

Folk singer hopes to build musical bridge to Soviet Union

By Teresa A. Parsons

If music is indeed the language all the world understands, then Mary Lu Walker should get along just fine in the Soviet Union.

The Corning composer and singer, who describes her folk-style songs as "simple, so kids can remember them and anyone can play them," is among 300 U.S. citizens visiting the Soviet Union this month on a travel/study seminar sponsored by the National Council of Churches.

"The purpose is to foster understanding and work for peace," Walker said. "That's why they're using Christian churches as a starting point. There are more Christian churches in the Soviet Union than we have been led to believe."

In fact, based on her conversations with a similar delegation of Soviets who visited Corning in April, Walker believes that Russian Christianity is healthy and thriving.

"Your image is of ladies in babushkas, but that's not true," she said. "Those (delegates) were dynamic, exciting people."

"A 'mid-life musician,' Walker only began to play the guitar after the age of 40. "I was a chemistry major," she said. "I learned three chords and began to play on Saturdays for children at St. Patrick's. Then I began to write the songs, and I sort of just went from there."

Since then, the mother of eight has written

nearly 60 songs such as "The Peacable Kingdom" and "All God's Critters," and has released six albums. Many are based on Jewish folk tales, but all "say something good to kids without being specifically religious," she explained.

Walker has also produced numerous instructional television programs, including "Saints Alive." Walker is currently hosting these 15-minute segments on the lives of the saints for the Archdiocese of New York. "As things come up, I do 'em," she said.

That goes for the Soviet trip as well. Walker applied to the Corning Committee for U.S./U.S.S.R. Church Relations when she heard the committee had agreed to sponsor one Corning-area person going to Russia.

A Corning resident for 35 years, Walker believes she may have been chosen in part because she has performed in most of the city's schools and churches. Her name recognition has certainly aided her fund-raising efforts. While Walker is personally paying one-third of the \$3,000 cost of the trip, the Corning Council of Churches is raising the remainder through such efforts as selling "I helped send Mary Lu Walker to the Soviet Union" buttons.

"What pleases me most about this whole thing is the totally ecumenical effort on behalf of this town," Walker said.

After leaving June 14 from New York City, she and the other delegates will visit Moscow,



Mary Lu Walker

Leningrad and Zygorsk, taking part in church services and meeting religious leaders. Then, with a smaller group, Walker will make stops

in Minsk and Riga. Throughout their trip, delegates will be hosted by the Soviet counterpart to the U.S. National Council of Churches.

Before returning to the United States in July, members of the delegation will also meet with church and government officials in Moscow for discussions on peace and justice, women's issues, human rights, theology and youth. Walker will take part in the meetings on youth and plans to ask what she termed "searching questions."

"That's my area of expertise," she said, "And that's the hope of the world, isn't it?"

"I want to see the churches and the schools, see what they're teaching the children," she said. "I hope it's better than what we're teaching."

She expects to return a changed person. "I know it will touch our emotions deeply," she said. "You don't normally make the connection between people you know and 'the Russians.'"

Although she has long been active in local peace groups, Walker believes the trip will be more rewarding. "Building bridges — that's the way peace will be won," she said. "I don't really believe all the stuff I hear about the Soviet Union," she added. "I think we're victims of lots of propaganda. I think the Soviet Union is just full of people like us."

World leaders

Continued from Page 1

of hatred and violence" in their quest for justice. He also prayed for the "ever more numerous victims of violence" in the country.

In a June 15 interview reported by Vatican Radio, French Cardinal Lustiger called South Africa a "sick" country that requires healing.

"This country is sick, sick from violence and from injustice," the cardinal said. "It is necessary to heal it, not kill it."

Vatican Radio said Cardinal Lustiger led an hour of prayer and reflection for peace

and justice in South Africa June 15 at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris.

Cardinal Hume, head of the English and Welsh bishops' conference, called for "strong and effective" British political, moral and economic measures to bring pressure on the South African government, according to a June 16 statement.

Archbishop Denis Hurley of Durban, president of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference, told National Catholic News Service June 13 that a "long, hard siege" is under way, and it "must end with black government."

"The black people have taken their destiny in their own hands," the archbishop added.

During church services marking the June 16 anniversary, Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Rev. Allan Boesak, president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, expressed anger at the situation in their country.

Archbishop Tutu told an audience of about 500 whites at an Anglican memorial service that the South African government is "trampling our dignity under foot and rubbing our noses in the dust."

He called the government's ban on events commemorating the Soweto riots "grossly insensitive and highly provocative."

Mr. Boesak, at another church service

marking the anniversary, rapped President Reagan's call for restraint.

"For God's sake, Mr. President, how much more restraint can we show?" he asked.

"Who are these people walking around with shotguns and rifles? How many white children have died at our hands?" the Associated Press reported him as asking.

He accused Reagan and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of urging "not restraint from violence but restraint from protest against apartheid."

To the president of his country, Mr. Boesak said, "Woe to your government, Mr. Botha. Your God is not our God. Your God is racism."

THE WOMB

ONCE THE SAFEST PLACE IN
THE WORLD FOR A BABY NOW
THE MOST DEADLY

One of every three children conceived in the United States is killed in the womb through abortion. That is nearly one million five hundred thousand unborn children killed every year. The womb has literally become a death chamber for babies.

There are alternatives to abortion. There have to be.

Those sending a donation in any amount will receive the 32 page color booklet, "When You Were Formed In Secret/Abortion in America" by Gary Bergel with remarks by C. Everet Koop M.D.

Please make checks payable to: **Rochester Area RTL Education Fund.**
All contributions are tax deductible.

Call or write us for more information or a speaker for your group.

Rochester Area Right to Life Committee, Inc.
Education Fund
3910 Dewey Avenue
Rochester, N.Y. 14616
(716) 621-4690

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution to the **Rochester Area RTL Education Fund.** Please send me the 32 page color booklet "When You Were Formed In Secret/Abortion in America"

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State/Zip _____

Social ministry

Continued from Page 4

boards creates a structure that tends to be "board-heavy."

"In their day-to-day operations, I don't think we have over-burdened regions and their boards with processes," said Wynne. "The diocesan board is on record as saying they don't want to do that."

All three directors agree that so far, the tendency has been avoided for the most part.

"John Firpo inherited an organization that's complex," said Barbaro. "He's done well in helping to keep empowerment at the regional level and good discussion at the diocesan level. I've noticed that even local activities have the flavor of diocesan approach."

In the coming year, Father Firpo and the diocesan board hope to extend that "diocesan flavor" to such other procedural areas as personnel policies. "We have nothing down on paper," Father Firpo said, "but we would hope to implement the values found in the economics pastoral in our policies the best way we can."

Regional directors are also optimistic about what they believe the new structure can accomplish.

"I hope through the new organization ... that a greater sensitivity and responsibility

and delegation will continue to happen to allow regions and people at the local level to have control of service and programs," Caroscio said. "The fact that we have moved to a decentralized structure indicates that."

"I would hope to do a better job of canvassing the Southern Tier to get a hold a burning issues and needs here," Barbaro said. "I see all kinds of potential to become a better provider of service and advocate of justice and peace."

Father Bausch simply pointed to what has already been accomplished. "The growth we have seen in social ministry since 1979 has just been phenomenal," he said. At that time, there were no regional offices, and diocesan Catholic Charities was providing between \$3 and \$4 million in human services. Last year, diocesan social ministries coordinated a total of \$8 million worth of human services.

"This year has been the best of times and the worst of times," Barbaro concluded. "There have been great progress and setbacks. We still have a lot to do."

D/S/W group at South Seneca changes monthly meeting time

The Divorced, Separated and Widowed group at South Seneca has been meeting for the past eight months on the third Saturday morning of each month. A new meeting time, however, has been set for the third Friday evening of each month.

The change in the meeting time allows anyone in the group to participate in other D/S/W groups, which are having meetings and social functions at Geneva, Rochester, Auburn and elsewhere.

South Seneca's next meeting will be held Friday, June 20 at 7 p.m. in the Holy Cross Catholic Center in Ovid. The center is located on South Main Street between Holy Cross and South Seneca High School.

The program will consist of reflections on the "Wells Far Go" Regional II Conference. Committees will also be elected for programs, publicity, fund raising, social activities and refreshments.

For information, call (607)869-5236, 869-5222 or 582-6705.

Please come and feel free to bring a friend. Coffee, tea and dessert will be served.

Alpha & Omega
Books & Records

Special Sale on all N.A.L.R. products in stock.

Save \$3.50 on all records and \$3.00 on all cassettes.

25% off all music books, including "Glory and Praise"

Artists include: *St. Louis Jesuits, Monks of Weston Priory, The Dameans, Carey Landry, Lucien Deiss, and Michael Jonas.*

Open 9 till 9, Saturday till 6

Alpha & Omega Books & Records.

(Four corners in Penfield)

1825 Penfield Rd.

381-1250