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We would like to welcome Christopher Barkan and Rebecca Haacker- Santos to our National Coordinating Committee!

Top Row: (left to right) Brenda Humphreys, Becky Jaffe, Randy Divinski, Michael Joseph, Matt Messier, Kelli Corrigan, Carl Kline.

Bottom Row: (left to right) Barbara Wien, Cristopher Barkan, Angie Garling, Rebecca Haacker-Santos, Paul Paz y Miño. (Not Pictured: Gina Amatangelo and Joe Morton)

Photo by Aaron Walburg

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PBI/USA REPORT

The Newsletter of Peace Brigades International/USA

FALL 2005

A Remembrance of Louise Wijnhausen

(This remembrance was written by her niece, Carolyn Wynhausen Sperry)

Long-time PBI supporter, Louise Wijnhausen, passed away in February of this year. Louise was very impressed with the work of Peace Brigades International. She learned about PBI from her great nephew, Joe Sperry, a former field volunteer and active member since 1995. Louise often recounted to Joe how Peace Brigades reminded her of those who had helped her escape Europe during WWII. Louise proudly booked Joe to speak about his PBI work in Guatemala at the Foulkeways Retirement Community in Gwynedd, PA, where she lived since 1987, founded and run by the American Friends Community.



Passport image Courtesy of Carolyn Wynhausen Louise Wijnhausen's Passport

Sometimes with a little wine and coaxing, Louise would share her life story in some detail...

In 1940 with World War II raging, Louise, Jewish by birth and Catholic by intellectual decision, fled Europe. She was 28 years old. Tales of her escape, racing out of Bruges into France, then to Spain, then Portugal, to catch a ship from Lisbon to New York, made a gripping story.

En route, she helped two Royal Air Force pilots es-

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Outrage Over the February Massacre Results in Strong Political Response

by Gimena Sanchez
PBI Colombia Project US Representative

On February 21, tragedy hit the San José de Apartadó peace community in Colombia when eight civilians, including peace community founder Luis Eduardo Guerra and three children, were brutally murdered. This horrible event symbolized a lack of protection faced by all civilians, displaced persons and human rights defenders that fight for human rights and peace in Colombia. PBI issued a rare public statement urging protection for the members of the peace community and their accompaniers, calling for an investigation into the massacre and reiterating their commitment to the peace community's project. PBI activated our support network with special emphasis placed on obtaining a political response in the U.S. and preventing future harm to members of the peace community. Working jointly with the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), PBI organized numerous meetings on Capitol Hill, at the Department of State, with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as well as holding a public event at Amnesty International on the anniversary of

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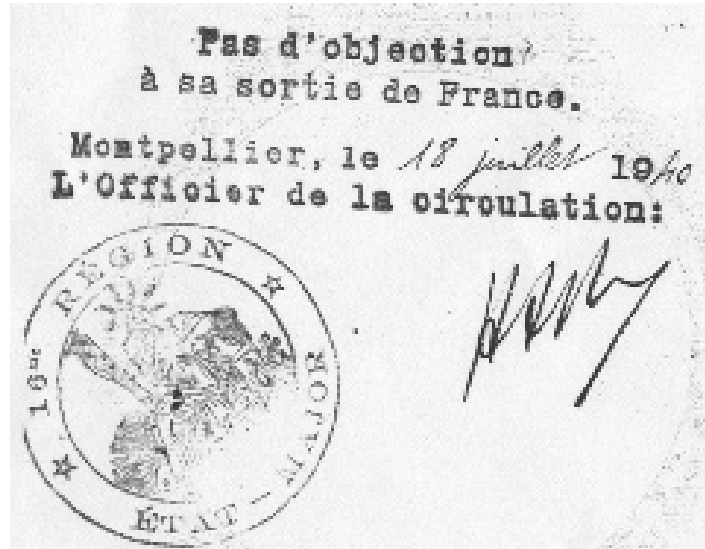
Remembrance of Louise Wijnhausen

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cape occupied France. Along with the pilots, Louise's émigré group, all fleeing through France in hopes of reaching Lisbon, included a man dispatched by the Van Houten Chocolate Company with a unique mission. He had been chosen to memorize the closely guarded formula to make the famous Dutch chocolate and take it to New York City for safekeeping until the war ended.

In July 1940, as the group of a half-dozen refugees threaded their way through occupied France in hopes of reaching Spain, then Portugal, they learned they could not cross the border until each had a special visa, stamped by the French (Vichy) authorities in their passports. This required a day's trip to a regional government office to obtain the stamp, and a day's trip back. Louise, who spoke not only Dutch, but French, German, and English, was entrusted by the group to take each one's passport to that regional office.

Loss of one's passport in German-occupied France might mean arrest, imprisonment, even death. Once there, the functionaries told her to leave the passports overnight for stamping. Not on your life! Louise waited and waited. After many hours, in fluent French she lit into an available official, assuring him she would not leave until each passport was correctly stamped. He stamped the passports! Her pluckiness prevailed.



Passport image Courtesy of Carolyn Wijnhausen Sperry

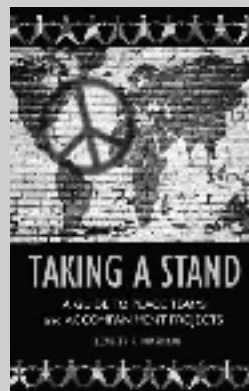
Pictured above is the passport stamp which was so difficult for Louise to obtain, yet so critical.

It is not surprising Louise Wijnhausen would never forget she was lucky enough to have escaped the fate of millions sent to the concentration camps. The memory of her escape inspired her to leave a legacy to peace, individual freedom of conscience, human dignity and to the courage and tenacity embodied in all of PBI's volunteers, particularly the activists who invite PBI's presence to advance their ongoing struggle towards justice.

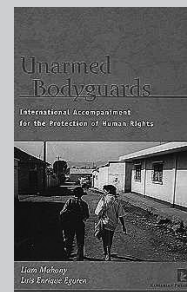
[Editor's Note: We are extremely grateful to Louise for her generosity over the years and the bequest she has left to Peace Brigades International/USA.] ■

PBI Featured in New Book on International Peace Teams!

Released in July, the new book, *Taking a Stand: A Guide to Peace Teams and Accompaniment Projects* by Elizabeth Boardman, describes the work of PBI and other accompaniment organizations. This accessible, fun, and educational book is currently for sale from PBI/USA. (see below)



Also available is *Unarmed Bodyguards* by Liam Mahony and Luis Enrique Eguren. This book provides inspiring stories on international accompaniment for the protection of human rights and is an important contribution in the search for paths and alternatives in extreme and violent situations.



TO ORDER:

To order either of these books send a check in the amount of \$24 (which includes S&H) to:

PBI/USA
1326 9th Street NW
Washington, DC 20001

Protecting Colombian Peace Community

Tim Fogarty e-mailed PBI/USA Co-Director, Michael Joseph, responding to an article in the Spring Newsletter reporting on the massacre at the San José de Apartadó Peace Community in Colombia. Tim wrote:

Dear PBI,

I just received my PBI/USA Report (spring 2005) which mentions in the first story, that Luis Eduardo Guerra, leader of the San José de Apartadó Peace Community in Antioquia, Colombia was murdered along with seven other people on February 21, 2005. It also mentions that he has been accompanied by PBI since 1998. But nowhere is there an explanation of where PBI was on February 21st. As a supporter of your organization, I would be interested in knowing the answer to that question. Perhaps you don't know. But it doesn't seem wise to publicize that PBI was accompanying a man who was murdered along with several women and small children unless you have some kind of explanation. I don't mean to increase the pain that you must feel as an organization, but I believe it is in the best interest of your team and your clients that there is some kind of accounting. Thank you,

Tim Fogarty
Gainesville, Florida

(Michael Joseph, PBI/USA Co-Director, responded)

Dear Tim,

Thank you for your response to the article on Luis Eduardo Guerra in our Spring 2005 PBI/USA Report. The questions you raise are good ones and we appreciate the chance to explain how our accompaniment works in the San José de Apartadó Peace Community. I see now that we probably should have done a better job of this.

The San José de Apartadó Peace Community is a group of individuals and families that live in a rather large area in Northern Colombia. As a community they are committed to not participate in the Colombian conflict, in particular, by not supporting any of the armed groups. All individuals in this larger area who have made this pledge and abide by the community's principles are members of the Peace Community, even though many of them live several hours away from the village-center of Apartadó.

PBI has protected the San José de Apartadó Peace Community for the last four years. PBI maintains a constant presence in the village and may from time to time directly

accompany individual members of the community. Due to limited resources (in comparison to the number of members of the community and the large geographical area in which they live and work), PBI cannot physically accompany individual members 24 hours a day. The continuous accompaniment is sometimes used when we (and the individual we are accompanying) deem it necessary at a particular time.

On February 21st PBI accompaniers were in the village center of San José de Apartadó. Luis Eduardo Guerra and the seven others who were killed that day were in a small hamlet about 4-5 hours away by mule.

PBI's model of accompaniment is much more than just physical presence. The physical presence of our volunteers is simply the visible embodiment of a much broader international network of concern for the individuals, organizations, and in this case, communities we accompany. In addition to this presence, it is our belief that raising the cases of people we accompany to our political networks in Colombia and in the 18 countries that support our work we can provide a level of protection that is more effective than just physical presence, and that works without constant physical accompaniment.

We must assume that those who chose to carry out the murder of Luis Eduardo Guerra and seven others on February 21 must have weighed the consequences of their actions and decided it was still worth it. Would the presence of an international accompanier have forced the gunmen to change their minds on the spot? We don't know.

We have done everything within our power to hold those responsible for this massacre accountable. Unfortunately there are yet to be any final findings, which makes this somewhat difficult. This murder also propels us to redouble our efforts to broaden and strengthen our accompaniment, both physical and political, inside and outside of Colombia. We hope and believe that one day, with enough international attention and concern, the costs will be too high for murders of this nature to continue in Colombia.

I hope this helps explain why we weren't present with Luis Eduardo Guerra on February 21st, even though we were accompanying him. We truly do appreciate your support, your concern, and your excellent questions!

Michael Joseph
Co-Director, PBI/USA. ■

Outrage Over February Massacre

Continued from page 1

the peace community's founding.

The concern expressed for the peace community and the political response to the February massacre in the U.S. has been strong. On the political level, 32 members of Congress sent a letter to President Uribe expressing great concern for the safety of the community, urging the President to ensure their safety, and bring the perpetrators to justice. U.S. NGOs sent a letter to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice calling for U.S. officials to take specific actions to better protect the community, and asking the Department of State (DOS) to withhold certification until there was an effective impartial investigation into the massacre. The grassroots response throughout the U.S. included numerous urgent actions, vigils and protests in front of the DOS and around the country related to this case. Thousands of persons emailed, wrote and/or faxed the DOS. The United Church of Christ alone sent an urgent action that generated over 2,000 faxes to the DOS, expressing concern over this massacre and asking them to withhold assistance to the Colombian Government.

At the end of April, PBI participated in a private meeting on San José de Apartadó with Colombian Vice President Francisco Santos and Senator Patrick Leahy's senior aide at the Colombian Ambassador's residence. In June, a U.S. delegation consisting of Congressional staffers and NGO representatives, visited the now displaced community of San José de Apartadó. During this delegation they met with community members in the displaced region and listened to their perspective on the massacre. After returning to the U.S., staffers who participated in this delegation organized a showing on the Hill of the documentary on the peace community made by well-known Colombian journalist Holman Morris.

In July, twenty-two U.S. Senators sent a letter to Secretary Rice asking the DOS to refrain from certifying military aid until the Government showed progress in a series of human rights cases, including the February 2005 massacre in San José de Apartadó, the 1997 massacre in Mapiripán, and the August 2004 murder of three union leaders in Arauca. The DOS did not certify military assistance to Colombia until early August, which brought strong political pressure on the Colombian Government to show progress in these cases. ■



US volunteer Kath Nygard on assignment at the Association of Families of the Detained and Disappeared (ASFADDES).

"Peace Brigades' presence is like oxygen. All of the people that Peace Brigades works with are activists who are trying to change structures in areas of conflict. Because of that, they are targeted, receive death threats, their relatives are murdered, they are thrown into prison and so on. So this kind of accompaniment, walking with people so that they can breathe, so that they can continue to do the work and feel that they're not alone, is really important."

Guillermo Rishchynski, Former Canadian Ambassador to Colombia,
Current Vice-President, Canadian International Development Agency, The Americas Branch

Ongoing Demand for PBI Services in Nepal

By Andrew Miller, Nepal Steering Committee
Kathmandu, July 2005

Over the course of 27 days, my PBI colleague, Jenny Brav, and I have visited nearly one third of Nepal's 75 districts. Our trip was unprecedented: A nation-wide field survey of the security situation facing the country's embattled human rights defenders. The space for such activists has clearly diminished in recent years, squeezed by the Maoist insurgents on one side and the state security forces on the other.

Following the 1 February 2005 "royal move," in which parliament was formally abolished and civil rights suspended, sections of the international community responded with grave concern for political party members, journalists, and other social activists. The International Commission of Jurists launched a short-term emergency initiative to protect human rights workers. PBI was invited to facilitate its unique security trainings for defenders, built on 22 years of conflict-zone experience.

Roughly 100 defenders and journalists participated in a series of three-day workshops in late April and early May in four of Nepal's five regions led by Marie Caraj, PBI veteran and staff of the PBI European Office. The trainings offered a series of practical and immediate tactics that can help improve security.

One month later, Jenny and I were dispatched to visit these defenders in their home towns. Our primary mission was to assess the impact of the training on their security consciousness and practices. During our travels, we met with members of well-known Nepali human rights groups, several of which originally requested PBI's presence. We interviewed one charismatic activist with the Human Rights Organization of Nepal. He was tortured by the military late last year. More recently, he received a personalized death-threat, on national television, by the leader of one of the private "village defense committees" that have been accused of violence since earlier this year. Elsewhere we heard from lawyers with Advocacy Forum who are monitoring prison conditions and filing Habeas Corpus petitions against illegal detentions. Each detainee released means more potential threats from authorities.



Jenny Brav of the PBI-Nepal Project speaks with Nepali human rights leaders.

Photo by Andrew Miller

Security problems for human rights defenders are by no means limited to aggressions carried out by the state security apparatus. One ethnic rights organization we visited, Backwards Society Education, has seen its field offices bombed four times by the Maoists. Nepali non-governmental organizations are increasingly accused by the insurgents of being "agents of imperialism," a reference to the international funding that many receive. Maoist abductions and occasional killings of NGO workers and journalists have added to the climate of fear.

The PBI trainings have clearly contributed to an emerging security consciousness within the human rights movement. In some cases, participants outlined specific security measures they had adopted in recent weeks, such as carrying out fact-finding missions in groups, as opposed to alone. In other cases, they told us that the trainings had boosted their self-confidence and a sense of identity as a Human Rights Defender.

A strong demand exists for PBI security trainings and other services. This appears to be especially true in more remote districts where human rights defenders feel isolated and, consequently, particularly vulnerable to harassment, threat, abduction, or attack. Everywhere we went, Nepali activists expounded on the value of international solidarity. We heard dozens of examples in which international opinion or presence influenced the decisions of both the Maoist rebels and Nepali Royal Army, in favor of releasing captives or not killing them. While we investigate and strategize how to obtain official registration in Nepal, we plan to carry out other initial programs. Follow-up on the security trainings will be one area. International delegations could be another. Creative options for "long-distance accompaniment" might also emerge.

Much to the detriment of most Nepalese, the country's violent conflict is not on the verge of simply going away. With our third mission in less than a year, however, we hope to have proven that neither is PBI. ■

Exciting New Strategic Directions for PBI for the Next Six Years: 2005-2011

On June 17, 2005, in the fitting venue of the Mahatma Gandhi Room in Central London, Peace Brigades International's 7th General Assembly was called to order. The General Assembly (GA) is the highest decision-making body of PBI and sets our course of action for the next three years. 42 PBI representatives from 13 Country Groups, the five projects, the Brussels/European Office, the International Headquarters in London and the International Council, attended the GA.

A detailed Strategic Plan proposal had been circulating to all 23 offices of PBI for 18 months, and nearly 100 new proposals to strengthen and improve our work were discussed using small groups and a democratic consensus process. The Strategic Plan proposal was divided into two parts: programs and structure.

Each day was spiced with intriguing field reports of the work done by our teams in Colombia, Mexico, Guatemala, Nepal and Indonesia. We affirmed at the GA that our greatest strength is "undoubtedly the international presence work carried out by our field Projects" which will "continue to be the central focus of PBI's energies."



Photo by Michael Joseph

Delegates from more than 18 countries circle-up at the PBI General Assembly in London for a round of consensus decision-making.

New Key Directions

1. To broaden PBI's presence in Asia and Africa in ways "fundamentally motivated by clearly identified needs on the ground." At the request of 40 civil society groups in Rwanda, Burundi and The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the staff of the European office and a member of the International Council have been conducting extensive field interviews, surveys and security protection trainings. Emerging from the GA, it looks like this very solid work will be expanded.
2. PBI will take on a greater advocacy and policy role. This strategic proposal received considerable attention at the GA. This means advocating more intentionally and explicitly for nonviolence and human rights in the media, at international forums, including the United Nations, and through the work of the Projects and Country Groups.
3. With respect to how PBI organizes its work, we passed numerous proposals to strengthen PBI internally, including policies on fundraising, financial management, the International Secretariat, communication among the Projects and Country Groups, volunteer support systems and personnel.
4. It is important to report that the GA considered several proposals to better protect and psychologically support our field volunteers, after a very tragic kidnapping and rape of a volunteer last year. PBI is taking steps to ensure that this violent aggression towards women never happens again to a volunteer. At the GA, we discussed several proposals related to sexual assault and harassment, crisis intervention for our volunteers during traumatic emergencies, as well as ongoing volunteer and team development. These proposals were remanded to the International Council for more attention and guidance in order to ensure effective implementation of these safeguards. More work is also needed on an ad hoc proposal calling for a PBI policy

on respecting gender equity and diversity.

As usual at a GA, there tends to be at least one proposal too controversial to achieve consensus. This time it was a proposal from the Indonesia Project to remove from our Mission Statement, "PBI respects the autonomy and the right of self-determination of all people ..." [Part 1: General Principles of the organization]. The Indonesia Project asserted that the terms autonomy and self-determination identified PBI with the separatist movement in Aceh and were not fundamental markers of PBI's work. Many other delegates could not agree to the proposed change and late night dialogue and brainstorming ultimately could not salvage the proposal.

The last day of the Assembly a newspaper headline read, "Mississippi Klansman Found Guilty in 1965 Civil Rights Slayings" which made us both sad and jubilant, for it was testament to all the hard work people must do around the world to stop impunity.

Putting PBI roles aside, people were fraternizing as the unique individuals we all are, thanks to the Europeans' flexibility of languages and their willingness to go with the flow. Everyone was backslapping after a beautiful consensus close-out, in the shadow of Gandhi's portrait. ■

PBI/USA has a New Address!

Peace Brigades International/ USA has changed the location of its Washington, DC office. The new address is:

*PBI/USA
1326 9th Street NW
Washington, DC 20001 USA*

Berkeley Party a Big Success! Celebrating 25 Years of Nonviolence in Action

PBI held a benefit concert to kick off our 25th Anniversary on Sunday, May 22, 2005 in Berkeley California. The event attracted new PBI supporters and fans of local musician Kid Beyond, while also becoming a reunion of many former field volunteers now living in the San Francisco Bay area. Approximately eighty PBI donors, potential field volunteers, former volunteers, staff & board members, and fans gathered to hear the great music of the featured artist Kid Beyond. We are exceptionally grateful to Kid Beyond for contributing his musical talent in support of PBI's operations. The fundraising event was held at La Peña Cultural Center, Shattuck Avenue in Berkeley. A great time was had by all, and the party raised almost \$1,000. ■



Looping and multitracking his voice live onstage Kid Beyond layers soulful lyrics over his own vocal instrumentation - creating an evocative, funky brew of hip-hop/techno-flavored alt-pop.

Linda Divine, a Bay Area nurse and mother of former Mexico field volunteer Emily Felt, speaks at a PBI fundraiser in Berkeley, California, May 22, 2005. At the fundraiser Linda shared some passages from Emily's letters home. Linda was initially concerned about her daughter's decision to serve as a field volunteer, but she soon realized what a terrific experience it was for Emily.



Photos by Aaron Walburg