

Group 49's 27th annual Write-a-thon for Human Rights

Group 49's 27th annual Write-a-thon for Human Rights was held on December 14, 2014. This event, in honor of International Human Rights Day, is now known as the Global Write-a-thon or "Write For Rights," celebrated in communities across the US and in many countries around the world. At these events, Amnesty members as well as friends from the general public, come together to write letters on behalf of prisoners of conscience and other individuals at risk or under human rights violation.



Like most local groups in AIUSA (the American section of Amnesty International), we write appeals on a selection of ten cases or situations.

This year, we wrote on behalf of individuals in Belarus, China, Iran, Nigeria, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), USA, Uzbekistan, and the women and girls of El Salvador.

The public is always cordially invited to this free, annual event, held in the Parish House of the First Unitarian Church of Providence

In four intense hours, our participants wrote nearly **500 letters**, which we have mailed to the countries involved.



The case in the US regards a prisoner in Louisiana now entering his 42nd year of solitary confinement. No physical evidence links him to the murder in which he was allegedly involved. His conviction has been reversed three times by appeal courts, but Louisiana continues to assert his guilt.

Since our event, the prisoner in China for whom we wrote appeals was permitted, for the first time in years, to receive a visit from her daughter, and a court in Nigeria is reviewing the case for which a 16-year-old was tortured and sentenced to death.

Our guest speakers were Clement and Aline Shabani, courageous human rights activists from the Democratic Republic of Congo. They were forced to flee from their home in the Congo because of their work on behalf of abused women and education for children. After bringing a complaint against the violation of a young girl, the Shabanis were themselves attacked and assaulted, and had to flee for their lives. After telling their story at our Write-a-thon, they lit our ceremonial Amnesty Candle of Hope.

Contributions from our business community helped make this meaningful event festive as well as serious. We are deeply grateful to these generous donors, who helped make our event enjoyable, providing prizes for the drawings, and fortifying participants with food and beverages for a long afternoon of writing: Adler's Hardware, Avon Cinema, L'Artisan Café & Bakery, Books in the Square, Brown University Bookstore, Cable Car Cinema, CAV restaurant, Coffee Exchange, Garden Grille Café, Minerva Pizza, Olive Tap, Paper Nautilus Bookstore, Seven Stars Bakery, Teas & Javas Café, Town Wine & Spirits, Wayland Bakery, and Wayland Fine Wines and Liquors. Please patronize them.



Our Donors

Adler's Hardware
Avon Cinema
L'Artisan Café & Bakery
Books in the Square
Brown University Bookstore
Cable Car Cinema
CAV restaurant
Coffee Exchange
Garden Grille Cafe
Minerva Pizza
Olive Tap
Paper Nautilus Bookstore
Seven Stars Bakery
Teas & Javas Café
Town Wine & Spirits
Wayland Bakery
Wayland Fine Wines and Liquors

Our Write-a-thon was co-sponsored by the World Affairs Committee of the First Unitarian Church of Providence.

Human rights work goes on year round, not only on the special day of the Write-a-thon. Group 49 meets once a month to continue this work. We would be glad to welcome you at a meeting, if you would like to visit, or to join us. We post information on this web site about the date of our meeting, time, and place. We also look to the community to support our work, both by joining in as much as possible, and by donation to cover our minimal expenses, which are mainly postage and copying. If you shop at the East Side Marketplace, we would also be grateful for receipts from shoppers, as they can provide us with small amount of help.

Amnesty International works for the basic human rights of all persons, the release of prisoners of conscience, and seeks and protection for individuals who are abused or at risk because of their non-violent expression of their belief, their religion, race, ethnic origin, language, or sexual orientation. We are neutral, impartial, and independent of all governments, economic interests, political factions, ideologies, and religious creeds.