

Mass Dissent

Massachusetts Chapter

National Lawyers Guild

14 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02108

December 2010

www.nlgmass.org

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In This Edition

Guild News
page 3

Lawyer Referral Service
page 5

Street Law Clinic
page 5

NLG Student Chapters Report
page 6

NLG Mass Defense Committee
page 8

"NLG Presents" & Happy Hour
page 9

**NLG Convention - Lawyers
Perspective**
page 10

NLG Advisory Committee
page 11

BOARD MEETING

December 14, 6:00 pm

14 Beacon St., 1st Fl.
Boston

2010, a Year of Hard Work: Legal & Otherwise

2010 continued the depression which continues to be called the Great Recession. The economic problems of the previous few years continued, causing the NLG Massachusetts Chapter to be stressed, with decreasing funding but increasing work which needs the Guild's attention. However, the Chapter continued to produce work all our members should be proud of.

The Massachusetts Chapter Board of Directors began the year with an emergency meeting to assess finances, and worked to create a plan to make the Chapter's finances viable. This work continued throughout the year, with much of the work being done by the finance committee. The **Guild Circle** continued to grow but we've lost several **Sustainers** due to financial constraints.

The Chapter's ongoing projects continued to be challenged by the requests for services. The **Street Law Clinics** were on the increase this year (see report on page 5); the **Lawyers Referral Service** had a good year after a slump in revenue in 2009, and increased the number of lawyers on its panel (page 5). **Student chapters** in the Boston area were very active; there were nascent

chapters at Roger Williams University School of Law in Bristol, Rhode Island, and Western New England College School of Law in Springfield (page 6).

The **Mass Defense** committee had a busy winter with charges against 200 students who camped out on the Boston Common in November 2009, eventually resulting in all but one of the protestors having the denial of the criminal complaints in exchange for paying \$50 court costs. (page 8).

The **Foreclosure/Eviction Prevention Task Force** continued to grow as it chased increase demand, working with the expanding number of community groups organizing to protect their neighborhoods from foreclosures and evictions. The work included Street Law Clinics, representation at foreclosure/eviction blockades, and legislative action to protect homeowners & tenants.

Two projects were merged this year, the Brown Bag Luncheon Series became "**NLG Presents...**" and is now scheduled just before the monthly **Happy Hour** (page 9).

Continued on page 4

**NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD
Massachusetts Chapter, Inc.**

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Join a Guild Committee

Street Law Clinic Project: The Street Law Clinic project provides workshops for Massachusetts organizations that address legal needs of various communities. Legal education workshops on 4th Amendment Rights (Stop & Search), Landlord/Tenant Disputes, Workers' Rights, Civil Disobedience Defense, Bankruptcy Law, Foreclosure Prevention Law, and Immigration Law are held at community organizations, youth centers, labor unions, shelters, and pre-release centers. If you are a Guild attorney, law student, or legal worker interested in leading a workshop, please contact the project at 617-723-4330 or nlgmass-slc@igc.org.

Lawyer Referral Service Panel (LRS): Members of the panel provide legal services at reasonable rates. Referral Service Administrative/Oversight Committee members: Neil Berman, Neil Burns, Joshua Goldstein, Jeremy Robin, and Azizah Yasin. For more information, contact the Referral Service Coordinator at 617-227-7008 or nlgmass@igc.org.

Foreclosure Prevention Task Force: Created in June 2008, the Task Force's goal is threefold: (1) to draft and introduce policies that address issues that homeowners and tenants of foreclosed on houses face, (2) to provide legal assistance to these homeowners and tenants, *and* (3) to conduct legal clinics for them. If you are interested in working with the Task Force, please call the office at 617-227-7335.

Independent Civilian Review Board: In coalition with the American Friends Service Committee and Greater Boston Civil Rights Coalition, the NLG has been pushing for the creation of an independent civilian board to review complaints against Boston police officers. To get involved in the campaign, please contact the office at 617-227-7335.

NLG National Immigration Project: Works to defend and extend the human and civil rights of all immigrants, both documented and undocumented. The Committee works in coalition with community groups to organize support for immigrant rights in the face of right-wing political attacks. For more information contact the NLG National Immigration Project at 617-227-9727.

NLG Military Law Task Force: Provides legal advice and assistance to those in the military and to others, especially members of the GIRights Hotline, who are counseling military personnel on their rights. It also provides legal support and helps to find local legal referrals when needed. The MLTF and the Hotline exchange many questions and information through their listserves. For advice and information, GI's can call 877-447-4487. To get involved, please contact Neil Berman (njberman2@juno.com) or Marguerite Helen (mugsm@mindspring.com).

COALITIONS:

Jobs with Justice, a coalition-based organization addressing workers' rights. The NLG is a member of Jobs with Justice; any interested Guild members can attend meetings & events.

GUILD NEWS

NLG HAPPY HOUR

The Massachusetts Chapter's **NLG Presents... & Happy Hour** takes place on the **2nd Wednesday of every month, 5:30 - 8:00pm, at Kennedy's Mid-Town Pub** (44 Province St., 2nd Fl., Boston, close to Suffolk Law School). However, we will not have Happy Hour in December. We will see you on January 12, 2011.

NLG HOLIDAY PARTY

You are invited to our Annual Holiday Party on **Friday, December 3, 5:30pm**, at **Stern Shapiro Weissberg & Garin** (90 Canal St., 5th Fl.) Among many attractions, we will have a raffle drawing with wonderful prizes. Raffle tickets are \$10 each and you can order them by calling 617-227-335 or when you come to the party.

Street Law Clinic Report

The following Guild members conducted (or are scheduled to conduct) trainings for law students and/or clinics for members of Boston area community organizations and agencies:

November 1: *Immigration law clinic at St. Ambrose Family Inn, by Liliana Mangiafico, observed by Northeastern student Stephanie Gharakhanian.*

November 8: *Foreclosure/Eviction Prevention training at Northeastern University School of Law, by Jonathan Messinger.*

November 19: *Workers' Rights clinic at The Cambridge Community Center, by BU student Marjan Batchelor and Mark Stern.*

December 16: *Immigration Law clinic at The Kennedy Center in Charlestown, by Rosie Milano.*

December 30: *Stop & Search clinic at Bridge Over Troubled Waters, by Makis Antzoulatos.*

NLG 2011 DINNER NOMINATIONS

Please send in your nominations for 2011 NLG dinner honorees (the nomination form is posted on www.nlgmass.org). The deadline for all entries is January 3, 2011.

Guild Mentorship Program in Full Swing!

The NLG Massachusetts Chapter Mentorship Program is doing really well thanks to the efforts of the many volunteers who have come forward to participate. Many very busy lawyers and law students have carved time out of their busy schedules to form mentoring relationships.

This year, the Program hosted two parties - in February at Felt and in October at Revolution Rock Bar; both events were very well attended. Several new mentees and mentors signed up, bringing the number of people in the program up to around 30. We have generally paired people up based on areas of practice and interest. One concern with the program is the number of mentors - the ratio of mentees to mentors is about 2:1, so we would love to see more mentors get involved - we don't want to turn any mentees away!

If you would like to participate and be a mentor or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. Laura Alfring (laura.alfring@gmail.com) & Mary Lu Mendonça (marylumendonca@yahoo.com).

ARTICLES FOR MASS DISSENT

The February issue of *Mass Dissent* will focus on the suppression of political dissent.

If you are interested in submitting an article, essay, analysis, or art work (cartoons, pictures) related to the topic, please e-mail the articles to nlgmass-director@igc.org.

The deadline for articles is January 15.

2010, a Year of Hard Work: Legal & Otherwise

Continued from page 1

In February the **Mentorship Program** entered a new era with a kickoff event at Felt, and through the year mentors and mentees were paired and bonded. There was a cocktail party at the Revolution Bar in October to kick off the new school year and again pair lawyer mentors with students (page 3).

May 7th saw the 29th **Annual Testimonial Dinner**. Ably emceed by Susan Church and John Salsburg, the evening was livelier than ever. Honorees included lawyers Soffiyah Elijah and Howard Cooper, legal worker Dan Kesselbrenner, and students Charlie Noss and Josh Raisler Cohn. There was a tribute to Howard Zinn, whose death this year was a loss that will be felt for a long time. The dinner had some new twists, including a silent auction and dancing into the night.

The highlight of the year for the Chapter Board of Directors was the **Annual Meeting** in March where Jerry Tisme gave a timely and personal overview of Haiti's long road to recovery after a history of human and natural disasters. There was a wide ranging discussion with much concern and hope for the future of Haiti by the numerous members who attended.

Since the spring, the Chapter has been working very closely with the Student Immigrant Movement and their campaign to pass the Dream Act.

The **Summer Retreat**, this year in June, was a time to step

back and rethink the Chapter, emphasizing how to make the Chapter more relevant to our members and their law work. There was much discussion about the Chapter better using technology to increase our efficiency and relevance. This has already resulted in our website being refurbished.

An exciting new project was launched this summer, the **NLG Advisory Committee**, an attempt to increase communications between the Guild and area activists and organizations. After a brainstorming meeting in August, there was a meeting in September to begin the hard work of creating a working committee. A second



Working hard at this year's half-day NLG Summer Retreat in August.

Thank you to all you Guild members who attended meetings and events, worked with various committees, and took to the streets fighting injustice. Let's do it again in 2011!

meeting was scheduled for December and great things are expected (see page 11).

In September, Urszula Masny-Latos testified at a Cambridge Council Meeting urging the City to support and fund the city's **Affordable Housing Program**.

The Chapter Board also worked through the fall considering creating an **NLG Litigation Group** to coordinate and pursue

litigation in the name of the Massachusetts Chapter.

In October the Chapter organized and sponsored a premier showing of Oliver Stone's **"South of the Border"** at the Brattle Theater in Cambridge with a discussion panel afterwards moderated by Iris Gomez. The show was sold out and a grand time was had by all who managed to obtain one of the elusive tickets.

In November we co-organized a **"Know Your Rights" Training** for local activists on what to do when the FBI pays a visit. Among the trainers were Guild members Myong Joun, David Milton, and Urszula Masny-Latos. We also co-

organized a fascinating panel on **"FBI and the Murder of a Black Panther,"** moderated by Michael Avery.

2010 included some **personal milestones** for members of the Chapter, and congratulations are in order for Laura Alfring's engagement, Astrid af Klinteberg's marriage, the birth of Makis Antzoulatos's

daughter, Devlin Harper Doran, and Urszula being awarded the "NLG Legal Worker" award at the NLG Convention Banquet in New Orleans.

We look forward to 2011, with hope that the elusive one world socialist Eden will finally be attained, and peace pervade the lovely planet Earth.

- Neil Berman -
Chapter Co-Chair

Lawyer Referral Service

by Sara DeConde

The Lawyer Referral Service (LRS), a sustaining project of the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild, places referrals to low and moderate-income residents in need of affordable legal services by our panel of over 70 Guild attorneys—the largest panel to date. A common thread exists among LRS attorneys: a commitment to those in need.

“National Lawyers Guild clients have the goal of gaining access to justice in our legal system,” summarized Attorney Brian McLaughlin, a first-year attorney and first-year member of the NLG and LRS whose first clients—a single mother and a disabled person—were referred by the LRS. “I feel fortunate that I was able to provide them service that they would not otherwise be able to attain anywhere else except as a result of the National Lawyers Guild.”

Similarly, after over two decades in the NLG and 15 years involvement with the LRS, LRS Trustee Chair Attorney Neil Burns, said his driving interest in this project remains in his ability to help lower-income people. He highlighted a personal injury case where a city-hired construction company’s method of street paving harmed his client with a history of respiratory problems.

As of October 2010, the LRS has placed 3,133 referrals to community members in search of legal representation and directed another 500 or so callers looking for free services or advice to outside resources.

As with years past, the majority of cases involve family law issues, civil litigation, and tenants’ rights, and are referred by the Greater Boston Legal Services, Massachusetts Bar Association, and other social service organizations—often because callers make too little to afford an attorney yet too much to qualify for free or reduced rate services elsewhere.

It is no wonder then that McLaughlin concludes NLG clients are “so incredibly thankful for all that we do as NLG Attorneys.” For more information or to join the NLG Lawyer Referral Service, visit www.nlgmass.org/lawyer-referral-service.

Sara DeConde is the Coordinator of the NLG Lawyer Referral Service.

Street Law Clinic

by Daniel Werner

The Street Law Clinic program got off to an enthusiastic start this year by meeting with most of the NLG school chapters. At these meetings the SLC coordinator and/or the NLG’s executive director talked about the value of the Street Law Clinics, both to society and to the Guild. We also used this opportunity to listen to the different ideas and projects that members are interested in. In response to interest in smaller cities, we will be working with gang outreach workers in Brockton and may also be working with law students and housing advocates in Springfield.

Something to celebrate this year is that some struggling NLG chapters have come back and are participating in clinics. Thanks to perseverant organizing, BU now has a vibrant group that hosted a Workers’ Rights training. BU students have also attended trainings at other schools and have participated in clinics. Suffolk students have attended trainings at other schools and are working toward holding a training at Suffolk.

Two law schools outside of the immediate region, Western New England School of Law in Springfield and Roger Williams University School of Law in Rhode Island, have recently formed NLG Chapters and are looking to hold clinics. Student member Lauren Marcous has been organizing with students and lawyers around Springfield to create a local Foreclosure Task Force that may involve the SLC project. Meanwhile, the newly formed NLG chapter in Rhode Island has been coordinating with community organizations to assess needs for clinics in Rhode Island and Southern Massachusetts.

Northeastern and New England law schools continue to be active in SLC this year, with many 1L’s exhibiting leadership in starting new projects. Trainings have been held at NESL, Northeastern, BU, and even at members’ offices; more are planned at Harvard, Roger Williams, and Suffolk. Stop and Search clinics seem to be the hot topic this year with clinics held, scheduled or in the works at Cambridge Cares about Aids, Cambridge Children’s and Family Services, Youth on Fire, Bridge over Troubled Waters, Brockton Youth Build and New Bedford Youth Build. Tenants’ Rights, Immigration Law, and Workers’ Rights clinics have also all been held or are planned. In order to strengthen leadership there may even be a multi-school training/party in the spring!

Thanks to all the attorneys and students who have volunteered their time for making this fall a success for the Street Law Clinic.

Daniel Werner is the Street Law Clinic project coordinator and a 2nd year student at New England School of Law.

NLG Student Chapters Report...

Boston University

After a dormant period, NLG at BU is officially a real student group and already busy organizing! We have held a Workers' Rights Street Law Clinic training and hosted a couple happy hour nights. In November, we hosted a discussion with Jeff Haas on "How the FBI and the Chicago Police Murdered a Black Panther" and Mr. Haas's experience litigating on behalf of Fred Hampton.

We are trying to get a discussion group going for next semester and hoping to hold a few more street law trainings, including Legal Observer.

- Marianne Tassone -

Harvard

During the past year, the Harvard NLG has worked closely with Justice for Palestine and *Unbound: Harvard Journal of the Legal Left* to host a number of events. Such events have included a talk by Norman Finkelstein about the Goldstone Report (U.N. fact finding mission on the Gaza conflict); "On the Legal Left," a discussion with professors Duncan Kennedy, Janet Halley and Lucie White from HLS and Karl Klare from Northeastern (we're pleased to note that Kennedy and Klare are NLG members); and a showing of "The People Speak," a tribute to the late Howard Zinn. In addition, the NLG recently held a viewing of "William Kunstler: Disturbing the Universe." Other events which the NLG supported and co-

sponsored included "Afghanistan: Resisting Occupation and Fundamentalism," with Prof. Marc Herold (University of New Hampshire) and an anonymous member of the Revolutionary Association of Women in Afghanistan; a screening of the documentary "Bread and Roses" (regarding the Justice for Janitors Campaign) and the Harvard Dinner for Darfur. Now we are ready for 2011!

- Marissa Vahlsing -

New England

The New England Law chapter of the NLG has had a very exciting year thus far. The chapter held a Street Law Clinic trainings, including Stop and Search and Landlord/Tenant, and plan to hold many more in the coming semester. The chapter also is co-sponsoring and training a team of high school students at Jeremiah Burke High School in Dorchester to participate in a Mock Trial competition put on by the Massachusetts Bar Association. We look forward to organizing some more exciting and engaging activities in 2011.

- Margaret Ciborowski -

Northeastern

The Northeastern University NLG chapter has been largely led by a vibrant and energetic group of first year students who have hit the ground running since school began in August. Several of our members put together the event "Organizing for Human Rights: Sex Workers and Allies Take it to

the U.N." We also organized an informal "History of NLG" program where we learned about the amazing background and roots of NLG, which was presented by NUSL Prof. Melinda Drew and Mass. Chapter Director Urszula Masny-Latos.

We proudly hosted "The FBI and the Murder of a Black Panther," featuring Jeffrey Haas, author of *The Assassination of a Black Panther*. We also sponsored a "Know Your Rights" training organized by Students for Sensible Drug Policy. Speaking of trainings, we organized two Street Law Clinics at our campus, one on Tenants' Rights and another on Foreclosure/Eviction Prevention. These trainings are in line with our issue of the year -- housing forfeitures and seizures.

Looking ahead, we plan a SLC training on Civil Disobedience. We are also planning to get trained in lobbying and will probably do some advocacy work next semester. In other news, NLG members organized a meeting with visiting Daynard Public Interest Fellow Fred Brewington, a well known New York civil rights lawyer and community advocate.

Not to count out the excellent and dedicated work of our upper level students, in October Yana Garcia, a 3L member, represented young activists on an NLG panel for the screening of "South of the Border" in Cambridge, Oliver Stone's documentary.

We are looking forward to next year and have big plans in mind -- stay tuned!

- Raymond Austin -

NLG Student Chapters Report...

Roger Williams

2010 marks the founding year of the Roger Williams University School of Law (Bristol, RI) chapter of the NLG (RWUNLG). Seven students began the chapter with the help of the Massachusetts Chapter's director, Urszula Masny-Latos. The RWUNLG chapter is structured as a collective, rather than a hierarchy, with seven students acting as Executive Council Members and labor divided within the group.

In January 2011, the RWUNLG chapter will hit the ground running with a general meeting to start the semester and Stop & Search and Legal Observing clinics to follow. We will also be reaching out to Providence, RI, activists and community organizations in order to assess how we can be of assistance in Rhode Island and how we can facilitate a stronger NLG presence within the state.

- Lindsay Vick -

WNEC

2010 has been a productive year for the reconstituted NLG chapter at Western New England College School of Law. We've been working hard to get the organization off the ground by drafting our constitution and building membership, as well as by bringing a more progressive legal voice to our campus.

In October and early November, we held a Prisoners' Rights Speaker Series, which kicked off with NLG member and



"Introduction to the Guild" October meeting of Guild members with students at Roger Williams University School of Law in Bristol, Rhode Island. (l.-r.): Lindsay Vick, Tracy Harper, Shannah Kurland, Laura Alfring (Boston), Benjamin Evans (Pawtucket), Lipou Laliemthavisay, Jaime Rogers, Chris Williams & Carl Williams (Boston), Neal Lawless.

Photo by Urszula Masny-Latos

Brooklyn defense attorney, Liz Fink. Ms. Fink spoke about the Attica prison uprising, prison conditions in the 1970s and the political undertones of that era. We also hosted Leslie Walker, Executive Director of Prisoners' Legal Services, who spoke about prison conditions in Massachusetts and what prisoners' rights advocates are doing to change them. Our third speaker, WNEC alumnus Peter Wagner, Executive Director of The Prison Policy Initiative, spoke about prison-based gerrymandering and how his organization started as an independent study project at Western New England College 10 years prior.

In November, the WNEC Chapter partnered with the Alternative Spring Break team and the International Law Society to co-sponsor Guild and international human rights attorney, Brian Concannon, Jr., Director

for the Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti. Mr. Concannon spoke about rebuilding Haiti from a human rights perspective and his position on the Haiti subcommittee of the NLG International Committee.

Many Guild members have also been serving as volunteers for the No One Leaves Coalition in an effort to combat the foreclosure epidemic in Springfield, which has the highest rate of foreclosures in the state. Next semester the WNEC Chapter is looking forward to participating in the Student Day Against the Death Penalty, as well as continuing our work with the No One Leaves Coalition and other on-campus groups.

- Jack Godleski -

NLG Mass Defense Committee

by Jeff Feuer

2010 has been a fairly quiet year for the Massachusetts Mass Defense Committee. However, we did manage to successfully represent more than 200 demonstrators involved in a major environmental action campaign, as well as demonstrators arrested at the Israeli Consulate in Boston. We also continued our legal observer and representation work with City Life/Vida Urbana and Jobs With Justice around the continuing foreclosure/eviction and health-care crises gripping our state.

In November, 2009 and again on Earth Day in April, 2010, a total of more than 200 climate change demonstrators (many of them college students and first-time demonstrators from throughout

tors at a series of magistrate hearings, spread out over many months. Through negotiations with the Suffolk County D.A.'s office, we were able to get all of the applications for criminal complaints against all of the demonstrators dismissed, so that none of the demonstrators had a criminal record entered against them, upon payment of a reasonable "court cost" fine. The one activist who decided not to take this deal was represented pro bono by David Nathanson, who eventually was able to get the trespass charge against him dismissed completely.

In addition, Ryan Schiff and David Nathanson provided pro bono representation to four activists arrested at a pro-Palestinian demonstration at the Israeli Consulate. Ryan and David were able to get those

eviction blockades in Dorchester and Mattapan, and various protests against foreclosures, working with the Leadership Campaign, City Life/Vida Urbana, Jobs With



Chris Williams walking in the stormy waters...



On their legal observing posts at a Boston protest in June against Arizona's anti-immigrant law, escaping sudden very heavy rain (l.-r.): Carl Williams, Sam Berk, Sara DeConde. (Not pictured Cecilia Canda.)

Photos by Ester Serra

Massachusetts) who camped out overnight on the Boston Common across from the State House received summons to show cause why they should not be charged with trespassing. The volunteer Guild lawyers of the Mass Defense Committee worked to represent all of these demonstra-

charges dismissed as well.

The Committee continued to provide legal observers for a variety of progressive political events and demonstrations throughout Massachusetts, including the GLBT Pride Parade in Northampton, the Earth Day protest on the Boston Common,

Justice, the Chelsea Collaborative, and the Mass. Alliance Against Predatory Lending (MAAPL). In addition to providing legal observers for these events, the lawyers from the Committee provided a number of free clinics to groups and individuals who were planning on engaging in direct political action that could result in arrests. The NLG lawyers who volunteered a significant amount of time with the Committee this past year included Jeff Feuer, Lee Goldstein, Susan Church, Kathryn Hayne Barnwell, Danny Beck, Ben Falkner, Carl Williams, Ryan Schiff, and David Nathanson.

Jeff Feuer is a long time active member of the Mass Defense Committee and an attorney at Goldstein & Feuer in Cambridge.

“Think & Drink” or “Lunch & Learn” -- Either Way, It’s Organizing

by *Bonnie Tenneriello & Judy Somberg*

We underestimate the value of talking. You can tweet or facebook all you like, but real-time conversation is how lasting organizing happens. As Malcolm Gladwell recently wrote in the New Yorker (October 4), real risk-taking activism occurs only in groups whose members know and trust each other.

Thus the Chapter’s speaker series, “*NLG Presents*,” aims to overthrow the established order through subversive talk, food, and drink (alcohol optional) on the second Wednesday of each month. It has moved from a brown bag “Lunch and Learn” to an evening “Think and Drink” at Kennedy’s Midtown on Province Street, but the comradeship is the same. We do not just listen to speeches, but think together about issues and work that matter to all of us.

This past year has brought leading organizers and thinkers of many stripes to the Guild’s table. Hopefully, each of them recruited some support for their cause.

- The foreclosure crisis was the topic in January, when **Nadine Cohen** and **Jeff Feuer** and activists from **City Life – Vida Urbana** talked about their joint efforts to stop foreclosures and evictions.
- **Barb Dougan** of Families Against Mandatory Minimums spoke in February about her organization’s efforts to overturn harsh drug sentencing laws –

efforts that bore fruit later in the year with the passage of S. 2583, a bill allowing drug offenders in county Houses of Correction to be eligible for parole after serving one-half their sentences.

- In March, **John Bonifaz** and **Jeffrey D. Clements** of Free Speech For People explained the dangers of the Supreme Court’s *Citizens United* decision, which opened the floodgates for corporate money in elections but also created efforts to amend the

legendary Boston civil rights lawyer. And in July **Iris Gomez** read from her newly published novel, *Try to Remember* -- an “enthraling fiction debut,” according to Publisher’s Weekly.

- Most recently, **Cole Harrison** of United for Justice with Peace and **Sarah Fuhro** of Military Families Speak Out spoke in November about the realities of war in Afghanistan and Iraq, and strategies for ending it. The discussion with Chapter members showed how passionately we feel about the war, its tremendous cost in dollars as well as lives, and how painfully powerless many of us feel to stop it.

Look for announcements of future talks, join the conversation, meet new friends, and bring your own work to the

table. Right now the Chapter is discussing whether the lunch or evening format works best, so please share your thoughts by emailing nlgmass@igc.org. Also, please let us know if you are interested in a particular issue or a project – from inside or outside the Guild.



November “NLG Presents...” - Sarah Fuhro addresses the group.

Photo by Sara DeConde.

Constitution so that a corporation is not a “person” entitled to free speech. (You may have heard them recently on Democracy Now.)

- Guild members and friends shared personal insights on international struggles for justice on two occasions. In June, **Marjorie Suisman** and her son **Max Geller** described their experience in Palestine and grassroots activism to end the Israeli occupation. In October, **Nancy Kohn** talked about her recent trip to Cuba, the plight of the Cuban 5, and her work with Pastors for Peace.
- Guild members also shared their literary triumphs. In April **Mark Brodin** read from his new book on the life of Bill Homans, a

Bonnie Tenneriello is a member of the Mass. Chapter’s board of directors and a staff attorney at Prisoners’ Legal Services of Massachusetts. Judy Somberg, a solo practitioner, is also a board member.

We, The Lawyers, Report from the 2010 NLG Convention...

Thom Cincotta

The Guild's national convention is a perennial jolt in the arm for progressive and radical lawyers, law students, and legal workers from all over the country. This year's event was held in the heart of New Orleans' French Quarter at an exquisite historic hotel, the Monteleone. Hopping clubs along Frenchmen and Bourbon streets, delicious Cajun food, and amazing brass jazz were a lively backdrop to the convention, which fulfilled its role as a reminder of the spirit of resistance that binds us as organization.

My personal highlights (aside from rooming with Urszula's son, Sebastian) include two fiery speakers on *What Happened to Working Class Consciousness*. Jaribu Hill, director of the Mississippi Worker's Center for Human Rights, gave us a reality check in her talk on "diapers, rape, and the Klan," where she described how, just a few days before the convention, workers at a catfish plant in the Delta were forced to wear Pampers when the bosses denied them bathroom privileges. Steward Acuff, a former organizing director for the AFL-CIO, put today's economic crisis in perspective as part of a sustained, systematic public policy designed to crush workers' power. Lambasting the so-called "jobless recovery," Stewart shared how average take-home pay today is worth less than in 1973. To great applause, he said, "When people talk about the free markets and free market solutions, they're full of shit."

Every time I attend convention, I am struck and nearly over-

whelmed by the wide scope and quality of Guild members' work. I attended a workshop led by Ben Manzi (MovetoAmend.org) and Roxana Orell on resistance to the *Citizens United* case that opened the flood gates for corporate donations to campaigns. A young lawyer from Philly, Mike Lee, also inspired me during his talk on setting up shop as a progressive attorney. Mike offers a discount to clients who will sit through his free 3-hour "Know Your Rights" clinic.

As usual, the conversation ended too soon to feel like we could reach consensus on what needs to be done.

Ewelina Mroczka & Jonathan Messinger, two first timers

New Orleans, though devastated by Hurricane Katrina, never lost its soul, including its activist politics and warm hospitality. The Hotel Monteleone in the French Quarter was packed with many of the NLG's brightest who came together to fight for justice and equality for all people.

During the day, we participated in seminars that focused on immigration law, labor law, and criminal law among other salient topics. Various NLG committees and projects - National Immigration Project, National Police Accountability Project, Military Law Task Force Committee, International Committee, Labor & Employment Committee - held daily workshops (six or seven per day).

The evenings featured receptions with much of the wonderful food and music for which Nawlins is renowned, celebrations of international solidarity with lawyers and human rights defenders from many countries. On Friday, the Guild

hosted a well-attended and fun Student Party with musicians including Rusty Lazer and Big Freedia.

On Saturday, there was a United People of Color Caucus Anti-Racism Training and an Anti-Racism Workshop that examined and explored interpersonal and structural racism and the systemic inequality that comes with it. That afternoon, the Free Palestine Subcommittee had a workshop based on the topic "What is the role and/or importance of Academic and Cultural Boycotts in the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Movement?" Later that afternoon at the Plenary, we all voted on resolutions and amendments for the upcoming year.

Saturday evening, there was a banquet with our Massachusetts director, Urszula Masny-Latos, receiving the 2010 National Legal Worker Award for her hard work, dedication, and passion to the Guild! We found her inspiring acceptance speech the highlight of the Convention. On Sunday, the final day of the Convention, attendees joined a 3-hour Solidarity Tour where we were able to view up close the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and the slow rebuilding process that has followed.

All in all, a very inspiring event! Let's all march on and not miss the Philadelphia Convention October 12-16, 2011!

Thom Cincotta, a member of the Board of Directors, is an attorney at Political Research Associates. Jonathan Messinger has a law office in Danversport. Ewelina Mroczka works at the Law Office of Jonathan Messinger.

NLG Massachusetts Chapter Sustainers

In the spring of 2003, the Massachusetts Chapter of the NLG initiated the Chapter Sustainer Program. Since its inception, the Program has been very successful and has been enthusiastically joined by the following Guild members:

Adkins, Kelston & Zavez • Anonymous • Michael Avery • Susan Barney & Kamal Ahmed • Samuel Berk • Neil Berman • Howard Cooper • Barb Dougan • Robert Doyle • Melinda Drew & Jeff Feuer • Carolyn Federoff • Roger Geller • Lee Goldstein & Shelley Kroll • Benjie Hiller • Stephen Hrones • Martin Kantrovitz • Nancy Kelly & John Willshire-Carrera • David Kelston • Leslee Klein & Mark Stern • Petrucelly, Nadler & Norris • Hank Phillippi Ryan & Jonathan Shapiro • Allan Rodgers • Martin Rosenthal • Sharryn Ross • Anne Sills & Howard Silverman • Judy Somberg • Stern, Shapiro, Weissberg & Garin

The Sustainer Program is one of the most important Chapter initiatives to secure its future existence. Please consider joining the Program.

YES, INCLUDE MY NAME AMONG NLG MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER SUSTAINERS!

I, _____, am making a commitment to support the Massachusetts Chapter of the Guild with an annual contribution of:
_____ \$500 (not including my membership dues)
\$ _____ (other above \$500)

As a sustainer I will receive:

- special listing in the Dinner Program;
- 1/8 page ad in the Dinner Program;
- acknowledgement in every issue of *Mass Dissent*;
- two (2) free raffle tickets for a Holiday Party raffle;
- invitation to special events.

Three ways to become a sustainer:

- contribute \$500 or more a year (not including dues)
- pair up with another person and pay \$250 each, or
- join the "Guild Circle" and pay \$50/month minimum.

Please mail to: NLG, Massachusetts Chapter
14 Beacon St., Suite 407, Boston, MA 02108

NLG (New) Advisory Committee

This year saw the beginning of a new project, the NLG-Massachusetts Chapter Advisory Committee. It grew out of discussions between some Guild Sustainers considering how to use the skills of our Chapter's members and connect them with the needs of Boston communities. This beginning led to a meeting at Northeastern in late September attended by a dozen Guild lawyers and local activists. This project is being developed as we enter 2011 and the committee promises to be an exciting addition to our work. After the meeting, two participants expressed the following thoughts about the committee:

SUSAN BARNEY:

"The NLG, and the Massachusetts Chapter in particular, plays a crucial role in our

movements for social justice. Many of us in the activist community have received training, advice and legal assistance from the Guild over the years. The new advisory committee, recently begun by the Massachusetts Chapter, represents an exciting opportunity to move beyond this traditional relationship between the Guild and community activists. By formalizing regular communication, I hope the voices of a broad range of activists and community members will inform the work of the Guild. I also believe this committee will bring increased awareness of the resources and knowledge that the Guild has to offer to our struggle, as well as providing an opportunity for many of us to sit at the same table and learn about work being done in diverse sectors of our movement. I look for-

ward to participating in the committee and appreciate the Guild's initiative towards strengthening our movement for social justice."

STEVE BUCKLEY:

"I see two reasons to become involved with the NLG Advisory Committee. First, being on the Committee allows me to get information from Boston community groups about what issues they work on. Second, it also increases my participation in the Guild and other progressive causes. So far, I think it's working out!"

Susan Barney is a local activist working on Palestine solidarity and a member of the Boston Interpreter's Collective.

Steve Buckley is an NLG member and sustainer.

Mass Dissent

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The National Lawyers Guild is...



"... an association dedicated to the need for basic change in the structure of our political and economic system. We seek to unite the lawyers, law students, legal workers and jailhouse lawyers of America in an organization which shall function as an effective political and social force in the service of people, to the end that human rights shall be regarded as more sacred than property interests. Our aim is to bring together all those who regard adjustments to new conditions as more important than the veneration of precedent; who recognize the importance of safeguarding and extending the rights of workers, women, farmers, and minority groups upon whom the welfare of the entire nation depends; who seek actively to eliminate racism; who work to maintain and protect our civil rights and liberties in the face of persistent attacks upon them; and who look upon the law as an instrument for the protection of the people, rather than for their repression."

Preamble to the Constitution of the National Lawyers Guild, originally adopted February 22, 1937, and most recently amended in July 1971.

Please Join Us!

Dues are calculated on a calendar year basis (Jan.1-Dec.31) according to your income*:

Jailhouse Lawyers	Free
Law Students	\$25
up to \$15,000	\$40
over \$15,000 to \$20,000	\$50
over \$20,000 to \$25,000	\$75
over \$25,000 to \$30,000	\$100
over \$30,000 to \$40,000	\$150
over \$40,000 to \$50,000	\$200
over \$50,000 to \$60,000	\$250
over \$60,000 to \$70,000	\$300
over \$70,000 to \$80,000	\$350
over \$80,000 to \$90,000	\$400
over \$100,000	\$500

* Any **new** member who joins after September 1 will be carried over to the following year. Dues may be paid in full or in quarterly installments. Dues of \$80 cover the basic membership costs, which include publication and mailing of *Mass Dissent* (the Chapter's monthly newsletter), national and regional dues, and the office and staff.

No one will be denied membership because of inability to pay.

Fill out and send to:

National Lawyers Guild, Massachusetts Chapter
14 Beacon St., Suite 407, Boston, MA 02108

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

PHONE: (w) _____ (h) _____

E-MAIL: _____

FAX: _____

Circle one:

____ Lawyer ____ Legal Worker ____ Law Student ____ Jailhouse Lawyer

Alumna/Alumnus of _____ Year _____

Dues (from schedule): _____

I am interested in working on the following projects:

- ____ Lawyer Referral Service
- ____ Street Law Clinic
- ____ Mass Defense Committee
- ____ *Mass Dissent* (monthly publication)
- ____ National Immigration Project