

# TROUBADOUR

The Newsletter of St. Francis House, New London, Connecticut

Pentecost 2004

Vol. 6, No. 1



## Celebrating Five Years in New London

IN JUNE 1999 WE (Anne and Emmett, and our children, Nate and Sarah) left a comfortable life in Stone Mountain, Georgia, where Emmett was rector of St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church. We sold our home there and bought a rundown Victorian at 30 Broad Street in New London with money from the sale and a bridge loan from friend and mentor Chuck Matthei of Equity Trust in Voluntown, CT. Now we've finished the renovations on St. Francis House (and also the house next door at 32 Broad Street, again with financial assistance from Equity Trust), and Anne is involved in helping the Hartford Catholic Worker buy the Voluntown Peace Farm for their work. Folks there helped us get started in 1999, by example and concrete assistance. A lot of circles are coming full this Pentecost, and the Holy Spirit is the artist drawing them all together.

June 2004 marks five years in New London and provides an occasion for reflection on our life here and to celebrate with friends far and near the grace of God that has brought us thus far. The celebration will last for three days, beginning with Friday night clarification of thought on **June 18. Fr. Emmett** will lead the conversation on the topic: **Community: The New Wine of the Kingdom of God.** As usual, we begin with prayer and Bible Study at 5:30 p.m., serve supper at 6:00 and have conversation from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

The **big party** will be **Saturday, June 19, from 12 noon to 5 p.m.** in Williams Park next door to the new house at 32 Broad Street. There will be food supplied by our neighbors at 127 Hempstead Street, the senior housing tower block, music by **John Scott** and his friends, tours of both houses, tables to share with many of the groups and organizations we've worked with over the five years – **Community United for Renaissance in Education (CURE), Community Gardens of New London, the Homeless Coalition, Southeastern Connecticut Peace & Justice Network**, among others – and general good fellowship, culminating with **"Mass on the Grass"** in Williams Park at 4 p.m.

**Sunday, June 20** will be Emmett's last Sunday at St. James Episcopal Church, where he served as part-time priest associate for five years. All are welcome, as always, to all of these events. Whether the meeting, the party, or Sunday worship, all are venues in which we try to live up to Saint Augustine's advice: ***Sing alleluia, and keep on walking!***

Anne Scheibner & Emmett Jarrett, TSSF



### A Word of Welcome

Welcome to the pages of the **Troubadour**. This issue is the first since the Fall 2003. Usually we do one in the Spring followed by Summer and then a Fall or Winter issue.

The **Troubadour** has evolved over the last five years along with St. Francis House. This issue represents the first in which a majority of the contributions come from members of the extended St. Francis House community - Board member Annie Brown, regular volunteer Hope Norris, daily Morning Prayer participant Mardie Chapman, site manager Arthur Lerner and newly accepted resident Br. John George.

**The Urban Networker** is the centerfold because St. Francis House serves as the headquarters for the Episcopal Urban Caucus. **The Networker** existed early in the life of the EUC and has been resurrected as part of the contribution of St. Francis House to furthering communication among members of the EUC between annual assemblies. St. Francis House has offered hospitality to the EUC for the last four years and will complete its five year commitment with next year's Assembly in Newark.

This issue contains a wide range of work from the last 9 months. The main reason we are late with the first issue for this year is that Emmett's 93-year old mother Virgie Jarrett was run over on Palm Sunday and has been in the hospital ever since. She is improving and our thanks to all of you who have upheld her and her family in prayer. Please continue to do so! Emmett has been basically commuting to the hospital in Alexandria, Louisiana and is there even as I write.

This issue comes with prayers for renewing times for all of you this summer!

*Peace, Anne*



### WE DID IT!

#### First "Come and See" Presentation Held in Washington, DC

Old friends and new friends responded to the invitation from St. Francis House to "come and see." On a bright and sunny afternoon, on April 30, people braved the traffic and gathered at the Howard University School of Social Work for a reception, fellowship and power point presentation on the purpose and *raison d'être* of St. Francis House and on the progress, both spiritually and physically, made toward fulfilling its mission to be a place of hospitality for all God's children. Annie Brown and Bob Cosby, members of the Board from the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, were pleased to host the gathering at Howard University School of Social Work. It seemed very apropos that we would have the gathering there. St. Francis is not a settlement house in the social work tradition, but it embodies the spirit of that tradition and the mission of Howard University School of Social Work.

Emmett and Anne were there to shepherd the discussion and emphasize how far St. Francis had come from the dream to the reality. The pictures taken by Anne for the scrapbooks on the tables and for the power point presentation told in living color the transformation of the physical structures and the transformation of the lives of those who have come in contact with the spirit of St. Francis House. Far flung friends and some from close by sent notes and made pledges of support or financial contributions to the life and work of St. Francis House. This gathering, the first of other gatherings to be held outside of New London, was a way to say thanks to

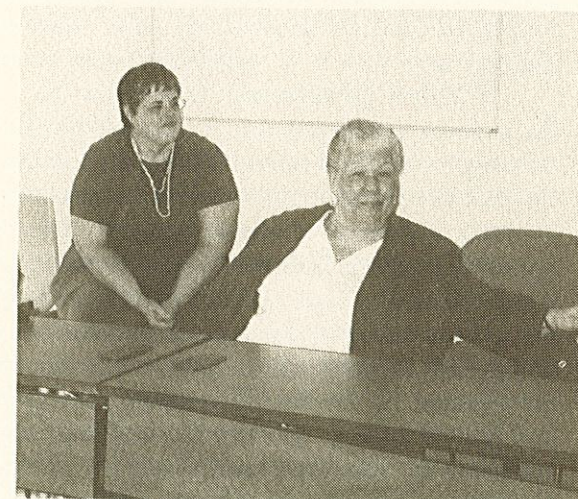
old friends and supporters of St. Francis and to bring new friends into the fold.

Many thanks to Karen and Dick Marks, and to Anna Clark, board members and friend of St. Francis House, for their assistance with the reception; to Dr. Ruby Gourdine, a volunteer from the School of Social Work, and to the administration of the School of Social Work for providing the space accommodations for this event.

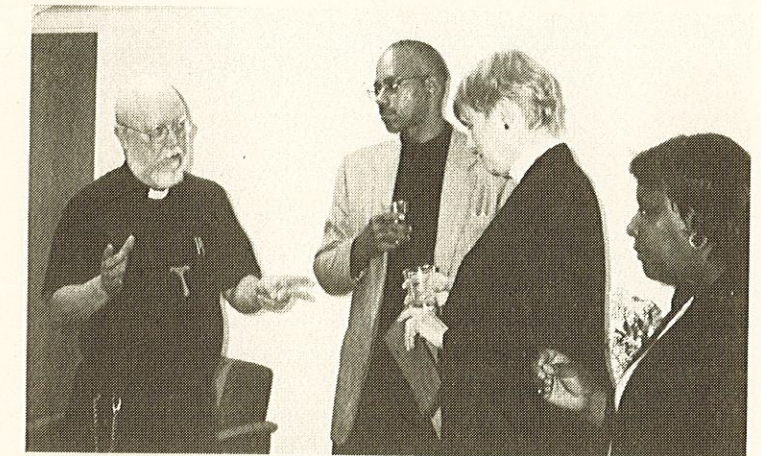
It was on the loveliest of spring days that this gathering was held - a gathering truly worthy of the spirit of St. Francis.



Annie Brown



SFH board member Karen Marks and Anna Clark enjoy the Story of St. Francis House power point developed by Bob Cosby and Bob and Annie Brown.



Emmett talks with Dr. Robert Cosby (SFH Board member), the Rev. Elizabeth Orens and Dr. Annie Brown at the "Come and See" event at the Howard University School of Social Work.



Above: Pam Moffat, John Rebstock and Terry Doyle converse with Emmett after the power point presentation. Below: Anne shares the St. Francis House notebook with Elizabeth and John Orens and Billie Abraham.





## Eleven Days in January

by Brother John George SSF

For the last four years, I have taken a period of solitude after Christmas and before the semester starts. This year, I was excited to use the Hermitage at St. Francis House for the time. I had a blessed time of prayer and sleep and manual work here in New London.

While being apart, I was excited to see St. Francis House in full swing. Emmett and Anne keep up an amazing pace. This peace and justice center dedicated to St. Francis and honoring the Catholic Worker tradition shows how much a little leaven in the lump can accomplish. They have become a center of witness in this part of New England.

New London is the home of Electric Boat, General Dynamics Corp's submarine building unit, and of the Navy's submarine base. There is a very dynamic collective of people standing for peace. **Cal Robertson** leads a weekly demonstration at the Soldiers and Sailors Monument in downtown New London on Saturdays from noon until 1 p.m. Cal has been doing this for 17 years except when he is in jail for civil disobedience. One of the St. Francis House community joins him. There are also regular demonstrations in front of the plant and the sub base. St. Francis House is an important gathering place for this continuing witness for peace and to end war industries. At the monthly meeting of the Southeastern Connecticut Peace and Justice Network, people organizing Wal-Mart workers meet with people struggling for a more just world trading system meet with people witnessing for peace and ending war industries. St. Francis House becomes a creative catalyst for relationship among activists.

On Wednesday night Emmett and **Rev. Mardie Chapman** are part of the weekly meeting of the New London Homeless Coalition. They have worked with a group of homeless folks as well as **Russ Carmichael** and **George Clarke** to create a dialogue between the City of New



London Social Service providers and those on the street. As a result they have engaged local churches in providing space and have advocated for needed shelter services. Several people are now joining the St. Francis House community for daily Morning Prayer.

Anne is the secretary for **CURE**, a New London education reform group. After several years of relationship building and planning and discussion with the New London Board of Education, a strong multi-racial, multi-lingual organization has been formed, a big step in education work. While I was with them, they were building a community-wide meeting using the local Martin Luther King Day Parade as the as the kickoff.

Anne continues to work for Connecticut land reform and with Community Gardens of New London. She is taking a significant role in assisting the Hartford Catholic Worker in its effort to purchase an historic peace farm in Voluntown, CT. She is also thinking about how to put the St. Francis House community garden to bed and what to plant in the spring. **Arthur Lerner**, another member of the St. Francis House team, is spending the weekend researching seeds. Arthur also serves as project manager and general contractor for renovation of the new building next door to St. Francis House.

This is now the third building on the St. Francis House campus. The original building is a three storey Victorian home that had been broken into rooms for rent and done some time as a "crack house." It is presently home to Otis, the Beagle, Emmett, Anne, Sarah and Nate Jarrett (when Nate is home from college) and Jody, a seminarian doing CPE at the local hospital. It is also the location of the chapel, meeting rooms, and lots of books. The second building is attached to the first and includes the Hermitage, a lovely three room apartment, and an undeveloped apartment planned for use as transitional housing. The new building is next door and also a beautiful Victorian home that was many apartments. When St. Francis House acquired it last year

it was semi-abandoned. Arthur has been working with volunteers and contractors to restore the building. They have now built three beautiful apartments on the second and third floor. Any of these apartments in Manhattan would rent for \$3,500 per month. The plan is to provide space for people who would like to come and join the community permanently or for an extended period. Emmett and Anne are working to raise \$100,000 this year to retire the debt on the buildings.

St. Francis House is located in downtown New London. It is four blocks from the main post office and six blocks to the harbor and shops. It is a block from the major theatre where Emmett and Anne and I heard the Southeastern Connecticut Symphony last Saturday. This Wednesday, the Broadway cast of "Saturday Night Fever" is making a video in the theatre. Even though it has been very cold while I have been here, I have already enjoyed exploring New London.

Lest you think that St. Francis House is all activity, prayer is very central. Morning Prayer from *Celebrating Common Prayer* is prayed together in the chapel daily and Evening Prayer is also observed. The community participates in parishes on Sundays. People come for spiritual direction. The Third Order Principles are read as part of the Office.

During the eleven days I was at St. Francis House, I participated in two community bible studies, both of which took a morning and led us deeply into the connect between scripture and our lives. I also was part of the weekly ecumenical study of Ched Myers's *Who Will Roll Away the Stone*, leading the eight participants from local churches to support one another in our vocations. Last night about 25 people gathered for the biweekly Clarification of Thought. The topic was money and the Christian life. Very interesting and challenging reflection came about how we live with our money and what our options are, being among the richest people on earth. Everyone seems to squirm when asked about how they handle their money.

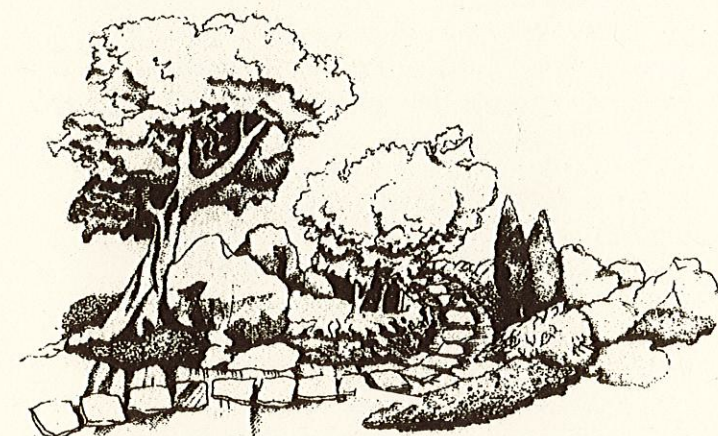
The Spirit is working and faithful people are responding here. Come and see!

**Note** John George Robertson will be a resident of St. Francis House in the fall of 2004.



## Bob Treadwell-Hill

April 2, 1923 – February 15, 2004



~ Make haste to love ~

Bob Treadwell-Hill was a passionate advocate for the poor. Legally blind, his energetic clarity of vision for Community Gardening was a force to be reckoned with and counted on!



## Celebrating Aunt Dorrie

by Mardie Chapman



On March 12, 2004, St. Francis House celebrated Aunt Dorrie's 84<sup>th</sup> birthday. Anne's aunt, adopted by all of us, is the official greeter for events at the House. She sets her box of nametags by the telephone and is a center of calm amid the flow of people between the chapel and the dining room. Often knitting or needlepointing, Aunt Dorrie always has a nametag, a warm word and a smile for everyone who enters. She is also a constant presence when help is needed: stuffing envelopes, checking address labels, sorting food, and answering the phone. Calm and methodical, Aunt Dorrie maintains a cheerful presence that lights up the House.

While Anne, Emmett and Sarah were in New Orleans for Nate's family weekend at Loyola University, the wider St. Francis House community gathered for the party, which included a wonderful potluck dinner, a decorated birthday cake, a helium-filled balloon, and a corsage for the honoree. Two candles, in the shapes of "8" and "4," were deemed safer than 84 candles, and we enjoyed a lights-out singing of the birthday song. Following the dinner, instead of "clarification of thought" in the chapel, we all remained around the dining table to hear Aunt Dorrie talk about her life. The evening was a thought-provoking opportunity to think of the span of history during her 84 years: war and peace, technological advances, and scientific discoveries, all of which she took in stride.

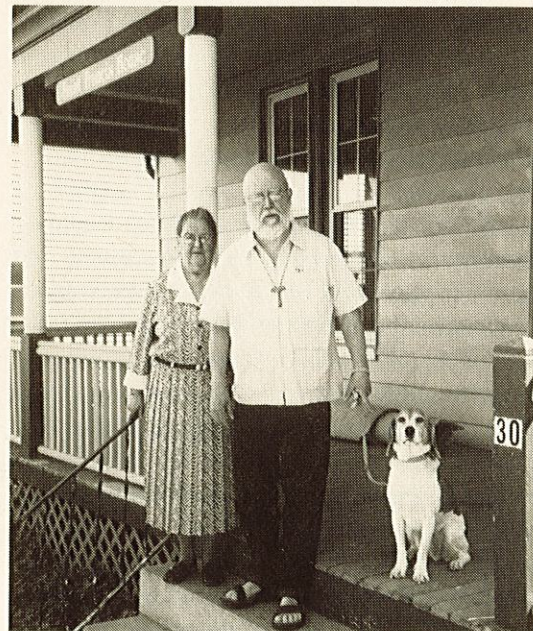
Aunt Dorrie was born in Albert Lea, Minnesota, second daughter of an Episcopal clergy family. The Paulsen family moved frequently. As an adult, Aunt Dorrie, who never married or had children, worked in Boston and in Washington, DC. Most recently, she resided in Peabody, Massachusetts, for 20 years, and moved to New London in 2000 to be closer to her family. She now lives in the Mohican, a former hotel renovated into elegant apartments in the heart of New London, just

two blocks from St. Francis House. When the family is out of town, she entertains Cleo, Sarah's kitty.

Although St. Francis House operates on a Franciscan model, another order, the Benedictines, also practice hospitality. *The Rule of St. Benedict* describes the role of the porter of the monastery, and there are some parallels with Aunt Dorrie's role here at St. Francis House:

*At the door of the monastery, place a sensible old man who knows how to take a message and deliver a reply, and whose age keeps him from roaming about. This porter will need a room near the entrance so that visitors will always find him there to answer them. As soon as anyone knocks, or a poor man calls out, he replies, "Thanks be to God" or "Your blessing, please;" then, with all the gentleness that comes from the fear of God, he provides a prompt answer with the warmth of love.*

We are grateful for the gentleness, the warmth of love and the example of faithfulness that Aunt Dorrie shares with us all.



Aunt Dorrie, Emmett and Otis on the porch at St. Francis House.



# THE URBAN NETWORKER

Summer 2004

## A WORD OF HOPE AND CHALLENGE

by Emmett Jarrett, TSSF

At the closing business meeting of the 24<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the Episcopal Urban Caucus in Baltimore on Saturday, February 21, 2004, the Rev. Michael Hopkins proposed, and the Assembly unanimously adopted, the following resolution, entitled **A Word of Hope and Challenge**:

*Resolved, that the 24<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the Episcopal Urban Caucus proclaims a word of hope and challenge to the Episcopal Church at this particular time in our history. The word of hope is that Jesus is alive and in our midst speaking the good news. Do not be afraid. In a fearful world and a fearful church this message must be clear. The word of challenge is to live out of hope and not out of fear. A world in desperate need does not need our fear. It needs God's hope. The hope among us must not be articulated in ways that marginalize or denigrate anyone. The mission of the church includes all of the church's people and all of its life, including our disagreements. Indeed, how we disagree with one another is an important witness to the world. We call on all Episcopalians to move forward in mission and ministry with hope, for God is among us and calling us to transform the world.*

*And be it further resolved that the EUC board commit to make this proclamation of hope and challenge widely available to the church at large as quickly as possible – including but not limited to distribution to bishops and deputies, The Witness, Every Voice Network, and our various organizational websites and listservs.*

I personally promised Michael that I would undertake to make sure the distribution required was accomplished, and I believe that has been done. All of the resolutions are on the EUC website – [www.episcopalurbancaucus.org](http://www.episcopalurbancaucus.org) – and our network is hard at work implementing the resolution. I think it is an incredibly important statement, and one I am proud the EUC has made.

In light of this Resolution, readers of **The Urban Networker** will be happy to know that the 25<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the Episcopal Urban Caucus will be held in **Newark, NJ**. The dates of the Assembly are **February 23-26, 2005** and the theme will return to our founding principles to focus on **American Cities: In Need of Intensive Care**. The local and national planning groups are hard at work on the Assembly, and the Board's *Task Force on the Future* is preparing for a special Board meeting in Chicago this August to make decisions about the future life of the Caucus. Stay tuned.





## LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

My dear friends in Christ – Mis amigos en Cristo,

Thanks for your kindness in electing me as your President even though I had to be absent from the Board meeting due to prior commitments in my Diocese of Connecticut. I feel very honored and I shall do my best to honor your trust. My hope and prayers are that we may work closely together in advancing the ministry and mission of the EUC as we discern new directions and initiatives God is calling us to move.

I have had a couple of phone conversations with RPM, our former President. He kindly briefed me as to matters discussed at the Board meeting and offered his wise advice as to how to proceed from here on. Also, I have met in person with Emmett and Anne, our Coordinators, at St. Francis House. It is good that they are nearby and so accessible. Their gracious support means a lot to me as I discharge the responsibilities of the office as your President.

With regard to the appointed Task Force to look into the future of EUC, my sense is that it should move forward immediately. I have asked Task Force members Jane Gould and Terrence Taylor to serve as Chair and Co-Chair respectively. I believe they represent a balanced view and bring a fresh perspective in looking into the issues and concerns that we have ahead of us. I encouraged them to work closely with Nell Gibson, who served as Consultant and provided us with a fine report. Also, they are to seek the input from our Coordinators, Emmett and Anne. Task Force members will communicate electronically and via

telephone conferences to be arranged by Terrence and Jane.

The date for our next Assembly has been set for February 23-26, 2005 in Newark, New Jersey. Local arrangements are being made with the assistance of RPM and others.

Let us keep us in contact. I welcome your advice and support.

All my blessings! ¡Todas mis bendiciones!

In Christ,  
+ Wilfrido Ramos-Orench  
President



## Episcopal Urban Caucus TASK FORCE ON THE FUTURE

**What is our vision?  
What is our task?  
Who are our members?  
What steps do we need to take  
now to make a difference  
tomorrow?**

**Send your ideas & suggestions  
to the Task Force co-chairs”  
The Rev. Jane Gould  
[jgould@andover.edu](mailto:jgould@andover.edu)  
The Rev. Terrence Taylor  
[ttaylor@diosf.org](mailto:ttaylor@diosf.org)  
or mail to EUC, PO Box 2247  
New London, CT 06320-2247**

## CARTA DE NUESTRO PRESIDENTE

Mis estimados amigos en Cristo,

Muchas gracias por su voto de confianza en elegirme Presidente aunque tuve que ausentarme de la reunión de la Junta debido a previos compromisos con mi Diócesis de Connecticut. Esto es un gran honor para mí. Mi compromiso es hacer la mejor labor posible para reciprocitar la confianza puesta en mí. Mis oraciones y mi esperanza es que todos podamos trabajar conjuntamente para la propagación del ministerio y misión del Caucus Episcopal Urbano (EUC) según vayamos discerniendo nuevas direcciones e iniciativas que Dios nos lleve a descubrir.

He tenido par de conversaciones telefónicas con RPM, nuestro anterior Presidente. El muy bondadosamente me ha instruido acerca de asuntos discutidos durante la sesión de la Junta y me ha ofrecido su sabio consejo en cuanto a como proceder de aquí en adelante. También me reuní personalmente con nuestros Coordinadores de St. Francis House, Emmett y Anne. Es muy conveniente tenerlos tan cerca y tan accesibles. Su generoso apoyo significa mucho para mí según voy asumiendo las responsabilidades de Presidente de esta organización.

En cuanto al Comité de Trabajo asignado para investigar y decidir el futuro del ECU, mi opinión es que se debe comenzar a trabajar en ello inmediatamente. Le he preguntado a dos miembros del Comité, Jane Gould y Terrence Taylor que sirvan como Directora y Co-Director respectivamente. Siento que ellos nos darán un balance adecuado y traerán una perspectiva refrescante a los asuntos y preocupaciones que se presenten ante nosotros. Además, les he exhortado a trabajar conjuntamente con Nell Gibson, quien ha servido de Consultora y quien nos ha provisto con un excelente informe. También, ellos consultarán con nuestros Coordinadores, Emmett y Anne. Los

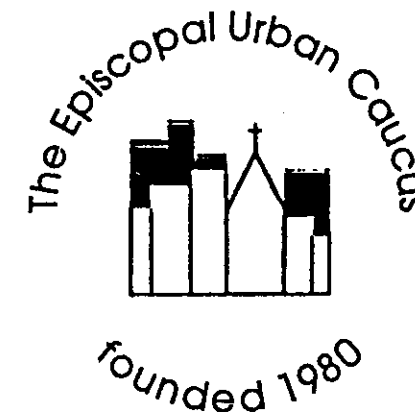
miembros del Comité de Trabajo mantendrán comunicación electrónica y conferencias telefónicas que estarán bajo la coordinación de Terrence y Jane.

La fecha de nuestra próxima asamblea será del 23-26 de febrero en Newark, Nueva Jersey. Se están haciendo arreglos pertinentes con la ayuda de RPM y otros.

Espero que todos podamos mantenernos en comunicación. Su apoyo y sus consejos serán bien recibidos.

¡Todas mis bendiciones!

En Cristo,  
+Wilfrido Ramos-Orench  
Presidente-EUC



**SAVE THE DATES**  
25<sup>th</sup> Assembly  
Episcopal Urban Caucus  
**February 23-26, 2005**  
*American Cities:  
In Need of Intensive Care  
Newark, NJ*

## DEVELOPING SUPPORT FOR URBAN MINISTRY

by Ed Rodman

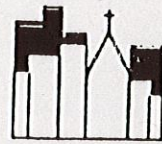
Now that the recent Urban Caucus Assembly has passed, it is important to pick up some of the loose ends that remain for our consideration as the Caucus continues its stated commitment to continue its focus on local expressions of urban ministry while attempting to involve more youth and young adults in that ministry and in the life of the Caucus. One of the high points of the Assembly, for me, was the presentation by the several representatives of national church ministry in areas such as revitalized ethnic desks (new staffing for Black, Asian and Native American ministries), women's ministry, future anti-racism work and the still growing Jubilee Ministries network. When one couples the new energy that this revitalization portends with the million dollar priority of enabling youth and young adult ministry networks, it would be easy to believe that in spite of the ongoing furor surrounding Gene Robinson's consecration and the possibility of same sex civil marriage and the blessing of same sex unions that the Church is doing remarkably well in these important areas. While this is true to some extent, it should not be lost on us that at this moment the National Church has no domestic granting program that supports grass roots urban ministry nor is there a provision of effective tools for engaging the crisis in funding that most local parishes and ministries confront. *What should be done and what is the role of the Urban Caucus?*

One hopeful sign is that during the board meeting following the Assembly, Bishop Wilfrido Ramos was elected president and a task force was empowered to begin to develop a plan for the administrative functions of the Caucus following the Newark Assembly. Such housekeeping matters did not inspire much enthusiasm or concern on the part of those present at the Assembly in Baltimore. The



reality is that the failure to address these mundane matters saps the energy and the resources of the volunteer board and task forces that are charged with carrying out the mandates stemming from the business meeting. I only point this out for the simple reason that a viable Caucus infrastructure is essential if we are to remain a credible force in advocating for the priority of urban ministry in the life of the Church at all levels. This is the first and most important thing that the Caucus can do. The second and equally important action that the board and membership should consider is developing a task force that could begin a needs assessment survey (similar to the one that Nell Gibson did with the board) but focused in this case on the membership and supporters who are actively engaged in ministry, seeking to document the extent of the crisis and the types of support that are needed beyond more money. The third thing that the board should consider is contacting the several seminaries and determining what training if any is available to students or ministers in the vicinity, to help update the skill set of those engaged in urban ministry if they are to be more effective and less stressed in carrying out the work. This latter concern should also involve, where appropriate, ecumenical and interfaith models which are currently at work and could be used to attack some of the larger social justice concerns relative to education, healthcare, housing and the criminal justice system.

The above suggestions begin to build an agenda that a staff officer at 815, provincial networks, and diocesan task forces could be challenged to undertake so that there is an institutional response to these concerns rather than a hit or miss approach which rewards those who are reasonably successful and excludes those who would like to start or are currently suffering great frustration. One outcome of this work could be a celebration of urban ministry at the Newark Assembly where we would have an opportunity to hear from successful practitioners, and recognize their accomplishments, and create a context in



which we can all learn from each other what the new demands are and what some of the possible solutions and supports can be. As you begin to think through the implementation of these suggestions, you can quickly observe why it is important to have a stronger administrative infrastructure so that the tools of modern technology and communication could in fact be employed to garner this information, collate it, and present it in a lively and exciting fashion at the Assembly and beyond. I offer these simple suggestions now so that there may be time for members of the Caucus to step up to the plate and volunteer for this task force and members of the board who are not involved in the planning of the future of the Caucus could take some responsibility for documenting the needs, challenges, and opportunities for urban ministry at all levels of the church's life.

I need not remind any of you that in this election year, in a post 9/11 world, politicians, candidates and the media are continuing to debate the future of this country within limited boundaries that do not reflect the pain and fear of the poor, the alien, the incarcerated and the sick. One way to look at the ministry of the Episcopal Urban Caucus is that now more than ever we are called to be the deacons of the church that bring the needs of the people to attention of the faithful for their sacrificial response.

#### SPECIAL NOTE:

Next year's Assembly in Newark will start during the second week of Lent. In past years the Assembly has been the Wednesday before Ash Wednesday, but next year that date is February 9.

So please note the **February 23-26, 2005** dates for next year's **ASSEMBLY** in Newark and plan accordingly!



See you there!



## SE CT Organizes to Help Save the Voluntown Peace Farm

by Anne Scheibner

Many individuals and religious and secular groups are joining the effort to preserve the 57-acre property known as the "Voluntown Peace Farm" and prevent its sale as a possible development site. The Farm is the current home of Equity Trust whose loan fund program made possible the purchase of both St. Francis House buildings.

Before his death in the fall of 2002, Chuck Matthei, director of Equity Trust, directed the restoration of the 4 major buildings on the property including an 18th century farm house and the A.J. Muste Conference Center. The farm has been the site of war resistance and peace work since the early 1960's.

The Hartford Catholic Worker has taken the initiative to reorganize the Voluntown Peace Trust in order to purchase the property for \$500,000. This money will go back immediately into loan fund assistance to low income communities, community supported agriculture initiatives and various land preservation efforts.

The property will be managed by the Northeastern Cooperative for Non-Violence which so far consists of 19 organizations who have pledged \$1,200 a year for ten years to repay the mortgage. The property will be owned by the Voluntown Peace Trust which will work towards "the building of a culture of non-violence." The current program envisioned for the property is three-fold:



#### 1) *Retreats and conferences:*

The CNVA is committed to using the conference center as "an affordable space to train an organize all people, especially young people, in the skills of nonviolent conflict resolution."

#### 2) *Culture and cultivation:*

The VPT believes that "a healthy, vibrant culture springs first from our relationship with each other and the earth." Therefore, they will make an organic farm and using the community-supported agriculture model work to involve low-income families in Hartford in the process of food production and distribution.

3) *Summer camp:* Over the last eight years the Hartford Catholic Worker has brought small groups of inner-city young people out to the farm for summer holidays. They plan to continue this tradition and develop ways to "enable inner-city youth to touch the earth, see the stars, plant a tree, and water a garden."

I am co-chairing the Voluntown Peace Farm Task Force of the SE Connecticut Peace and Justice Network. So far locally we have raised over \$27,000 - some in small gifts and some in gifts ranging from \$2,500 to \$10,000. The total raised to date is close to \$180,000. The hope is to have at least \$200,000 for the down payment and preferably \$300,000 so that the debt burden will be as small as possible. Low or no-interest loans are being sought. Tax deductible checks can be made out to "CULIFBVPT" (Conn. Urban Legal Initiative for the Benefit of the Voluntown Peace Trust) and mailed to the Hartford Catholic Worker, 26 Clark St., Hartford 06120.

Can you help? Thank you!





## Getting Clear about Nonviolence

by Hope Norris

CONSIDER THE TOPIC of solidarity and resistance in communities of transformation: that is what St. Francis House has been doing in Friday night meetings for clarification of thought since September 2003. In October there were two of these discussions, on the theme of nonviolence.

First, on October 10, came the topic of individual ways of being and/or supporting nonviolent lives and behavior. Here is a list of ideas that those present came up with:

Being aware of resources and reaching out to those who need help and support.

Showing "revolutionary patience" – the term is Ched Myers's, from *Binding the Strong Man* – awareness of both the long haul and the futility of thinking in terms of quick fixes.

Eating right: consciously and conscientiously without addictions to food or to dieting.

Looking at spending patterns and analyzing how each of us participates in the economy, from buying local, renewable resources to the other end of the continuum: the global business which exploits workers.

Advocating for rights of oppressed (GLBTI, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered and intersexual) and ethnic groups, including standing up to jokes and put-downs.

Resisting false doctrines, e.g., "survival of the fittest."

Not undermining the ability to survive and prosper – don't shoot people and don't let them starve.

Opposing the death penalty.

Resisting war taxes (27% of US budget).

Writing letters to newspapers.

Putting money into political efforts.

Keeping video games out of homes.

Also:

Analyzing cycles of violence and how to stop the spiral.



Getting rid of TV. Electronic bombardment is also a form of violence (cell phones) (interference with nature).

Supporting drug treatment as an alternative to prison.

Practicing daily prayer and meditation to develop peace with family and neighbors.

Becoming gardeners and supporting community gardening.

Being a visible teaching witness (like Cal Robertson, who has spent more than 17 years holding signs, e.g., "Nonviolence or Nonexistence," at the New London Soldiers and Sailors Monument.)

After that October 10 meeting for clarification of thought, the next meeting, October 24, looked at how St. Francis House can support individuals and the local community in living and/or practicing nonviolence. The following ideas were brought up:

Praying more.

Playing soccer instead of football.

Sharing news and product information from local farmers by designating a bulletin board for it, and by including relevant information in **The Troubadour**.

Witnessing for peace at high schools; offering alternatives to ROTC.

Outreach: get word out about St. Francis House.

Reaching out to people in trouble.

Being a center for examining uses and/or new ways of using money and/or investment capital (for housing, etc.).

Teaching nonviolence and/or peace. How do children learn to be nonviolent in an urban environment? Do children still play hopscotch and other low-cost games? Will children now think real life and/or real time games interesting?

Finally, we considered a quotation and listed relevant St. Francis House activities or "practices." (See sidebar)



## NONVIOLENT PRACTICES

*Nobody was born nonviolent. No one was born charitable. The first duty of the nonviolent community is helping its members work upon themselves and come to conversion. The community provides a system of rules and ways of living that oblige the individual to convert, to turn around, to put the heart inside-out and up-side down.*

### Lanza del Vasto

Some "practices" for nonviolent living at St. Francis House:

1. We pray daily: Morning Prayer, Monday – Friday, 7 a.m.
2. We meditate: an hour of individual contemplative prayer or meditation each day.
3. We study: weekly Bible study at community meeting.
4. We engage with others: participation in regular Friday night meetings for clarification of thought.
5. We fast: weekly on Friday, and other times as needed.
6. We witness: weekly peace witness in downtown New London, Saturday noon to 1:00 p.m.
7. We provide "safe space" for wider community meetings: as needed.
8. We question: we seek to help our community and others develop skills to ask questions in various settings in a nonviolent manner (Interrogative Theology).



## Amal Project Seeks to Benefit Baghdad Woman Artist

by Anne Scheibner

Over the last year members of the SE Connecticut Peace and Justice Network have organized four shows for the benefit of Amal Alwan. Amal is a Muslim, mother of three and former school teacher.

When Chris Allen- Doucot of the Hartford Catholic Worker was in Baghdad shortly before the American invasion began, Amal thrust 50 canvases into his hands and begged him to sell them on her behalf when he returned to the United States. She and her family were preparing to flee to Syria in fear of American bombing.

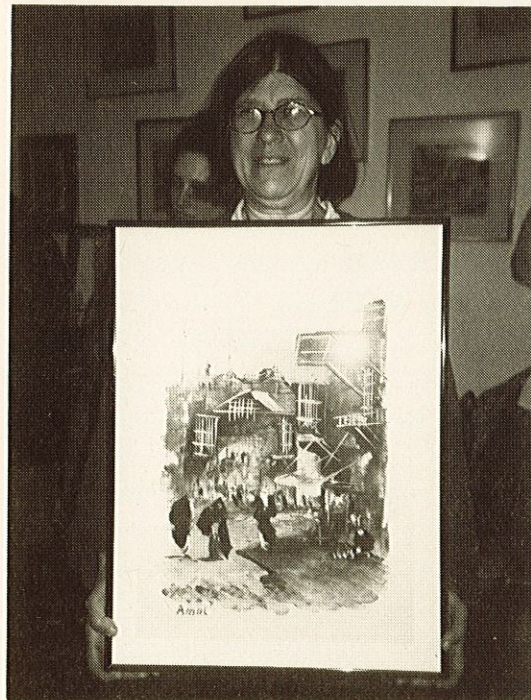
Upon their return to Baghdad they discovered their apartment had been looted by neighbors. As Amal earlier this year reported by e-mail to Mela Magno, a member of the Task Force: "What few possessions I had managed to acquire through the long years of sanctions were gone. Gone, too, was the relative security we had enjoyed before the much-touted fall of Baghdad. At that time we realized our life in the present and for the foreseeable future has become so fraught with new dangers. We Iraqi especially in Baghdad live a horrible life. The water is not well and rare also the electricity; it is four hours on and four hours off, no phones till now, no security, no employment, no jobs - I have tried for 9 months to get my (teaching) job back but it is useless. (Originally) I was dismissed from my job as teacher because I wasn't in the Ba'ath Party and I'm a friend for the American Peace Teams who visited Iraq before 1996 and before the war."

Developed at Friday Night Meeting on October 24, 2003.



When we first saw her paintings which depict traditional Baghdad market scenes and waterfront as well as rural scenes and camels, we thought it would be wise to make some of them digitally mastered so that prints could be produced even if the supply of her paintings was cut off. Through a local printer we have been able to provide very high quality prints as well as her originals.

A Christmas show was held at St. Francis House and we intend to display her work in the hallway of the renovated 32 Broad St. building. Do "come and see" or ask for a price list - prints come in two sizes 12"x16" and 18"x24". Most of the original acrylics are either roughly 12"x16" or 8"x10". Prices range from \$50-180.



Anne Scheibner holds one of the first market scene prints produced for the Amal Project. This one was given to Rep. Rob Simmons in a demonstration held at his Norwich, CT office. The SE CT Peace and Justice Network protested his support for the planned invasion and the picture was to remind him of what would be destroyed if the invasion took place.



## DOORS AND SPIRITS ARE GOING TO OPEN

Arthur Lerner

The past year has been tumultuous and exciting. With our country embroiled in a war of aggression and the presidential campaign underway, many forces are jockeying for position, working very hard to influence us that their way is right. While we pray that big forces will muster and begin to march toward peace, we must, as workers for non-violence always do, look toward the small voices in our community and country that are going to lead the way to change.

We have been warned that the war on terror will be fought over the long term. There is, indeed, no end in sight to the fear of attacks by those who disagree vehemently with U.S. policy in the world. We have been told that our current war was pre-emptive; the struggle for peace has never had such a luxury. Throughout history, non-violence has been a path perpetually threatened by the super-highway of force and war.

It is into this history that the doors of 32 Broad St. will be opened. I know that much good will come from there because of the process of renovating the building; I have already witnessed lots of good work being done.

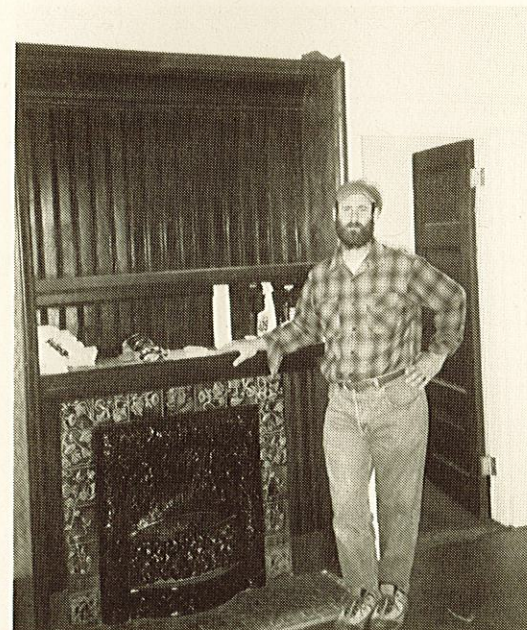
The renovation of 32 Broad St. has been a collaboration of many folks. The Alternative Incarceration Center and the court's Community Service Program led by Anna Sullivan helped rebuild the house. Kimberly Giunta, David Smart, Hope Norris, Ted and Mark Olynciw have all been indispensable with the efforts they have made as volunteers. Our contractors: Ed Bartelli Plumbing

and Heating, Nelson Williams and All-in-One Electric and Rab Nawaz of Excellent Painting. All did solid work that will aid St. Francis House as we pursue our mission for many years to come.

The renovations are almost completed. Moving into the new offices will mark only a new beginning to work that is tragically very far from over. We have big hopes for the space we have reclaimed at 32 Broad St. Please come by and add your own voice into the mix!

**NOTE :** The spectacular job of rehab and coordination of a community-based and interfaith group of volunteers and professionals would not have been possible without the equally spectacular care, coordination and oversight provided by Site Manager Arthur Lerner.

**Thank you, Arthur!**



Arthur stands next to the mantelpiece he built from scraps of paneling for the front office at 32 Broad St.



## ST. FRANCIS HOUSE WISH LIST

We are coming down the home stretch on the rehab at 32 Broad. The following items are needed:

- \* 2 small apartment size refrigerators;
- \* 2 day beds preferably with trundle beds underneath;
- \* bed linens and towels;
- \* knives, forks and spoons; dishes; cooking utensils - for two single and one double apartments;
- \* 2 small stoves - one gas and one electric.

We are getting ready to seek \$15-25,000 to undertake the rehab on the currently trashed one- bedroom apartment underneath the Hermitage to be used for transitional housing. Any ideas on funding sources?

We have refinanced our loan from Equity Trust and will need to make six payments of \$17,500 each over the next two to three years. Anyone able to help with one of these or able to organize a group to cover one would be much appreciated.

**Thank you !**





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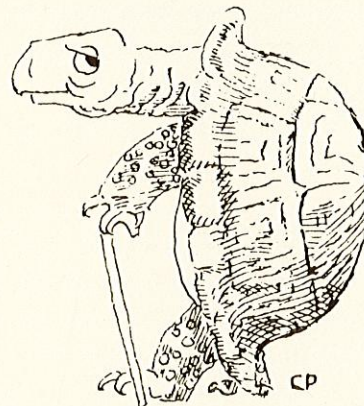
Emmett Jarrett, TSSF and Anne Scheibner, "Celebrating Five Years in New London"  
Annie Brown, "WE DID IT!  
First 'Come and See' Presentation Held in Washington, DC  
Br. John George, SSF, "Eleven Days in January"  
Bob Treadwell-Hill remembered  
Mardie Chapman, "Celebrating Aunt Dorrie"  
Anne Scheibner, "...Voluntown Peace Farm"  
Hope Norris, "Getting Clear About Non-Violence"  
*Non-Violent Practices*  
Anne Scheibner, "The Amal Project"  
Arthur Lerner, "Doors and Spirits Are Going to Open"  
*St. Francis House Wish List*

*The Urban Networker* insert  
Letter from EUC President  
Bp. Wilfrido Ramos-Orench  
Articles by Emmett Jarrett and Edward Rodman  
Task Force information  
Newark Assembly - Feb. 23-26, 2005

*R.I. P.*

Charles Price  
1923 - 2003

Neighbor and friend  
Friday Night Regular:  
We miss his tall and thoughtful  
presence at Clarification of  
Thought gatherings.



Drawing by Charles Price

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