

At the front of the display, CFPJ members take turns reading from a notebook containing the names of these dead. They don't call out to be heard; they don't demand the attention of passersby. Instead, they read the names with quiet reverence, with the inflection and focus of a meditation. The people walking by at first avert their glances, afraid perhaps of being accosted, of being solicited. But when they realize that the group is simply reading, and when they realize *what* they are reading, these passersby stop. They stop to look closer at the names and photos on the sheets of cardboard. They stop and listen to the names read out loud. Some even approach the faculty members behind the display. They have tentative questions, and a certain degree of alarm at the number of dead. They offer support and thanks — there is dialogue between the demonstrators and the public at large.

Twenty-nine-year-old James Raasch, a chemistry student and National Guardsman, stops to look through the names with his friend, 30-year-old Anthony, who served through the Navy on the U.S.S. Kittyhawk. When asked why they are scrutinizing the board so closely, Anthony answers, "I think it's important to check and see if any of your buddies has died."

Raasch explains, "You join up because you're the poorest of the poor. Nobody realizes — nobody goes in with the idea that you believe in anything. How can you know? They [military recruiters] can get you excited with propaganda, but there's a price to pay. And the dead," he says solemnly, "are only part of that price."

Geography professor and CFPJ member Shaul Cohen, who initially suggested the idea of reading the names of the dead each Friday afternoon, agrees, saying, "Many of the costs of the war are hidden from this country. These deaths are not the total cost, but being here and reading these names ... we want to do this so people can be engaged by it."

Cohen explains that the CFPJ display also includes notebooks that the public can sign into — one is a book of comments and concerns about the war for the White House, and the other is a book of condolences for American families whose loved ones have been killed in the war. The book of condolences is particularly touching, full not only of said condolences, but of remorse: "We are sorry we couldn't do more to stop this ... We are sorry to sacrifice your children ... We are sorry."

In late May, Eugene PeaceWorks' Craig Mahaffy worked with CFPJ's Bo Adan to coordinate a CFPJ reading of names with The Viewing Project, an installation of 105 symbolic coffins representing those killed so far in the Iraq War. To illustrate proper proportions, 100 of the coffins were draped in black to represent Iraqi civilians killed, and five of the coffins were covered with American flags to symbolize American and coalition deaths. The Viewing Project and that day's reading were presented on the quad north of the UO Knight Library. The scale of the presentation was dramatic.

Daniel Pope, history professor and spokesperson for CFPJ, says, "This was a really effective way of getting people's attention. A significant part of what is going on is getting people to pay attention, getting people to refocus on this. The Viewing Project and the reading of names helped to get this point across."

Other groups are working to mobilize and inform an even younger set of the population about the war with Iraq. Notably, CALC's Carol Van Houten and Eugene PeaceWork's Phil Weaver are collaborating on the Committee for Countering Military Recruitment program, which aims to protect student privacy from the prying eyes of government (and military recruiters), as well as to educate and counsel students on the realities of military duty as a life choice right out of high school. With as deeply entrenched as the U.S. is becoming in Iraq, and with as protracted as this war looks to become, the question of human power to fight the war looms large. The question of a possible military draft is a serious one, and Van Houten and Weaver are working to put out accurate information to stave off panic while keeping students and their families informed on the issues (see accompanying story, "New Recruits").

The efforts of CFPJ, Eugene PeaceWorks, The Viewing Project and Countering Military Recruitment not only protest the warring actions of the Bush administration, but they also inspire and hopefully mobilize the next generation in the work toward peace and justice.

### Something for Everyone

Don't be fooled because you don't see the huge peace demonstrations and rallies you saw a year ago on the streets of Eugene — activity is continuing in smaller, more focused groups. Longtime local activist Michael Carrigan sees much hope in the

# New Recruits

Local social worker Steven Merwin knows firsthand about military recruitment and the draft: Having grown up poor in upstate New York's dairy farm country, Merwin was drafted into the Vietnam War when he was 20 years old. "It was terrifying," he says. "It just struck me, 'This is real. I can't get out of this.'"

Steven and his wife Amy Pincus Merwin, an independent citizen video and audio journalist, are now parents of a daughter, 16-year-old Leanora, and a son, 19-year-old Orca. The fact is that this protracted war may well require more and more human power to sustain it has the Merwins facing the question of another draft. "It's my worst nightmare," says Amy, who protested mightily during the Vietnam War. "To have this cycling back — I never wanted to see this happen."

For families like this, and for students who find themselves being solicited by military recruiters as early as middle school, CALC and Eugene PeaceWorks are collaborating on the Counter Military Recruitment Program. Part of the focus, says Phil Weaver of Eugene PeaceWorks, is to have students, their families and school administrators understand the role of the No Child Left Behind Act. NCLB allows government access to student records and makes it possible to target certain students for military recruitment. Says Weaver of this breach of privacy, "This is a reversal of how student information is usually treated."

Van Houten has done school and community visits to talk over the issues of military service and recruitment. She does believe there is the possibility for a small draft, especially if Bush is reelected, and that this warrants true concern. However, this war has sharpened many of the standard draft statistics, causing a certain amount of panic for families of possible military recruits.

For example, there is much talk of Charles Rangel (D-NY), who has submitted draft bills every year for a couple of years calling for universal service for men and women, either military or otherwise, all of which would be highly controversial. This bill is aimed not at passing a draft, but at making the government face the "poverty draft" issues: that the military is largely made up of people of color and poor youth — and offspring of military families.

As well, the Selective Services System budget figures and the effort to fill vacancies on the draft board have the public worried that new action is happening in anticipation of a draft. In fact, says Van Houten, "Each year some in Congress (including De Fazio) try to end the SSS ... This year, to defend their need for so much money, [SSS] developed a work plan that would outline how to do a small selective draft. The plan for a short turn around, should a draft be authorized by Congress, already exists and is nothing new." Regarding draft board vacancies, Van Houten explains that the vacancies are nothing new. "Since terms are 20 years and the SSS was re-upped in 1980, there are a lot of vacancies [right now]," she says.

Van Houten says it's true that extradition treaties have been written to eliminate the option of going to Canada or Sweden. "But," she adds, "there is a case due to go to trial in Canada next month of a deserter arguing he needed asylum. The outcome of this case could make a difference here."

Finally, it's true there will be no educational deferments if and when a draft is re-instituted.

For families like the Merwins, whose children may be at risk in any future draft, such information provides little comfort. But, having accurate information about a possible draft, along with knowledge about student privacy rights, recruitment techniques, and alternatives for students after high school allows them to fight a stronger, better informed fight. — *Bobbie Willis*



Leanora, Steven and Amy Pincus Merwin.

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Noon, June 19, Federal Building at 7th Avenue and Pearl Street: **Progressive Response's teach-in/rally "Iraq After June 30: Can We Get Out ... How?"** Exploring the key ideologies that got us into Iraq and how to get out. Speakers: Ibrahim Gassama, Associate Professor of International Law; Susan Cundiff of WAND; Gordon Lafer, Associate Professor, Labor Education Resource Center.
- 7 pm, June 19, Washington Park Community Center: **Eugene Middle East Peace Group presents Moments**, a series of short films by Israelis covering the diverse spectrum of perspectives and interpretations of modern-day life in Israel.
- June 28: **Progressive Responses/CALC will run a call-to-end-the-war-in-Iraq ad in The Register-Guard.** To find out how to add your name to the ad, contact Carol Van Houten at vanhoute@onlink.net
- 7 pm, June 30, Broadway Plaza: **Faith in Action's "Call for Transformation: An Interfaith Prayer Service for Peace in Iraq."** A service of reflection and healing. Scheduled to coincide with the official handing over of power to a new Iraqi government.