

# CONA

Citizens Offering New Alternatives  
www.conamaine.com

PO Box 649, Newcastle, ME 04553  
SPRING 2008

## CONA Annual Meeting

### LEADING ISLAMIC INTELLECTUAL TO DISCUSS WHY DISSENT IS VITAL TO ISLAM AND AMERICA

CONA's annual meeting and pot luck luncheon will take place on Saturday, June 14, at 11:30 a.m., followed by a talk by Dr. Anouar Majid at 1 p.m. It will be held in the Fellowship Hall at the Second Congregational Church in Newcastle.

Dr. Majid, author of several acclaimed books on Islam and the West, is professor and founding chair of the Department of English at the University of New England. He has lectured and given keynote addresses at major universities and cultural institutions in the United States and abroad and has been profiled and interviewed by Bill Moyers on the PBS program *Bill Moyers' Journal* and on Al Jazeera TV.



*Author Anouar Majid,  
speaker at CONA Annual  
Meeting*

His most recent book, *A Call for Heresy: Why Dissent Is Vital to Islam and America* (University of Minnesota Press, 2007), examines the social and cultural conditions in the contemporary Islamic and American worlds simultaneously. The United States, he writes, seems to have regressed into a sort of unprincipled quest for money and power, whereas in the case of Islam, Muslims have failed to move away from doctrines and tenets shaped by people more than fourteen centuries ago.

These two worldviews, he argues, are leading both the Islamic world and the United States to precipitous decline because religious, political and economic orthodoxies in each have silenced the voices of their most creative thinkers—the nonconformists, go to "Annual Meeting" on page 2

### CONA'S APPLICATION TO BECOME A 501(C)(3) ORGANIZATION

When CONA was formed in the fall of 1982 as Citizens Opposed to Nuclear Arms, it had one single purpose and that was "to further the common good and general welfare of the community by working to remove the peril posed to all mankind by nuclear weapons." As a single-purpose organization it was set up as a 501(c)(4) organization according to IRS rules and regulations. As a 501(c)(4) organization, CONA could be involved in political action but any contributions to it were not tax deductible.

On March 19, 1997, CONA changed its name to Citizens Offering New Alternatives, thereby keeping the acronym. The decision to change the name came after it became clear that CONA needed to broaden its mission to seek peace and justice as well as oppose nuclear armaments. However, CONA continued to operate as a 501(c)(4) organization—until just recently.

Late in 2007 we voted to change to a 501(c)(3) organization. Such an organization cannot promote or be involved in political action so that, when approved as a 501(c)(3) organization, all contributions will be tax deductible.

The first stage of this process has just been completed by all paperwork being submitted in early April to the Maine Secretary of State. It takes approximately thirty (30) days for this office to process and accept everything. Once the approved documentation is received from the Secretary of State, we must then submit documentation to the IRS.

Their process of review, and, we hope, approval, takes considerably more time. However, we are told by our attorney that once we have submitted the paperwork to the IRS, any contributions made to CONA after the document submission date are tax deductible.

We shall keep you informed of that important date.  
Submitted by Don Means, Treasurer



## RUTH POPE: AN APPRECIATION OF AN ESSENTIAL MEMBER

**O**n March 10th, CONA lost a founding member, Ruth Pope. Ruth was the kind of person every new organization needs as it pushes to grow and establish its presence in the community. No matter what kind of help CONA needed, from contributing to bake sales, manning tables, writing many a letter-to-the-editor, and regularly attending meetings—to chairing our student essay contest and numerous other events, Ruth responded with cheerful enthusiasm. Ruth had a deep commitment to the cause of nuclear disarmament, and because she firmly believed deeds to be a necessary accompaniment to beliefs, CONA gained an essential member. We are grateful to have been a part of her long and genuinely inspirational life.

Jean Harris

CONA's mission is to provide opportunities to address the evolving issues of peace and social justice locally and globally. Our programs include education, discussion, and celebration to encourage the community to become active, involved citizens. We work in collaboration with other regional organizations sharing concerns for pressing issues such as poverty, overpopulation, war, and environmental protection.

## ANNUAL MEETING .....CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

radicals and revolutionaries, who are often dismissed or punished as heretics. The solution, Majid concludes, is a long-overdue revival of dissent in both cultures to work toward a global culture of freedom, one that is governed by the sacredness of all living things, not by the dictates and short-term interests of financiers and preachers of hatred.

Majid is also the author of *Freedom and Orthodoxy: Islam and Difference in the Post-Andalusian Age* (Stanford University Press, 2004); *Unveiling Traditions: Postcolonial Islam in a Polycentric World* (Duke University Press, 2000); and *Si Yussef*, a novel. He is cofounder and editor of *Tingis*, a Moroccan-American magazine of ideas and culture.

*A Call for Heresy: Why Dissent Is Vital to Islam and America* will be on sale at the event and at the Maine Coast Bookshop in Damariscotta, and Majid will sign as many copies as time permits.

For further information call 207 549-3869 or 207 563-5487. The annual meeting is free to all. Donations are welcomed to help defray costs of the program.

## DON'T MISS CONA AT THE MOVIES

Upcoming films, to be announced as show dates approach, will be shown on the following dates: June 22, July 20, August 17, September 28, October 19, November 16, and December 14. Last-minute changes may occur when films or the Skidompha Library are not available. Watch for announcements in the Lincoln County News, or better yet, to be automatically notified of the films, send your email address to Paul Kando, [kando@lincoln.midcoast.com](mailto:kando@lincoln.midcoast.com). Please put "movies" in the subject line.

## FAREWELLS

We are always sad when members of the CONA Board leave to go on to other things, but we always wish them well in their new locations and endeavors. Caroline Walker, who served in the unenviable post of treasurer, and lately was hospitality chair, providing the goodies that always make events go even better, is moving out West to be nearer to family.

We'll also miss very much Joan Grant's thoughtful worldview and her journalistic experience and expertise.

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## INTERNATIONAL REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING SUBJECT OF CONA TALK

**P**athfinder International, a private non-profit organization started 50 years ago by a physician with ties to Maine, and continued with the support of his daughter Julia G. (Judy) Kahrl of Arrowsic, is making a huge difference in efforts to provide women and families in the developing world with access to contraception and quality reproductive health care.

Dr. Clarence J. Gamble created the program in 1957, using a substantial part of his wealth from Procter and Gamble ties, to support his conviction that contraceptives should be available globally.

For a March CONA presentation, Gamble's daughter Kahrl and staff member Nancy Moorehead came from the organization's headquarters in Watertown, Massachusetts, to discuss the program, its current challenges, and how the result of the upcoming presidential election may influence U.S. foreign aid generally, and both domestic and international family planning programs in particular.

Gamble was the classic pathfinder, finding innovative ways to bring family planning to millions around the world in spite of economic, cultural and political barriers. His organization, working with many local partners in the developing world, has grown dramatically over the years and now employs some 550 persons in the United States and overseas, and has worked in more than 100 countries, serving the most vulnerable people, often under the most difficult situations.

Pathfinder International now has offices in Angola, Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Bangladesh, Egypt, India, Papua New Guinea, Viet Nam, Yemen, Moldova, Bolivia, Brazil, and Peru.

The organization receives funding from private and government sources, both in the U.S. and abroad, and works with other planned parenthood groups.

Their presentation also included a five-minute video, prepared for Pathfinder's 50th anniversary banquet, and ended with a question and answer period with the audience.

More information about this organization can be found at their website [www.pathfind.org](http://www.pathfind.org)



*Judy Kahrl of Arrowsic at a Pathfinder ceremony to salute the courageous efforts of medical workers in Peru, who surmounted tremendous odds to bring life-saving medical care to women in remote and under-resourced areas.*

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### CONA BOARD MEMBERS

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[mikemary@tidewater.net](mailto:mikemary@tidewater.net) 677-2850

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**BE SURE TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE [WWW.CONAMAINE.COM](http://WWW.CONAMAINE.COM)**

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## THE RESPECTFUL SCHOOL ACTION COMMITTEE

After CONA's presentation of a talk last fall by Stephen Wessler, director of the Center for the Prevention of Hate Violence, CONA Board member Joe Brennan initiated the Respectful School Action Committee which has been meeting monthly since January of this year to address the issue of bullying in our schools.

Members of The Respectful School Action Committee are very concerned about the very negative and long term effects that teasing and bullying have on children in school from kindergarten to 12th grade. Recent research shows that teasing and bullying affect the bully, the target(s) and the bystanders. For example, bullies have a much higher chance of being incarcerated. Targeted children frequently do not reach their full potential. Onlookers develop a sense of guilt as they realize that they did nothing to help the target. Teasing and bullying interfere with the normal learning process. No child should have to cope with relentless teasing, or being threatened, or having to avoid physical harm. The Maine State Legislature has recognized the problems associated with bullying, and has passed a law requiring all school systems to have effective anti-bullying programs in place. In some schools, this effort is underway but not completed.

There are many teachers and administrators who recognize the harm of bullying. However, reports of bullying occurring in our schools still appear in our local newspapers and letters to the editor. At the same time, we recognize that those schools that have complied with Maine's anti-bullying state statute still struggle to uniformly engage, implement and enforce their respective policies. School administrators, teachers and students are currently under unprecedented demands, stresses and pressures to succeed at academic levels, putting at risk the social and emotional school climate outcomes.

Our group is a grassroots committee comprised of parents, students, educators and professionals. The group is open to other concerned area residents. We are working to reduce teasing and bullying to the lowest possible level in elementary, middle and high schools. Our goals include:

1. Determining if the school problems in Lincoln County are of the magnitude that require active intervention,
2. Learning which of the many approaches to this problem has the best outcome with the least expense, and

## ITALIAN OPPONENT OF U.S. PLANS FOR AIR BASE IN VICENZA SPEAKS AT SKIDOMPHA

U.S. plans to establish an air base at an old airfield less than two miles from the historic center of Vicenza, Italy, have sparked vigorous protests in that country, said a spokesman for the protesters at Skidompha Library's Porter Auditorium in Damariscotta on April 8.

Andrea Licata, of the University Center for Study and Research for Peace in Gorizia, Italy, said the planned base is meant to house forces formerly based in Germany and elsewhere, to give them easier access to the Middle East and other southern theaters.

He said that an estimated 200,000 persons from all over Italy joined in a protest demonstration in Vicenza in February against the base—a notable figure, since the population of the town itself is only 120,000.

Establishment of the base, at the old Dal Molina airfield, added to an already existing nearby U.S. base called Camp Ederle, would bring U.S. military personnel in the town and its surroundings to a total of about 5,000 persons.

Licata said opponents of the new base are concerned that it would compromise the touristic attractiveness of Vicenza, a UNESCO world heritage site that boasts a number of buildings by the 16th-century architect Andrea Palladio. The Dal Molina base would bring noise, air and water pollution—the airfield is situated over an aquifer—and would take valuable land that could be used for economic purposes. The protests are directed not only at the U.S. plans, but also at the Italian governments, both conservative and center-left, that have accepted them.

Vicenza itself has been transformed by the threat of the new base from a relatively conservative community to an aroused center of political protest, Licata said.

Licata's appearance at Skidompha was jointly sponsored by CONA and Veterans for Peace.

Tom Eichler

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3. Deciding what is the best approach to help schools systems (and/or individual schools) put into place a comprehensive, effective and sustainable program to control and reduce bullying.

The committee meets monthly in the offices of Youth Promise. For further information, contact Joe Brennan at 563-2476 (or email to: [joebren@lincoln.midcoast.com](mailto:joebren@lincoln.midcoast.com))

## LAST BOAT

We were waiting for the ferry,  
lolling on the lowest ramp, on floats,  
shifty with wave slush, dip and sway.

We were sun-seared, sapped, soaking in  
the latticework, wooden scaffolding,  
stacks of lobster traps, pilings stained black

from creosote and tar, green with seaweed  
combed out on receding waves, swirled back  
by water's slap and curl: levels and lengths

of working docks, creaky planks, crossbars  
of tacked asbestos for stopping the slip  
on slick days – the whole wet rush,

the gleaming run-down fertile place.  
We were sitting on a dock of the bay,  
Watching how matter melts into

Quickery silks of light, a brilliant seethe,  
a glittery tease of there  
and not there, such dazzling manna.

We were squinting through shadows  
at little flamelike fish flickering  
among weeds – a whole world it seemed

flaring under the ramshackle,  
barnacled, rock-bottom dock, all flow  
and flown, and we were resting in

the brevity, the breve, breviary,  
the never-ending not-me: waiting  
for the ferry, wishing it wouldn't come.

By Betsy Sholl, Maine's Poet Laureate, whose readings at our Potluck and Poetry event last December we enjoyed so much.

From *Late Psalm*, published by University of Wisconsin Press. Used by permission of the poet.

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## Keep in touch with your Congressional representatives

### Sen. Olympia Snowe

3 Canal Plaza, Portland, ME 04101  
207-874-0883 • <http://snowe.senate.gov>

### Sen. Susan Collins

1 City Center, Suite 100, Portland, ME 04101  
207-780-3575 • <http://collins.senate.gov>

### U. S. Rep. Tom Allen

234 Oxford St., Portland, ME 04101  
207-774-5019 • <http://tomallen.house.gov>

It's renewal time! It's joining time!  
**CONA 2008 MEMBERSHIP**  
**KEEP CONA STRONG.**  
**Your support will expand our activities.**

I am/we are renewing CONA membership for 2008

I/we would like to join CONA

Suggested contribution: \$15 individual; \$25 family;

\$50-\$100 patron; or what you can afford. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Your additional contribution to the Julia Myers Speakers

Fund allows us to bring important speakers from farther  
away. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Please include your e-mail address:** it's the fastest, least costly  
way we can keep you informed of CONA events and other  
community activities of interest.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

May we call on you to help with a mailing?  YES!

...to help set up a program?  YES!

Please suggest program topics or speakers.

Please mail to CONA, PO Box 649, Newcastle, ME 04553



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**Inside this newsletter:**

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**Respectful School Action Committee**

**CONA changing IRS status**

*The date on your label indicates the calendar year in which you last renewed your membership. Please renew for 2008. Keep CONA strong. Thank you!*

**CITIZENS OFFERING NEW ALTERNATIVES  
PO BOX 649  
NEWCASTLE, ME 04553**

