Trade Organization, and many smaller pacts benefit global corporations like Blauer and General Electric while hurting the average citizen and the environment. The Bush administration is trying to pass a similar agreement with Colombia before leaving office.

The upcoming presidential election will be something of a choice on trade policy, with McCain as a strong “free” trader and Obama making critical remarks about the old trade model. But regardless of who wins the presidency, fair traders hope to pass the Trade Reform, Accountability, Development and Employment (TRADE) Act, probably next year. Written after discussions with several grassroots groups, this bill presents a progressive vision of what a good trade agreement must and must not include.

The Act requires review and renegotiation of agreements like NAFTA, and sets requirements concerning affordable medicines, government procurement, food and product safety. Supporters say trade and investment are not ends unto themselves, but must serve as means for achieving societal goals such as economic justice, basic human rights, healthy communities and environmental well-being.

The Wisconsin Fair Trade Coalition is working to oppose the Colombia bill and to support the TRADE Act. Already, Sen. Feingold and Reps. Moore, Baldwin and Kagen have signed on as co-sponsors (more about this legislation at www.wisconsinfairtrade.org).

Wisconsin groups have been active and successful on several fair trade fronts. Consumer buying and voting preferences have changed for the better, and big breakthroughs are possible, but a just world economy won’t come about automatically. We could use a few more change agents.

Steve Watrous, active with the Milwaukee Clean Clothes Campaign and Milwaukee Fair Trade Coalition, watrous@uwm.edu.
Grandmothers for Peace–Superior
Global Connections Team:ELCA
Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools
Franciscan Sisters of Mary–Madison
First United Methodist Church, Church Fellowship of Reconciliation–Fox
East Timor Action Network–Madison
Driftless Community Radio–Viroqua
Democratic Socialists of America–
Dells Country Progressive V oices
DeKalb, IL Interfaith Network for P&J
Coulee Progressives–LaCrosse
Concerned Citizens of Stevens Point
Concerned Citizens of Newport, Inc.–
Community Action on Latin America–
Colombia Support Network–Madison
Code Pink–Boscobel
Coalition for Wisconsin Health–
Code Pink–Boscobel
Colombia Support Network–Madison
Community Action on Latin America–
Concerned Citizens of Newport, Inc.–
Wisconsin Dells
Concerned Citizens of Stevens Point
Congregation of St Agnes, Justice Peace
& Ecology Office–Fond du Lac
Coalee Progressives–LaCrosse
Dale Heights Presbyterian Church
Outreach Committee–Madison
DeKalb, IL Interfaith Network for P&J
Dells Country Progressive Voices
Democratic Socialists of America–
Madison Area
Driftless Community Radio–Viroqua
East Timor Action Network–Madison
ELCA Greater Milwaukee Synod–Peace
and Justice Committee
Family Farm Defenders–Madison
Fellowship of Reconciliation–Fox
Valley Chapter
First Cong Church, UCC-Menomonee
First United Methodist Church, Church
and Society Committee–Madison
Fox Valley Peace Coalition–Menasha
Franciscan Sisters of Mary–Madison
Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools
Global Connections Team:ELCA
Grandmothers for Peace–Superior

WNPJ ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS
(New Members in bold)

Greater Wisconsin Committee -
Madison
Great Lakes Region Social Concerns
Network
Habiba Foundation–Janesville
Hill Connections–Chaseburg
Hiroshima-Nagasaki A-bomb Exhibition
Committee – Madison
Interfaith Coalition for Worker Justice -
Madison
Interfaith Justice and Peace Group–La
Crosse
International Committee for the Peace
Council–Madison
Iraq Veterans Against the War - Madison
Jewish Voices for Peace - Madison
Juneau County Peace Committee–
Mauston
Kickapoo Peace Circle–Viroqua
Lakeshore Peacemakers–Manitowoc
Loaves and Fishes Catholic Worker–
Duluth
Lutheran Human Relations Association -
Milwaukee
Lutheran Office of Justice and Peace–
LaCrosse
Madison Areatao Sister City Project
Madison Area Peace Coalition
Madison Area War Tax Resistance
Madison Buddhist Peace Fellowship
Madison Friends of International
Students
Madison Friends Meeting–Peace &
Social Concerns Committee
Madison Hours Co-op
Madison Infoshop
Madison Mennonite Church
Madison/Rafah Sister City Project
Madison Unitarian YouthMUUYACM
Madison-area Urban Ministry
Marquette University Center for
Peacemaking - Milwaukee
Mary House–Wisconsin Dells
Midwest Renewable Energy Association-
Custer
Miracles Prisoner Ministry - WI Dells
National Campaign for Nonviolent
Resistance–Madison
National Peace Foundation–Eau Claire
Northland Anti-War Coalition -
Duluth
Northwoods Peace Fellowship–Wausau
Nukewatch–Lubb

One Wisconsin Now - Milwaukee
PAX Christi–Madison
Peace Action Wisconsin–Milwaukee
Peace Economics–Madison
Peace North–Drummond
People for Peace–Waupeca
Perergrine Forum–Madison
Physicians for Social Responsibility–
Madison
Plowshare Center–Waukesha
Portage Area Peace Seekers
Preserve Our Climate–Madison
Progressive Forum–Washingt Island
Progressive Voices–Baraboo
Racine Coalition for Peace and Justice
Racine Dominicans Justice Outreach
Rainbow Bookstore Cooperative–
Madison
Rapids Citizens for Peace - Wisconsin
Rapids
Red Cedar Peace Initiative–Menomonee
Retained Peace Corps Volunteers of
Wisconsin–Madison
Rock County Citizens for Peace–
Janesville
Rockford Peace and Justice Action–IL
Rock Ridge Community–Dodgeville
Rock River Peace Group - Ft.Atkinson -
Whiter
Rock Valley Fellowship of
Reconciliation–Janesville
Saint Bede Monastery–Eau Claire
St. Norbert Abbey Justice and Peace
Committee–DePere
St. Norbert College, Peace &Justice
Center–DePere
Sauk Prairie Area Peace Council
School of Americas Watch–Madison
School Sisters of Notre Dame–Elm
Grove
SEIU District 1199W–Madison
Sinsinawa Dominicans–Sinsinawa
Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi–
Milwaukee
Sisters of St. Francis of the Holy Cross–
Green Bay
Sisters of St. Joseph, TOSF
Sisters of the Divine Savior–Milwaukee
Social Justice Center - Madison
Socialist Party of Wisconsin–Milw.
Socialist Party of Wl–So. Central Local
–Madison

SOS Senior Council–Madison
South Central Federation of Labor,
AFL-CIO–Madison
Southern Lakes Citizens for Peace–
Elkhorn
SW Grassroots Citizens for Peace–
Dodgeville
The Madison Institute
Union of la Trabajadores Inmigrantes -
Madison
United Methodist Federation for Social
Action, WI Chapter - LaCrosse
United Nations Association–Dane Co &
Milwaukee Chapters & Wisconsin
Division
UW-Milwaukee Peace Studies Program
University United Methodist Church–
Madison
Veterans for Peace–Chapters #25-
Madison, #153 -Cable, # 80 -
Superior, & Sheboygan
Voces de la Frontera - Milwaukee
Watertown Peace and Democracy
Waukesha Catholic Worker
WAVE Educational Fund–Milwaukee
Waymeet Quaker Center–Richland
Center
Winds of Peace–Projects in Vietnam
Winnebago Peace and Justice Center–
Oshkosh
Wisconsin Books to Prisoners Project
Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic
Violence
Wisconsin Coalition to Normalize
Relations with Cuba–Milwaukee
Wisconsin Community Fund
Wisconsin Coordinating Council on
Nicaragua
Wisconsin Council of Churches–Peace
& Justice Committee
Wisconsin Democracy Campaign
Wisconsin Greens
WI Impeachment/Bring Our Troops
Home–Madison
Wisconsin Resources Protection
Council–LaCrosse
Wisconsin Women’s Network
Women in Black - Sauk City Bridge
Women’s International League for Peace
and Freedom–Madison
Workers’ Rights Center Board -
Madison
Yahara Friends Meeting–Monona