



Canadian Friends Service Committee (Quakers)

E-Newsletter

September 2012

Conscientious Objector to War to be deported – what you can do to help



CFSC General Secretary Jane Orion Smith and US conscientious objector, Kimberly Rivera at August 31st press conference where the joint letter was released.

Kimberly Rivera, a US soldier who developed a conscientious objection to war while serving in Iraq, arrived in Canada in 2007 seeking refuge. On August 30th, Kimberly Rivera and her family (including two Canadian-born children) were ordered to leave Canada by September 20th. CFSC, Mennonite Central Committee Canada and The United Church of Canada immediately responded with a joint letter to Immigration Minister Jason Kenney asking that he allow the Rivera family to stay in Canada on Humanitarian and Compassionate grounds (see article and photo: www.quakerservice.ca).

While Kim and her lawyer pursue all legal avenues to challenge the family's removal, there is an urgent need for those who support the rights of conscientious objectors to ask the Minister to allow the Rivera family to stay in

Canada. To learn what you can do, and access a resource kit of information on the Rivera case, visit: <http://resisters.ca/support-the-rivera-family/>. In particular, please consider taking the following actions:

- Contact the Minister a.s.a.p. by telephone, fax or email (*draft letter on the Resisters' website; also see the joint letter and Amnesty's blog post for ideas - <http://www.amnesty.ca/blog/index.php?PostID=389>*). Jason Kenney, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, can be reached at: Phone – 613-954-1064, Fax – 613-957-2688, and email - minister@cic.gc.ca.
- Collect names on the petition (<http://resisters.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Petition-Riveras-Sept2012.pdf>) and fax in to the Minister;
- Organize or participate in the Days of Action on **Friday, September 14th** and **Wednesday September 19th**.

There is a very small window of time to act – please help the Rivera family stay in Canada.

Canadian Yearly Meeting update

Canadian Yearly Meeting's annual sessions were busy, worshipful, and enriching. A round-up of the various peace and social concerns issues that came to the floor can be found in the latest issue of Quaker Concern, which is available online at: <http://quakerservice.ca/news-and-resources/quaker-concern/>

New and departing CFSC board members

We offer our sincere thanks to Elizabeth Block (Toronto Meeting), Tamara Fleming (Winnipeg Meeting), and Michael Paetzold (Wooler Meeting) who have completed their service on the board of CFSC. We also thank Dick Cotterill (Halifax Meeting) who retired this spring. We welcome those appointed to serve by Canadian Yearly Meeting in August 2012: Rob Hughes and Heather Neun (Vancouver Meeting); Maggie Knight and Rick Juliusson (both Vancouver Island Meeting), Glenn Morison (Winnipeg Meeting); Rachel Urban-Shipley, Daniel Way and

Sylvia Lewis Havard (all Ottawa Meeting), Julie Berry-Imbert (Yarmouth Meeting) and Justin Coutts (Yarmouth MM) who was appointed by Canadian Young Friends Yearly Meeting.

Prison Farm concern continues ...

Prison farms across Canada were closed by the federal government two years ago. They provided environmentally appropriate agriculture as well as highly effective rehabilitation. Friends should know that not all has been lost. Public pressure on Public Safety Minister Vic Toews and Prime Minister Stephen Harper made their plan for immediate demolition of farm buildings impossible. In Kingston, a co-op bought much of the farm land at Frontenac Institution. Though some cattle were sold off, a registered herd has saved many (a unique genetic line); they could be returned after a change of heart by the government.

Continuing political pressure on the Minister and MPs of all parties is essential to preserve the infrastructure with hope to restore the farms, thereby reducing costs of incarceration – financial, environmental, and social – for the whole Canadian population. Individuals, Meetings and Worship Groups, regional gatherings, etc. can help by writing Members of Parliament. For updates and talking points, contact Quaker prison chaplain Kate Johnson (Thousand Islands Monthly Meeting) at kaleidoscopekate@gmail.com.

Upcoming Kairos events –regional meetings, workshops

Kairos is hosting a wide-range of gatherings and workshops across Canada this fall. Information can be found on their events webpage: <http://www.kairoscanada.org/kairos-events/>. Here are a few highlights:

September 22 (9 – 3:30 pm) - **Voices of Courage workshop: Women and human rights** – Location: Coldstream Meeting House, 359 Quaker Lane, Coldstream, ON. Contact: Joyce Holwerda - joyceholwerda@hotmail.com

October 13 (10- 3 pm) - **Making It Matter Indigenous Rights Workshop** – location: Mindemoya United Church, King Street / Hwy 542, Mindemoya, Manitoulin Island. Contact: Jane McKay Wright (Friends' representative on the Kairos board) - janemw@amtelecom.net

October 19 – 21 – Re:Generate – KAIROS Intergenerational Gathering for Eastern Canada – Location: Cornwall, ON. Cost - \$250 (subsidies available – contact Andrew Kohan at akohan@kairoscanada.org. For more info, visit: <http://www.kairoscanada.org/get-involved/igg12/>. Re:Generate will take place in Cornwall, Ontario and will bring together grassroots activists from Ontario (East of Thunder Bay), Quebec and the Atlantic provinces. Much of the content of the workshops and plenary sessions will be based on engaging young adults 18-35 and their supporters in looking at creative ways to build movements. Under 18s welcome with guardian.

Regional retreats – all are welcome at Kairos regional gatherings: September 21 - 23 in Lethbridge, AB (Prairies North), September 28-29 in Winnipeg, MB (Cambrian-Agassiz), October 13 – Parksville, BC (BC Region). More to be posted for Ontario, Quebec, and Atlantic Canada. For more details, visit: <http://www.kairoscanada.org/get-involved/the-kairos-network/fall-regional-meetings/>

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