

Lower Hudson Valley Chapter

NYCLU



March 2006

Come to Our Annual Meeting: Librarians Stand Up for Our Civil Liberties



Leslie Burger will speak at the Annual Meeting of the Lower Hudson Valley CLU, March 28 at 7 PM, at the White Plains Public Library on Martine Ave.

President-Elect of the American Library Association (ALA) and the Director of the Princeton, NJ, Public Library, Ms. Burger has always stood for public libraries as citadels of freedom. She has also been instrumental in promoting the ALA's strong position against torture and for civil rights.

In the wake of events on September 11, 2001, Congress quickly passed the US Patriot Act, giving the federal government expanded powers to fight terrorism. Some of the expanded powers, however, run counter to constitutionally guaranteed freedoms.

Fundamental principles that guard our liberty must be preserved. Basic civil liberties must be protected while the nation seeks to detect threats to national security. Libraries ensure the freedoms to read, to view, to speak and to participate—all cornerstones of our democracy.

In 2005, Rep. Bernard Sanders (VT) introduced an amendment that added language protecting library records as an amendment to the House Science-State-Justice Subcommittee appropriations bill. It passed the House but, in November 2005, House-Senate negotiators dropped the part that would have restricted searches of library and bookstore records under the Patriot Act. As a result, we have enhanced surveillance procedures that pose the greatest challenge to privacy and confidentiality in the library.

The ALA opposes any use of governmental power to suppress the free and open exchange of knowledge and information, or to intimidate individuals exercising free inquiry. The ALA considers that some sections of the Patriot Act are a present danger to the constitutional rights and privacy rights of library users.

In August, 2005, the ALA filed an amicus brief before the Supreme Court against U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales (*Doe vs. Gonzales*) challenging the constitutionality of Section 505 of the Patriot Act, which allows the FBI to issue an administrative subpoena (known as a national security letter) without judicial oversight. Because Section 505 also gags those receiving a national security letter from revealing that fact, neither Doe nor his employer have reacted publicly to a November Washington Post story identifying him as

cont. on page 4



Annual Dinner Supports Freedom of the Press: The Minority Voice

Our annual dinner will take place on Tuesday, April 25 at 6 PM at the Surf Club at 280 Davenport Ave., New Rochelle, NY. It will honor the publishers of two county newspapers: M. Paul Redd, publisher of *The Westchester County Press*, local and national news from a black perspective; and Norma Maximo and Miguel Blanco, publishers of *El Aguila*, an empowering voice for Latinos. As we see a growing intimidation of a free press, and some mainstream media becoming tools of government, it is urgent to support alternative media and minority press.

Our keynote speaker, Amy Goodman, is host and executive producer of *Democracy Now!*, a national, independent, award-winning, WBAI news program. At the dinner we will have copies of her book: *The Exception to the Rule*, exposing *Oily Politicians, War Profiteers, and the Media That Love Them*. Also invited is Gil Noble, producer and host of *Like It Is*, WABC's award-winning Sunday program. (See page 2 for dinner reservation form.)

Executive Director's List of Outrageous Local Issues

by Linda Berns

- Day workers arrested in Brewster (Putnam County).
- Newspaper refused to run an ad for an art show because it was sponsored by a group with the words "Gay and Lesbian" in their name (Orange County).
- Muster site for day laborers closed in Mamaroneck (Westchester County)/
- Homeless people banned from a restaurant in Spring Valley (Rockland County).
- Latino man beaten in error by Monticello Police (Sullivan County).
- Student suspended from athletic team in the Wappinger Central School District because of actions on a website outside of school (Dutchess County).
- A recovering drug addict was unable to get copies of his lab reports for 17 months after he was stopped by the police for not wearing a seatbelt. (Ulster County).

Teaching Reproductive Health in Schools

by Hillary D. Hampton

Lawyers working for the ACLU recently made oral arguments before the U.S. Supreme Court in the first abortion case to reach the Court in five years. At issue is how much control teens should have in choosing whether to have an abortion. Echoes of this debate can heard in New York State as we debate how much information to give teens in making decisions related to reproductive health.

New York schools teach "abstinence-only until marriage" curricula in sex education classes. The NYCLU and other reproductive health advocates maintain that teens need more comprehensive sex education. A U.S. Congressional report found that *more than 80%* of abstinence-only curricula distort information. For example, such programs suggest that condoms neither protect against sexually transmitted diseases nor prevent pregnancy.

Abstinence-only program leaders often ask students to sign pledges that they will remain sexually inactive

until marriage. According to research in Yale and Columbia Universities, 88% of students who make such pledges at the urging of their school, still engage in sexual activity prior to marriage.

The net result is that students are misinformed about sex, yet are sexually active. The federal government spends \$165 million annually on abstinence-only sex education. The result? Over 800,000 teen pregnancies nationally every year (over 1,300 in Westchester last year) and 9.1 million people between the ages of 15 and 24 infected with STDs.

The NYCLU supports The Healthy Teens Act pending in the NY state legislature. This bill would establish funding for age-appropriate, medically accurate sex education. It would provide programs that would give young people the information they need to make responsible decisions, including abstaining from sexual activity and, for those who are sexually active, using contraceptives effectively. This is the best way to help teens make educated and safe sexually decisions.

Teaching Teachers

by Stacy Sewell, Board Member

NYCLU/LHV, in cooperation with the Mid-Hudson branch of the NY State Social Studies and the Washingtonville Teacher Center (Orange County), will offer a in-service course, "Civil Liberties, Past and Present," to educators. Washingtonville Teachers Center will offer a grant to teachers from the

Washington School district and neighboring districts. Public school teachers will each earn one, in-service credit for the course which will be offered in five sessions on each Wednesday in May, 2006.

This course will cover such subjects as academic freedom, family law, equal protection, capital punishment, privacy, and the history of civil liberties. It is

hoped that the teachers who participate will use their creative abilities to produce civil liberties lesson plans for distribution.

This is a pilot project which we hope will be replicated in other areas of the State. If you are interested in helping this program get off the ground, please contact us at 914-997-7479 or info@nyclulhv.org.

Annual Spring Dinner April 25, at 6 PM

Surf Club • 280 Davenport Ave. • New Rochelle NY

Reservations received by March 10 will cost \$90/ticket.

After March 10 the cost will be \$100/ticket.

Enclosed is _____ for _____ tickets

Print name: _____

Print address: _____

Print state, zip, phone # _____

*Make check out to NY Civil Liberties Union Foundation
 Mail to NYCLU/LHV, 2 William St.
 White Plains NY 10601
 For more information call 914-997-7479*

Election Biographies: NYCLU/LHV Officers and Board of Directors

Officers

Chair

ARLENE R. POPKIN, Esq., Incumbent. Former Vice Chair of NYCLU/LHV; member of board of NYCLU; Senior Trial Counsel, Legal Aid Society of Westchester County.

Vice Chairpersons

DR. LONNIE BARNES, JR., Incumbent. Retired teacher. First Vice President of Westchester Community Opportunity Program. Former adjunct professor at Iona and Monroe Colleges, New Rochelle.

LUIS QUIROS, M.P.A., M.S.W., Incumbent. WESGOP chairperson; sociology faculty, Fordham University; social worker; community activist, and political columnist for *El Aguila*.

Secretary

LAWRENCE GRUNBERGER, Incumbent. Former Chairperson of NYCLU/LHV. Physicist, technical writer, editor.

Treasurer

FLORENCE ROHER, Incumbent. Accountant. NYCLU/LHV Volunteer.

Members of Board of Directors

(Terms to expire in 2008)

JULIE DAVID CARRAN, Incumbent. Co-chair of the Westchester Martin Luther King Jr. Institute for Nonviolence Board, Executive Committee of White Plains/ Greenburgh NAACP, Advisory Board member of the WESPAC Foundation.

TAMIKA COVERDALE, Esq., Incumbent. Associate Counsel, Criminal Division of West-

chester Legal Aid Society; Board of Directors of Westchester Coalition for Legal Abortion; Graduate University of Maine Law School.

DENNIS HANRATTY, Incumbent. Executive Director of Mt. Vernon United Tenants (MVUT). Over 20-year history of advocating for tenants' rights, affordable housing, and land use policy to benefit low- and moderate-income people; leader in campaigns for social and economic justice.

BARBARA HICKERNELL, Incumbent. Conferences Director, United Engineering Foundation; past President, Westchester Library System Board of Trustees; Spokesperson, Alliance to Close Indian Point.

CONNIE HOGARTH, Incumbent. Co-founder and former Executive Director of WESPAC. Lifetime activist for peace, justice, civil rights, and environment. Advisory Board of WBAI. Active in drive to close Indian Point. Board member of Connie Hogarth Center for Social Action at Manhattanville College.

CEIL LAVAN, OP

Social Justice Coordinator, Blauvet Dominican Sisters; Human Services Faculty Member, Metropolitan College of NY; Member, WBORDC Steering Committee; Westchester/Rockland Coalition Against War in Iraq; Dominican UN/NGO Advisory Committee, International Dominican Promoters of Justice.

RALPH MARASH, Incumbent. Stockbroker. Past NYCLU/LHV Chairperson.

ABDULWALI MUHAMMAD

2005 Graduate of Pace University School Of Law; Dean's list; interned with the rights firm

of McLaughlin, Gouldborne and Cohen, NY, NY in 2004; affiliated with Amnesty International; worked with organizations to free death row prisoner Mumia Abu Jamal; organized activities in response to police killing of African immigrant Amadou Diallo.

WESLEY STROMBERG, Incumbent. Founder of SANE Nuclear Policy Committee in Westchester and Westchester Women for Peace. Registered Drama Therapist. Serviced on national board for Drama Therapy. Currently Vice Chair of the Westchester Progressive Forum.

OLIVER SWIFT, Incumbent. Retired Librarian, White Plains Library; past President of Ethical Culture Society of Westchester; longtime member of ACLU.

Members of Board of Directors

(Terms to expire in 2007)

MAYO BARTLETT

Attorney in private practice in White Plains, former Chief of the bias Crimes unit of the district Attorney's office. Vice-Chair of the Westchester County Human Rights Commission; founding member of We Are Westchester, a coalition of not-for-profit organizations that focus on social justice.

LYNN SHEINKIN

Licensed social worker from Rockland County; psychotherapy practice (since 1980); trainer and program developer on work to end sexism, racism, and heterosexism; Vice-Chair of Rockland Stop F.E.A.R. Coalition; area coordinator for Amnesty International.

BALLOT for 2006 NYCLU-LHV ELECTION of OFFICERS and BOARD

Officers (one-year term)

Chair

Arlene R. Popkin

Vice Chairs (elect two)

Dr. Lonnie Barnes

Luis Quiros

Secretary

Lawrence Grunberger

Treasurer

Florence Roher

Board Members

(two-year terms) elect 10

Julie Davis Carran

Tamika Coverdale

Dennis Hanratty

Barbara Hickernell

Connie Hogarth

Ceil Lavan

Ralph Marash

Abdulwali Muhammad

Wesley Stromberg

Oliver Swift

Board Members

(One-year term) elect 2

Mayo Bartlett

Lynn Sheinkin

PLEASE VOTE FOR NO MORE THAN THE NUMBER TO BE ELECTED. JOINT MEMBERS MAY EACH VOTE ON THE SAME BALLOT. BALLOTS MUST BE RECEIVED BY MARCH 28, 2006

Mail your Ballot to:

Secretary, NYCLU/LHV, 2 William Street, Suite 200, White Plains, NY 10601

Or: Bring your Ballot to the Annual Meeting and Election at the White Plains Public Library on March 28, 2006, at 6:30 PM.



NYCLU

NEW YORK CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION
Lower Hudson Valley Chapter
Formerly Westchester Chapter

2 William Street, Suite 200
White Plains, New York 10601
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Email: info@nycluhv.org

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Annual Meeting, cont. from page 1

George Christian of the Connecticut Consortium Library Connection. The plaintiffs lost an emergency appeal October 7, 2005, to have the gag order lifted so they could speak out about the ramifications of the Patriot Act during ongoing congressional debate regarding its reauthorization.

Both the ACLU and the ALA oppose governmental suppression of free and open exchange of knowledge and information and consider sections of the Patriot Act as a present danger to our constitutional and privacy rights.

Learn what you can do to join librarians on the frontline of the battle to keep our civil liberties. Our annual meeting, which is open to the public, is co-sponsored by the Special Libraries Association and the White Plains Library.

THE EXONERATED

A play about the true stories of 6 innocent death row survivors
Directed by Tim Robins

Come see this gripping, dynamic piece of theater and help the New York Civil Liberties Union protect your civil liberties. All for just \$75 per ticket.

Saturday, March 18, 2006 at 8 PM

Performing Arts Center, Purchase College, Anderson Hill Rd., Purchase, NY

Enclosed is _____ (\$75/per ticket) for _____ tickets for THE EXONERATED

Print name: _____

Print address: _____

Print state, zip: _____

Phone #, email: _____

Make check out to NY Civil Liberties Union Foundation. Mail form and check to NY Civil Liberties Union-LHV, 2 William St., White Plains NY 10601. For more information call 914-997-7479.