

# New York City News



## NLG-NYC EC Approves Programmatic Goals for 2014

At its February meeting, the Chapter EC approved the following proposal for programmatic work for 2014, with the caveat that some of the goals are contingent on funding and require further investigation.

### MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

1. Develop a questionnaire, meeting or poll to membership to gauge services and opportunities, needed/wanted.
  - Create survey monkey poll to send to membership, and hard mailing poll for those members off line or who prefer snail mail. Give 30 days to respond.
  - Program committee will draft poll and send to membership.

- The program committee will analyze the poll and report to EC and membership.
2. Online Membership Database  
Acquire an online membership database that can provide members the ability to update their membership data, practice areas, pay dues, join committees, sign up for referral directory, register for events, donate etc., and sign up for automatic dues or donation payments.
  3. Outreach and Recruiting
    - Table at NYU Public Interest Career Fair.
    - Table at NYC Bar Career Fair.
    - Table at law school career fairs in the NYC region.
    - NextGen Happy Hour in connection with NYU Public Interest Career Fair.
    - Resume monthly NextGen events and encourage chapter membership among attendees.
    - Outreach to NYC law school student associations associated with traditionally marginalized communities to invite to NextGen events and other chapter events.
    - Devise and implement yearly membership drive.
  4. Become an accredited CLE provider  
Provide low cost CLEs of interest to radical attorneys

**Late-breaking news: change of venue! Due to the recent closure of our regular venue for structural repair, the Spring Fling has been relocated to the beautiful Riverside Church, Assembly Hall! Details below.**



### HONORING THE FLOYD STOP & FRISK TEAM

Jonathan Moore

Center for Constitutional Rights Team:  
Baher Azmy • Darius Charney • Ian Head  
Sunita Patel • Chauniqua Young

Law Student Honoree: Alex Gorman

Riverside Church, Assembly Hall • 490 Riverside Drive, New York, NY • Accessible entrance:  
91 Claremont Ave. @ 120th Street • 6:00 – 10:00 pm

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RSVP by May 1

For information call 212-679-6018.

Visit [www.nlgny.org](http://www.nlgny.org) to order journal ads and tickets online.

### SOLIDARITY/COMMITTEES

1. Devise a manual on “Starting and Running” a NLG-NYC Committee with suggested recommendations for activities, fundraising, events, membership criteria, etc.

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LAWYERS GUILD  
New York City News**

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animalrights at nlg.org

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**Next Generation Committee**

nextgen at nlgny.org

**Street Law Team**

Hannah Mercuris

# Programmatic Goals

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2. Conduct a yearly assessment of the NLG-NYC committees prior to the annual meeting.
3. Solicit a quarterly report from Chapter committees for purposes of the newsletter.
4. Check-in with committee chairs twice this year.
5. Identify procedure for drafting policy & position statements, press releases, and sign-on letters on areas of interest amongst chapter members and committees; recruit members who can speak on behalf of the Guild and draft press releases around priority areas.
6. Host a NLG-NYC Committee Fair providing an opportunity for committee members to network and learn about one another's work.

## STRATEGIC CAMPAIGNS

### 1. Campaign Committee

Form a committee consisting of EC, committee, and general members tasked with researching and identifying one local campaign for the Guild to engage as a coalition partner

## STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIPS

Develop relationships with 5-10 organizations or individuals (elected officials, media, etc.) engaged in the policy debate around our areas of interest

## SPECIFIC CAMPAIGN IDEAS

Some of the campaigns proposed by members of this committee are listed below. Further investigation and research is required to determine interest in, and viability of, these suggestions.

### NYPD SUPPRESSION OF PROTEST ACTIVITY

With a new administration, we have the opportunity to test the NYPD's position on some of the most egregious examples of NYPD suppression of protest activity. It is also better to engage in these kinds of efforts right now when protest activity is quiet for the time being and our stance has the benefit of distance. There are certain tactics that we might address:

- The over-use of police motorcycles that idle alongside pedestrians.
- The use of horses in a threatening manner.
- Excessive use of metal barriers and kettling, preventing people from mingling and interacting
- Pepper spray, police brutality

### END SURVEILLANCE OF MUSLIMS

Much of the Muslim community is in a "wait and see" mode to see what might come of the rampant Muslim surveillance project under De Blasio's administration. We should reach out and let them know we are partners with this struggle. We should be on the standby to issue releases and lend legal observers.

We might also consider reaching out to the attorneys in the two lawsuits challenging the surveillance to see if an amicus brief would be helpful. This amicus brief can bring the wealth of historical knowledge that our membership has on the need to restrain the NYPD's surveillance of communities during the civil rights era.

### CAMPAIGN AGAINST SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

Our mass incarceration committee is already well - connected. I think the idea here is to throw more Guild support their way. Let's connect their work more so that we take every advantage of opportunities where the EC may speak collectively with our voice in furtherance of their work.

There might be room for direct representation by our members in cases involving conditions of confinement.

### DRONE-FREE NEW YORK CITY

We need a City Council resolution that makes New York City a drone free zone. There are already efforts underway whereby the NYPD is planning to test the use of drones. We should remain vigilant of the civil rights implications of these proposals. This idea is most in the germination phase. Ideally, non-violence community groups would spearhead a bill like this. We might lend support through the research and writing skills of students with the supervision of attorneys who have experience in the New York City political processes.

### STOP AND FRISK/ MUSLIM SPYING

The NLG is not a member of Communities United for Police Reform. If there were a way for us to join and lend support, I think that would be awesome. In particular, the anti-Muslim spying campaign has not gotten as much traction as the campaign against stop and frisk. I don't know if MDP is doing any work on this, but I think it's an important issue to put NLG support behind.

### STAFFING

Add an additional staff person to support implementation of the NLG-NYC program proposal.

# NLG-NYC Holiday Party 12/18/13

Photo: Jefferson Siegel



The NYC Chapter returned to the historic Surrogate's Court to close out 2013, graciously hosted by Surrogate Rita Mella.



Above: Franklin Siegel and Emily Jane Goodman.

## LAW SCHOOL ROUND UP



**J. Justin Woods** (above), a JD/MPA Candidate at **Pace Law School**, will be interning at Newman Ferrara in Manhattan for most of the summer. Justin will also be studying at Oxford University in July, conducting a comparative study of US and UK local governments, and legal issues related to transparency, participation, and engagement in the land use development process.

**NYU Law** student **Jacqueline Horani** is seeking information on Intentional Communities for a summer internship project attempting

to synthesize the legal perspective of these communities: "Intentional Communities are groups of people who have been drawn to live together ranging from communal house living to towns formed through sustainable philosophies. If you or anyone you know has been involved in Intentional Communities, has a legal perspective or background of working with such communities, or has related jurisprudential ideas on communal living, property rights, and governance. Please email Jacqueline at [jeh519@nyu.edu](mailto:jeh519@nyu.edu). All and any information and perspectives welcome, this is a self-created internship and aims to provide value to both lawyers and those involved in Intentional Communities."

On April 8 **CUNY** NLG hosted a workshop on *FOIA/FOIL: A Practical Guide to an Impractical System*. "Learn experienced practitioners' strategies for gaining access to information the government keeps on you, your communities, or your clients". NLG-NYC's Animal Rights Activism Committee and Muslim Defense Project were co-sponsors.

The **NYLS** chapter showed the documentary film on solitary confinement *Herman's House* on March 19. Herman Wallace spent more than 40 years in solitary confinement in Louisiana's Angola Prison. He was finally released in October 2013 and died three days later from advanced liver cancer.

The **CUNY** chapter, together with the NLG-NYC **Muslim Defense Project** and CUNY's CLEAR Project (Creating Law Enforcement Accountability & Responsibility) conducted a *KYR Train-the-Trainer Workshop* on February 20 "to address the unmet legal needs of Muslim, Arab, South Asian, and other communities in the New York City area that are particularly affected by national security and counterterrorism policies and practices". **Beena Ahmad** and **Bina Ahmad** were trainers. Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), the Middle Eastern and North African Law Students Association (MENALSA), and the Muslim Law Students Association (MLSA) also participated.

On February 7 after the Public Interest Career Fair at NYU Law School, the **NextGen** Committee welcomed NLG law students to the new school year with a Happy Hour at the Half Pint on W 3rd Street.

The chapter is seeking a **summer intern** to work with the Mass Incarceration Committee (MIC) to work primarily on its **Parole Preparation Project**, in assisting long-termers in New York State prisons who have been denied parole and who would benefit from counseling and assistance in preparing to go before the Parole Board. The internship is unpaid, but the position is work/study eligible. The MIC is part of a large coalition supporting parole reform in New York State.

The chapter held an **Anti-Oppressive Communication Training** on May 3 to assist the EC to improve communication skills “to enhance how the organization and its members are working and collaborating together”, and to avoid “breakdowns in communication, leading to tension and dissension, impacting efficiency, cohesion, and effectiveness.”

The **Animal Rights Activism Committee** is seeking vegan recipes for its **Social Justice Cookbook**. So please send “delicious, cruelty free” recipes to [animalrights@nlg.org](mailto:animalrights@nlg.org).

The NLG-NYC **Mass Defense Committee** and the Defending Dissent Foundation co-sponsored a panel discussion at Judson Memorial Church on April 10 on *Panagacos v. Towery*, the suit by Olympia/Tacoma area anti-war activists and anarchists charging the U.S. Army with violating their First and Fourth Amendment rights by infiltration, harassment and disruption in 2006-2009. The Ninth Circuit has rejected the government’s motion to dismiss.

The **Labor & Employment Committee** met on April 7 at CWA Local 1180 on Harrison Street in connection with a campaign by a group of **contract attorneys** who are organizing to “bring some equity to the world of temp work”. The many Guild members who are temping or doing other contract work can contact co-chair Garrett Kaske at [g.kaske@gmail.com](mailto:g.kaske@gmail.com) or (631) 805-5638.

The chapter had a table at the **MetroLALSA (Metro-Area Latino/a Law Student Association) Conference** on April 5 at CUNY School of Law

The chapter’s **Street Law Team** has hired **Hannah Mercuris**, a rising 2L at NYU Law School, as the new coordinator, starting April 14, 2014. The Street Law Team sends workshop facilitators into communities to teach people about their rights during encounters with law enforcement and Immigration and



**NLG-NYC Mass Defense Committee** and the Defending Dissent Foundation co-sponsored a panel discussion at Judson Memorial Church on April 10 on *Panagacos v. Towery*, left to right, Brian Glick, Lynne Williams, Brendan Maslauskas Dunn, Sue Udry and Bruce Bentley.

Customs Enforcement (ICE). The workshop gives participants an opportunity to talk about stop-and-frisk, the role of law enforcement in their communities, and focuses on three types of interactions: conversations, detentions, and arrests. Facilitators provide practical advice for getting through an encounter safely and calmly. Facilitators are law students, organizers, legal workers, and attorneys from all over. The coordinator will receive a stipend of \$500 for the summer and \$1000 per semester.

The chapter was among many co-signers of a letter urging the mayor to forbid all City departments, particularly the police and fire departments, from marching in the **St. Patrick’s Day Parade** either in uniform or with any banner that identifies them with the City: “The organizers of the St. Patrick’s Day Parade have established a constitutional right to their exclusionary religious procession, but the participation of uniformed police and firefighters is a clear violation of the City’s Human Rights Law [and] sends a clear signal to LGBTQ New Yorkers that these personnel, who are charged with serving and protecting all New Yorkers, do not respect the lives or safety of LGBTQ people.”

**Jeanne and Frank Mirer** hosted a reception for Lord Joel Joffe and his spouse Vanetta on March 16. Mr. Joffe led the team of attorneys which represented Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, and eight co-defendants at the 1964 Rivonia Trial. **NLG-NYC**,

**NLG International Committee**, IADL and NCBL/NYC were co-sponsors.

The chapter co-sponsored a showing of the new film *Al Helm [The dream]: Martin Luther King in Palestine* on March 13 at West Park Presbyterian Church in Manhattan. The film follows playwright and MLK scholar Clayborne Carson and an African American gospel choir to Palestine where they perform a play on Martin Luther King, Jr. with the Palestine National Theater in Ramallah and other cities in the West Bank.

On March 4 the EC approved a title change for **Susan Howard** from Chapter Coordinator to Executive Director. At the 2013 NLG national convention in Puerto Rico, the NLG’s union caucus had approved a resolution in support of the title change to bring the NLG-NYC staff member’s title in line with that of all NLG chapter staff with the same or similar job description.

The EC, assisted by two trained facilitators, met on February 26 at the Center for Constitutional Rights to discuss “how, if at all, **animal liberation** fits within the NLG’s broader commitment to justice”.

**Elena Cohen, Danny Meyers, and Susan Barrie** represented the chapter at the **Public Interest Career Fair** at NYU Law School on February 6 and 7.

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**BDS Victory in Albany!** On February 3 NYS Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver was forced to withdraw a draconian bill that would have punished any state-funded college or university in NY that used any of its money on activities related to groups that support boycotts of Israel. The **NLG-NYC** is part of the *Ad Hoc Group In Support of Academic Freedom and the First Amendment*, which includes the Center for Constitutional Rights, the Professional Staff Congress (PSC - CUNY faculty union), Jewish Voice for Peace, Jews Say No, the American Studies Association, NYSUT (NY State United Teachers), AAUP, NY Civil Liberties Union, and many individuals. The fight isn't over though, because Silver quickly issued a revised version of his bill, with one difference from the earlier version:

previously a college could have lost its entire state funding for a year if they had used any of their state funding on groups that support boycotts of Israel. In the new version, the college would only lose the amount of money actually spent on such activities.

On January 29, in a public comment prepared by **Nora Carroll** and **Mark Taylor**, the **Mass Incarceration Committee** urged the NYS Board of Parole to amend its rules in order to end its practice of arbitrary, subjective parole denials, and to adopt a policy based on forward-looking risk assessment and rehabilitation, rather than routinely emphasizing the applicant's past criminal record.

On January 23 the **Labor & Employment Committee** co-sponsored a CLE at CUNY School of Law on the bankruptcy crisis

in Detroit. The panel discussion covered the effect on civil, voting, pension, and collective bargaining rights; constitutional challenges to the Emergency Manager Act, and the battle in bankruptcy court. The event was a fundraiser for the NLG-affiliated **Sugar Law Center** — the non-profit law center in Detroit which is challenging the Emergency Manager Act.

On January 8 the chapter co-sponsored a CLE program at the Southern District court house: **Stop, Frisk and Judicial Independence**. Panelists discussed the removal of Judge Shira Scheindlin who had presided over the stop and frisk cases. **Emily Jane Goodman** was one of the presenters. The event was co-sponsored by the National Bar Association, the Federal Bar Association, and the Puerto Rican Bar Association.

## Chapter Hosts Mandela's Lawyer

BY ANN SCHNEIDER

Jeanne and Frank Mirer hosted a reception for the wonderful Joel Joffe and his spouse Vanetta on March 16th at their welcoming Brooklyn Heights home. Lord Joel Joffe and a team of attorneys represented Nelson Mandela and ten co-defendants at the 1964 Rivonia Trial. Joffe's account in his book, "The State v. Nelson Mandela," is the only complete historical account of the machinations of the apartheid regime during the trial, which included detention of witnesses until they testified "to the satisfaction of the state."

Born in South Africa, Joffe is a Labour peer in the UK House of Lords. He led Oxfam from 1995-2001 and received the Order of the British Empire in 1999 for his charitable works. Joffe's moving tribute to Mandela at a 2013 memorial event is at <http://globalsouthafricans.tumblr.com/post/69902782642/joel-joffe-speech-delivered-at-the-nelson-mandela>

We learned that Joffe's representation of the ANC defendants came at a great cost, effectively rendering his spouse and two small children stateless as South Africa revoked his passport and Australia, his intended relocation, refused him entry.

Led by the soprano Vanetta Joffe, we sang the national anthem "God Bless Africa" (Nkosi Sikeleli, Afrika) in the Xhosa language. Fresh from campaigning for workers' rights in Wisconsin, Merle Ratner and Jeanne taught us another song: "We thought voting used to be a right. They want to take it away but not without a fight!"

The event was co-sponsored by the Guild chapter, the local chapter of the National Conference of Black Lawyers, IADL and the Guild's International Committee. The sale of books garnered a small profit for the organizations, as food and wine were donated by Madiba Restaurant in Brooklyn. (Mr. Joffe's royalties go the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund).



Ann Schneider and Lord Joel Joffe

**Marina Sitrin**, a former member of the NLG's national office staff, will be a featured speaker at the opening plenary of the 2014 Left Forum at John Jay College on May 30. A CUNY Law grad, she was one of the legal coordinators designated by the General Assembly of Occupy Wall Street, and has been active in Occupy movements worldwide. She is currently a visiting scholar at the Center for Place, Culture and Politics at the City University of New York.

Occupy activist Cecily McMillan is facing seven years in jail for allegedly assaulting a police officer in Zuccotti Park on March 17, 2012. According to her attorney **Martin Stolar**, "She was leaving the park pursuant to the police department's orders when she was brutally assaulted by a police officer." McMillan, 25, insists that she did not know that her assailant was a police officer, and swung her arm at him only after he grabbed her breast from behind. McMillan, whose trial began on April 7, was known in the OWS movement and in other activist circles as a profound believer in non-violent political action. The police officer involved has been subject to inquiries by the NYPD's internal affairs bureau at least twice, and received a "command discipline" in 2010. Watch Marty discuss the case here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0M53ukskDoc&feature=youtu.be>

On March 17 the NYC Fire Department finally agreed to settle a seven year-old lawsuit charging the FDNY with racially discriminatory hiring practices, primarily by using biased written exams. The settlement includes approximately \$100 million for lost wages and seniority. The original suit was brought by the Justice Department in 2007, when the FDNY was roughly 90% white. (It is currently 86% white, 9% Hispanic and 5% black.) **Richard Levy** and 2014 Spring Fling honoree **Darius Charney** of CCR represented the FDNY's Vulcan Society and three individual African-American firefighter applicants.

When the Zuccotti Park barricades came down in January 2012, the OWS community joyously streamed in to celebrate and reconnect with each other. Shortly thereafter, Claire Lebowitz and Keegan Stephan were arrested for lying down on a bench and were charged with trespass, resisting arrest and obstructing government administration. Lebowitz subsequently spent 36 hours in jail for refusing to submit to an iris scan. The collection of biometric data on any person arrested for any reason with no public oversight raises



Attorney Bob Boyle (center) with political prisoner Eddie Conway (right) who is free after 44 years.

extremely serious privacy concerns. **Paul Mills** is representing the defendants pro bono, and they would greatly appreciate donations to pay for filing fees and transcript costs to get them to the federal court of appeals. You can contribute at <http://igg.me/p/lebowitz-and-keegan-v-city-of-new-york/x/6701228>.

Acting Supreme Court Justice **Andrea Masley** has been appointed as an Article 81 judge in NY County. "I encourage Guild members and others to contact me in writing with resumes if they are available for assignment as guardians, evaluators, or attorneys for alleged incapacitated persons (AIP). I encourage Guild members to take these very important cases helping the most vulnerable in our community." Visit the OCA web site for the steps necessary to qualify <http://www.nycourts.gov/ip/gfs/>. Justice Masley also chaired the City Bar committee that drafted the March 2014 report on judicial screening panels: *Judicial Selection Methods in the State of New York: A Guide to Understanding and Getting Involved in the Selection Process*

<http://www2.nycbar.org/pdf/report/uploads/20072672-GuidetoJudicialSelection-MethodsinNewYork.pdf>.

**Bina Ahmad** and **Radhika Sainath** were speakers at a panel discussion: *Challenging Apartheid and Repression from the US to Palestine* on March 5 at CUNY School of Law. The event, sponsored by NYC-area Palestine solidarity groups and CUNY Law Students for Justice in Palestine, was part of the 10th annual Israeli Apartheid Week.

On March 5 on the steps of City Hall, **Joel Kupferman** and the New York Community Gardens Coalition announced a lawsuit against the city on behalf of Coney Island's Boardwalk Garden, which was bulldozed last December to make way for a \$53-mil-

lion amphitheater project. The suit claims that the project violates municipal requirements for sewer capacity, and the city should therefore not have evicted the People's Playground planters from their 17-year-old garden. Joel, who is the director of the Urban Justice Center's Environmental Law and Justice Project and co-chair of the NLG's Environmental Justice Committee, said "The city did not follow its own regulations. You're going to have thousands of people coming to a concert, and the sewers in Coney West cannot take that."

Political prisoner Marshall "Eddie" Conway was released from a Maryland prison on March 4 after 44 years behind bars. Based on a showing that Conway's conviction was based on unconstitutional jury instructions, **Bob Boyle**, Conway's attorney for more than twenty years, was able to reach an agreement with the state's attorney for a resentencing to time served. Mr. Conway, a COINTELPRO target and ex-Black Panther, was convicted of killing a Baltimore police officer in 1970, but he has always maintained his innocence. His conviction was based largely on the testimony of a jailhouse informant. Politically active in prison, Conway founded "Friend of a Friend", a group that helps young men, often gang members, resolve conflicts, and published a memoir *Marshall Law: The Life & Times of a Baltimore Black Panther*. Eddie Conway and Bob discussed the case on *Democracy Now*: [http://www.democracynow.org/2014/3/5/exclusive\\_freed\\_ex\\_black\\_panther\\_marshall](http://www.democracynow.org/2014/3/5/exclusive_freed_ex_black_panther_marshall)

**Steven Banks**, attorney-in-chief of the New York City Legal Aid Society, was named commissioner of the city's Human Resources Administration by Mayor Bill de Blasio on February 28. Banks said one of his aims at HRA will be to make sure the agency treats *continued on page 7*

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clients with dignity. “We’ve got to look at each policy and procedure to see whether or not people are treated fairly,” Banks said. “The word ‘human’ is in the title of the agency, the Human Resources Administration. We have to make sure that people are treated as human beings.” Mayor de Blasio said he has long watched Banks, who has been with LAS for 31 years, “fighting for what he believes is right”.

The NYS Unified Court System held its 24th Annual Black History Month program and reception on February 27 in the rotunda of the Supreme Court on Centre Street. Court of Appeals Judge **Sheila Abdus-Salaam** was the honoree.

**Taylor Pendergrass**, former NLG SW Region RVP, was NYCLU lead counsel in a major case against the NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision. A settlement was announced on February 19 to reform the way that solitary confinement is used in New York State’s prisons, with the state taking immediate steps to remove youth, pregnant inmates and developmentally disabled and intellectually challenged prisoners from extreme isolation.

**JUDAH ROBERT WRIGHT MOISAN**



Congratulations to Jane Moisan and Garrett Wright on the birth of Judah Robert Wright Moisan born February 8, 2014 • 1:06 pm  
Weight 7 pounds 6 oz  
height 21 inches

A Valentine’s Day evening of Homecoming, Love, Liberation, Song & Celebration was held at St. Peter’s Church as an urgent fundraiser for the medical needs of recently released people’s lawyer **Lynne Stewart**. “Because of a determined people’s movement, Lynne is finally home with her family. But she has urgent medical needs and costs. Lynne’s cancer has spread. Now 74, she has lost weight and has trouble breathing. Lynne will soon begin treatment requiring her to pay deductibles and co-payments. To boost the odds, she’ll use a special diet, vitamins, and other healing methods - some costly and none covered by insurance. Lynne’s spirit is indomitable - help her fight to survive! Lynne has always come to the aid of those who needed her. Now it’s our turn to stand by Lynne.” Support Lynne at [LynneStewart.org](http://LynneStewart.org).

New York is one of only two states that treat incarcerated 16-year-olds as adults. More than 500 such teens are housed in a facility on Rikers Island. A quarter of these 16- to 18-year-olds have been placed in solitary confinement for “acting out”. Statistics show that this isolation causes emotional, mental and physical harm that increases their chances of committing more crimes once released, according to a report released by **Ellen Yaroshefsky**, director of Cardozo Law School’s Youth Justice Clinic on February 13. “We are not only setting them on a course for failure instead of addressing the underlying problems, but also are spending a lot of money in the process of doing harm,” The report recommends that the City should move teens from jail cells into small dormitories that offer therapy and rehabilitation.

On February 3 CCR attorney **Rachel Meeropol** appeared before the First Circuit Court of Appeals in Boston, asking it to strike down the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act (AETA) as a violation of the First Amendment. AETA, passed in 2006 by the fur, pharmaceutical, and meat industries, criminalizes a broad range of free speech activities and has cast a chill over the animal rights community. Later that evening at Suffolk University Law School, Rachel and **Lauren Gazzola** participated in a panel discussion *From Terrorism to Activism: Moving from the Green Scare to Animal Rights*, sponsored by CCR and the **NLG Animal Rights Committee**.

Former chapter president **Martin Stolar** appeared on WBAI/Pacifica’s *Cuba in Focus* on January 30 to discuss the IRS attack on Pastors for Peace, a special ministry of the



Ellen Yaroshefsky

Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO), arising from its delivery of humanitarian aid to Palestine, Cuba, New Orleans, Latin America, and the Caribbean. <http://archive.wbai.org/show1.php?showid=thurs8pm9pm> (at 9:20)

**Jerry Koch** is a 24-year-old anarchist and environmental activist one semester short of graduation from the New School. He worked tirelessly to provide jail support for OWS arrestees. On January 28, after 241 days in Manhattan’s Metropolitan Correction Center without being charged with a crime, he was released on the grounds that the government would not be able to coerce him into cooperating with a federal grand jury investigating a bombing, even after the prosecution gave him immunity. Prosecutors had alleged that Koch was present at a bar when two other patrons may have discussed a bomb plot. Koch: “I again assert that I have no knowledge of who is responsible for the Times Square Military Recruitment Center bombing, and I will once again refuse to testify to the federal grand jury in ethical resistance to participation in a fruitless exercise of fear-mongering and government intimidation. When I was first subpoenaed to the grand jury in 2009 I had no recollection of any such incident — a fact that I expressed publicly. I still do not recall the alleged situation. My politics, principles and ethics stand in direct opposition with

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this legal tool that is used to further enable the government in its assault on anarchists, and I will not lend it any legitimacy, nor will I comply in any way.” **Moirá Meltzer-Cohen, Susan Tipograph, Grainne O’Neill and David Rankin** were Mr. Koch’s lawyers.

On January 19 **Ann Schneider** hosted a guided tour for Guild members of the Squats and Gardens on the Lower East Side, sponsored by the Museum of Reclaimed Urban Space (MORUS, aka the Squat museum). MORUS, at 155 Avenue C, aka C Squat, runs neighborhood tours highlighting the efforts of local residents and organizations to clean up vacant lots and fix up abandoned buildings for community use, and promotes scholarship of grassroots urban space activism.

On January 18 at the Sixth Street Community Center, **Joel Kupferman** spoke

at a special breakfast meeting of the NoSpray Coalition ([www.NoSpray.org](http://www.NoSpray.org)), which seeks to stop the city’s mass use of toxic pesticides. The NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene continues to apply for and grant itself waivers from Local Law 37, enabling it to conduct pesticide-spraying each year, including glyphosate (Monsanto’s “Roundup”) on public properties, including sidewalks near public schools. The waivers, which are approved by the same officials who file the applications for them, violate the stipulation of settlement of a 2007 lawsuit between the city and the coalition.

On January 9 **Heidi Boghosian**, executive director of the National Lawyers Guild, appeared at the Mid-Manhattan Library to promote her book *Spying on Democracy*. “How did we get to this truly Orwellian moment? What role do corporations play in making this eavesdropping and spying pos-

sible? What can we do to protect ourselves?”

The World Trade Center Neighborhood Alliance (WTCNA), a coalition of Lower Manhattan residents who live next to the re-developed site of the 9-11 terrorist attack, appeared in NY Supreme Court on January 9 to argue that the NYPD’s security planning has been “arbitrary and capricious”. The City intends to close streets, including Greenwich Street, install bollards, walls, and guard houses to surround the site, which will turn the complex into “an armed camp”, according to **Danny Alterman** who represents the WTCNA. “The City’s has characterized the Alliance as ‘misguided armchair quarterbacks’, but these are people who know first-hand about the destruction that terrorism can cause, so they take security very seriously. But they also value quality of life, and fear that this is what will be destroyed by this plan.”

# Spring has sprung!

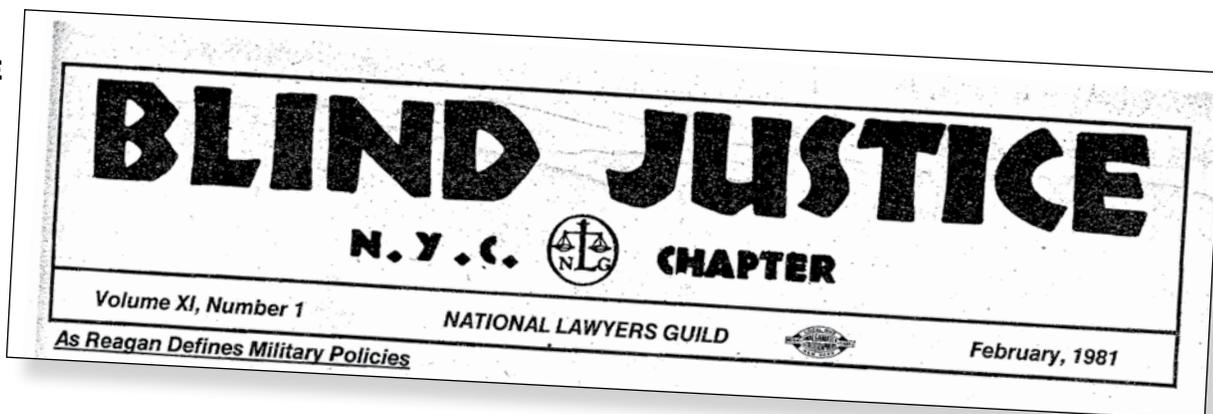
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## From the Archives...

**RIGHT:**  
**CIRCA 1981, ON THE OCCASION OF RALPH SHAPIRO'S HONOR AT OUR ANNUAL DINNER.**



*On January 9, 2014 we lost long standing Guild member and former chapter president Ralph Shapiro. Ralph was 97.*

*Ralph stayed active in the chapter until shortly before his passing. For those who were not fortunate enough to know him, we have reprinted an article from the chapter's newspaper that details some of the highlights of his courageous life.*

*He will be greatly missed.*

*Ralph Shapiro November 10, 1916 – January 9, 2014*

BY BONNIE BROWER

“Like the Catholic Church, the strength of the Lawyers Guild is its ability to change with the times.” In a characteristically droll and low-key fashion, so opined twice former NYC Chapter President and former National Treasurer, Ralph Shapiro recently. One might add that, in the same principled fashion (as the Guild, at least), this ability to change with the times accounts for much of Ralph’s strength and longevity, too.

Both in our Chapter and in the Guild nationally, Ralph represents what can be described as a missing link in a large and long generation gap that was occasioned by the Cold War and McCarthyism. Ralph’s path to becoming almost the sole surviving representative of that generation in NYC still active in the Guild began in the Boro Park section of Brooklyn where he was raised. He graduated from CCNY Uptown in 1937 and attended and graduated from the University of Michigan Law School in 1941.

It was during his law school year in Michigan that Ralph’s political consciousness and commitments were awakened and forged by the historical confluence of the Spanish Civil War and the organizing battles of the CIO. As Ralph put it, “Walking around Michigan wearing a Spanish Loyalist Button in the middle of Father Coughlan’s Black Legion and supporters of Henry Ford’s

Protocols of the Elders of Zion may have been foolhardy, but it was pivotal to my political development.” Not surprisingly, upon his return to New York, uncertain whether the practice of law was relevant or meaningful, Ralph spent 1941-1942 involved in full time political activities.

Married to his first wife and longtime political partner, Blanche, in 1942 on the anniversary of the Russian Revolution, Ralph was drafted into the Army in November of that year, and was initially stationed in Northern Michigan to guard the locks of the lake from attack by the Japanese. After a brief spell in Officers’ Candidate School, he found his “inordinate rise blunted by counter-Intelligence” when he was suddenly and unceremoniously assigned to the infantry and shipped to the European Theatre of World War II in 1945. Because security investigations in the armed services had begun on a wide scale, Ralph at the time “suspected that someone wanted to get me”, but it was not until recently, when he obtained files under the Freedom of Information Act, that he learned the truth of the adage that “even paranoids have real fears.” A young fellow officer had informed on him, resulting in his being shipped overseas, where he saw action in France, Luxembourg and Germany. He was wounded and is “still the recipient of a pension from a grateful government” that discharged him in March, 1946.



Former president Ralph Shapiro speaking at the Annual Dinner circa 1981.

Returning to New York, Ralph was active in the American Labor Party and other organizations. He joined the Guild in 1948 or 1949. After a short spell doing “uninteresting law,” he joined the labor firm of Witt and Cammer, which represented almost every progressive CIO union in New York at the time and whose partners were active in the Guild. The firm, which in time was renamed Cammer and Shapiro, had an active labor practice. At an early date, it also became involved in the first Smith Act trials and represented many persons called before congressional witch-hunting committees. Ralph himself was called and refused to testify before several committees, with Joe Forer representing him.

*continued on page 10*

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# From the Archives: Ralph Shapiro

*continued from page 9*

## THE MCCARTHY PERIOD

These years were brutal for all leftists and progressives, regardless of their profession or field of work. Fear infected old friends and clients and the need to present a “clean” (read “apolitical”) image informed the decisions of many individuals and organizations as to where they should turn for necessary services. As a result of the atmosphere of terror and hysteria, Ralph recalls that his law firm lost most of its union clients “almost in one day.” “We were”, he added, “murdered by the Cold War.” Survival meant entering other fields of law, and, as new legal work was found by the firm, old and new political battles were fought. In 1953, as the ALP’s fortunes were declining, the Guild began its lengthy but ultimately successful battle against being named as a subversive organization on Attorney General’s infamous list. While recognizing that the battle was almost “totally defensive”, Ralph threw much of his energy into the Guild’s struggle to survive. The cost of the struggle was immense: a whole generation was literally terrified of coming near the organization. From the late ‘40’s until the early ‘60’s, few lawyers of Ralph’s age or younger joined the Guild. During the infamous ‘50’s, the Guild “just existed. People found strength in each other to continue their fights”, and represented each other, as well as other clients, during the continuing committee hearings and trials that sought—and succeeded—in silencing dissent and blunting the movements for peace and disarmament, workers’ and minorities’ rights, and social and economic justice.

## CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

With the advent of the ‘60’s, however, and the slow incapacitation of the congressional subversive committees and the AG’s list, and the birth of the Southern civil rights movement, the mood of the country and the Guild began to change. With strong leadership and pressure from the Detroit chapter, the Guild went South and opened the first civil rights law office there. With several other NY Chapter lawyers, Ralph went South in 1964 and “had the distinction of being barred from the practice of law in Mississippi.” With increased national activities for civil rights and against the Vietnam war and the draft,

Guild membership began growing for the first time in almost two decades, as more and more political activists turned to law as an instrument for social change.

## THE GUILD’S RENEWAL

With the influx of these new, younger lawyers beginning around 1968 the Guild as an organization underwent a period of intense and sustained internal strain and turmoil around a series of issues that encompassed style and substance, philosophy and practice, rhetoric and action. A new “generation gap” or chasm, to be more accurate, grew, this one truly reflecting, on the whole, the differing generations involved. With what must have seemed like frightening regularity and frequency, the younger members bombarded the Guild with a series of organizational and political issues and insisted upon their resolution: the admission in the Guild and role of law students, legal workers and jailhouse lawyers in the Guild; the nature of the Guild—bar association versus “legal arm (and therefore part) of the movement”; the proper role of “movement” and “people’s” lawyers and legal workers and their relationship to “the movement” and “the people”; the role of Third World people and women and the issues of racism, sexism, elitism inside and outside of the Guild—how to address and defeat these “isms” and how to develop collective attitudes and life and work styles; how to deal with sectarianism and factionalism within the organization—and on. Each issue created new schisms and freshened old wounds; most also moved the organization forward and kept it alive and growing.

Ralph, who was President of the City Chapter just before the 1968 Columbia strike, the birth of the Mass Defense office and the Ocean Hill-Brownsville struggle for community control of schools in 1968, and just after the City Chapter’s dubious experiment with the collective leadership of the “Core Group” (fondly called the “corpse group” by some of the core) was one of the few “older” members of the City Chapter who, from the beginning of the influx of new, younger members, believed and practiced his belief that this infusion of youth and energy was essential to the Guild’s continued growth and relevance. His style and demeanor frequently made him a natural buffer and mediator between the

more extravagant members of the generation gap (of whom I was, as I recall, too frequently one); at the same time, he continued to grow and express his thoughts on the issues regardless of which side he might momentarily offend. Yet however hot the debate or unruly the participants, Ralph’s unfaltering respect for individuals made him heard, if not always heeded, by all sides.

Whatever his substantive position, Ralph’s role went far beyond that of issue advocate. He pressed the newer, younger members to analyze forms or organization and leadership in terms of substance, style and direction; at the same time, he challenged older members to examine and question their own behavior, attitudes and substantive positions in the light of current realities. His positions and role were always informed, above all, by his assessment of what was healthiest and best for the Guild, how it could grow, function and remain relevant and involved. That assessment often changed, as did the issues. It was this trait that enabled Ralph to remain valued and respected by almost all the members of the organization. Memory often plays interesting tricks—because of Ralph’s unquestionably constructive role throughout many of these struggles, I mistakenly recalled that he had supported certain issues long ago, which, in fact, as he reminded me recently, he had opposed at the time. His style and approach—reasoned, open, respectful and unbelligerent—made it impossible to identify Ralph as an “enemy” regardless of his position or to emerge from a heated political or organizational debate with him angry at or hostile to him.

Ralph, like the Guild, is a survivor. He and his family surmounted the terrible loss of Blanche, his personal and political partner; he has a loving relationship with his wife, Barbara, and with it has acquired a new, extended family. Ralph continues to practice law and continues being active politically, both inside and outside of the Guild.

Over these decades of political and legal struggles, Ralph has continued to grow and change. It is, to me at least, impossible to imagine Ralph ever growing old, ever stopping growing and changing. The Guild—and we as individuals—can learn much and well from Ralph’s example.

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