

Mankato Area Fair Trade Town Initiative

Annual Report, June 2009-May 2010

1. Preamble

- 1.1 The formation of MAFTTI was agreed at a meeting of the Churches' Fair Trade Network on May 20, 2009. The Network itself (CFTN) had been formed in June 2008 and, among other things, was responsible for hosting a visit of two Peruvian artisans, Eva Pizarro and Ayde Riveros, during a Midwest tour in May 2009 which was organized by Green America and Partners for Just Trade. The May 5 meeting at Christ the King Lutheran attracted 65 people and provided the catalyst for the development of MAFTTI.
- 1.2 The key aims of MAFTTI were recognized as being
 - To enable Mankato and North Mankato to claim Fair Trade Town status according to the criteria of the Fair Trade Towns USA Campaign.
 - To implement a varied program of awareness-raising activity with the aim of achieving this objective.
 - Over time to develop greater community awareness about 'Fair Trade' in its international and domestic dimensions.
 - Similarly, to develop greater community awareness of the relationship between issues of Corporate Social Responsibility (such as 'Fair Trade') and the international trade rules that stand in the way of combating poverty in the Global South.

2. MAFTTI - structure

- 2.1 At the point when CFTN turned into MAFTTI Jane Dow agreed to continue as Chair and Paul Renshaw as Administrator. Mark Levitt offered to be responsible for Media Relations and to act as Treasurer pro tem. (In January 2010 Margo Druschel took over as Treasurer.) A 'Campaign Group' was formed to facilitate consultation between monthly meetings. This comprised the office holders plus Mary Lou Halderson and, from early 2010, Betty Winkworth. It was agreed that a Reference Panel of well-connected people in the community be established. This remains a work in progress.
- 2.2 The question of whether MAFTTI should seek formal non-profit status was investigated and, after talks with a local attorney, rejected as being premature (and expensive). A DBA bank account was opened at the Valley Bank, Belgrade Avenue, North Mankato.

3. MAFTTI – advocacy program

- 3.1 A 14pp. packet of materials explaining various aspects of Fair Trade and Fair Trade Towns was produced by Paul Renshaw for the information of those with whom MAFTTI wished to engage. During the year 80 were produced, of which over 60 were distributed.
- 3.2 Short presentations on behalf of MAFTTI were made to Mankato City Council on June 22, 2009 by Jane Dow and Mary Lou Halderson and to North Mankato City Council on October 19 by Jane Dow and Mark Levitt. All members of each Council received a 2,000 word background paper written by Paul Renshaw. On April 26, 2010, MAFTTI was represented in a Working Session of Mankato City Council by Jane Dow, Margo Druschel and Paul Renshaw.
- 3.3 Target audiences were identified and divided among MAFTTI members:
 - Supermarkets: Jane Dow, Susan Schwieger, Julie Thorleifson.
 - Coffee shops: Betty Winkworth, Lona Falencykowski & Mark Levitt.
 - Local restaurants: Mary Lou Halderson (joined later by Margo Druschel)
 - Local retail: Arlene Renshaw, Joyce Finkler (florists)
 - Religious bodies: Paul Renshaw

- Arts: Lona Falenczykowski
- School Curriculum: Jane Dow, Mary Lou Halderson, Julie Thorleifson, Mark Levitt
- MSU: Paul Renshaw
- SCC: Mark Friedman
- Rasmussen College: Mark Friedman

Most progress was made in the supermarket, coffee shop and religious sectors. Groundwork was laid in the restaurant, local retail sectors, MSU and SCC. Arts organizations, Rasmussen College and the school system remain to be addressed.

4. Other MAFTTI activity

4.1 Monthly meetings

These were held regularly with the intention of strengthening the campaigners and/or organizing the campaign. The themes or topics that occupied at least part of each meeting were:

- June – Local Fair Trade (Kelsey Maki, Mankato Farmer’s Market)
- September – Fair trade v Free Trade (Mark Friedman)
- November – MAFTTI and Media; Trade Act 2009
- January – Fair Trade Bible Studies (Rev. Dawn Carder); planning Spring events
- February – Advocacy review; Spring events planning; approval of table tents
- March – Spring events planning (International Festival; World Fair Trade Day). T-shirts
- April – Advocacy Review finalized; Spring/Summer events; Mankato City Council
- May – Spring/Summer/Fall events; approval of MAFTTI decal; Fair Trade churches

4.2 Fair Trade Film Night

This was held at Christ the King Lutheran Church on August 18, 2009 and attracted 25 people, half of whom were new to MAFTTI.

4.3 Dinner Fundraiser - October 27, 2009

Held at First Congregational Church, this event attracted 70 people. Alicia Ranney, Director of the MN Fair Trade Coalition was the speaker. The sum of \$845.00 was raised after expenses.

4.4 Reverse Trick or Treat - October 31, 2009

About 2200 pieces of Fair Trade chocolate were given to ‘treaters’ along with a small explanatory card about cocoa farming and child labor. Participants this year: Belgrade Avenue UMC, Christ the King Lutheran, First Congregational, Grace Lutheran, Dakota Meadows MS, East Mankato MS and West HS.

4.5 Logo and website development

By the end of 2009 the design of a MAFTTI logo was agreed and executed by Malia Krohn of Mankato School of Art. An initial meeting had been held with Steve Kind of Full Swing Solutions about the scope of a potential MAFTTI website. This remains a work in progress.

4.6 MAFTTI T-shirts

In March contact was made with North Country Trading in Minneapolis, which distributes Fair Trade T-shirts and bags made in Central America. An initial order for 60 was placed for T-shirts with “Let all Trade Be Fair Trade” on the front and the MAFTTI logo on the back.

4.7 Table tents

In the first quarter of 2010 sets of table tents were developed for MAFTTI by Betty Winkworth and agreement secured to place them in Christy’s Café, Coffee Hag, Dunn Bros and Fillin’ Station.

4.8 International Festival, April 11, 2010

Two tables were mounted and ten T-shirted volunteers shared in staffing the stall. Julie Thorleifson and Jane Dow revamped the display boards.

4.9 Gustavus Adolphus College Peace Conference, April 28, 2010

Paul and Arlene Renshaw took materials for a table display in the Resources Room.

4.10 World Fair Trade Day, May 8, 2010

- Five coffee shops in Mankato-North Mankato (Christy's Café, Coffee Hag, Dunn Bros., Fillin' Station, Smiley Cup) brewed FTC coffee, 10.00-12.00 noon and donated a portion of the proceeds to a special Haiti earthquake relief fund set up by TransFair USA.
- Specially designed Mother's Day cards (facilitated by Betty Winkworth) and FTC roses (organized by Jane Dow) were offered on receipt of donations from customers.
- Members of MAFTTI (two per shop except for Smiley Cup) staffed the MAFTTI tables.
- The net sum of \$750.00 was raised for Haiti.

5. Churches

During the period October 2009-May 2010 seven churches agreed to the designation of Fair Trade Churches: St. John's Episcopal, First Presbyterian, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Centenary United Methodist Church, Bethlehem Lutheran, Grace Lutheran and First Congregational. Hope Interfaith Center became a Fair Trade Place of Worship. In doing this these bodies committed themselves to

- use only Fair Trade Certified coffee after services and in all meetings for which the church has responsibility.
- move forward on using other Fair Trade products (e.g. chocolate, tea, cocoa).
- promote Fair Trade during Fair Trade Fortnight (end of April into early May), Fair Trade Month (October) and at other times through events, worship and the selling of Fair Trade Certified products.

6. MAFTTI in the Media

6.1 Mankato Free Press:

- June 28, 2009: Article by Robb Murray, "Fair Trade movement taking form".
- October 1, 2009: Letter by Jane Dow, "It's important to look for Fair Trade logo in stores".
- February 5, 2010: Your View by Betty Winkworth, "Avoid slave-trade chocolate".
- February 10, 2010: Your View by Jane Dow, "Some show love for fair trade".
- May 6, 2010: Article by Robb Murray, "World Fair Trade Day to showcase local efforts".
- May 6, 2010: Your View by Lori Ruthenbeck, "It's a great time to affirm fair trade movement".

6.2 Radio: Jane Dow featured on Trish's program on KTOE radio three times, each for 30 minutes, on one occasion with Joyce Finkler. A fourth interview had to be scratched at the last minute because of Trish's indisposition.

6.3 Television: Jane Dow accessed CCTV both to draw attention to Fair Trade Month and MAFTTI's WFTD plans. She also arranged for some short Fair Trade films to be shown. KEYC picked up the MFP article of May 6 and featured MAFTTI's World Fair Trade Day program at two of the five coffee shops through interviews with Mark Levitt and Paul Renshaw and at Hilltop Hy-Vee where the FTC signage (facilitated by MAFTTI) was highlighted.