

Protests mark fourth anniversary of Iraq war

Demonstrations held in Kent, Ravenna

By Dave O'Brien
Record-Courier staff writer

Amid the clang of cymbals and honking cars, a dozen people braved freezing rain, ice and near-drenchings from passing snowplows Monday in downtown Kent to protest the Iraq war on its fourth anniversary.

Bundled up against the cold and holding a sign at the corner of Franklin Avenue and Main Street in downtown Kent, Bonnie Hawk, Portage Democratic Coalition communications director, said 18 people had gathered from 7 to 8:30 a.m. Monday near the Crain

• Peace activists plan 'anti-recruiting' today at Kent school. See page A3.

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Mike Carano holds up his "Peace Now" sign among Iraq war protesters Monday in downtown Kent. Demonstrations continued on the day the United States entered its fifth year in the Iraq war.

Lisa Scalfaro/Record-Courier

Bush asks patience on new strategy

By Jennifer Loven
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Iraq war lumbered into its fifth year Monday with President Bush pleading for patience to let his revised battle plan work and Congress' new Democratic leaders retorting that no patience remains.

"The new strategy will need more time to take effect," Bush said in remarks televised from the White House to mark the four years since he ordered the invasion. He challenged Congress to send him a war funding bill "without strings and without delay."

He got a swift response from House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

"The American people have lost confidence in President Bush's

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Bridge to take advantage of the heavy flow of traffic at that hour and place and get their message out.

The two "Stand for Peace" vigils in Kent and a simultaneous one in Ravenna were sponsored by the PDC and inspired by the late newspaper columnist Molly Ivins' final column, printed Jan. 1 prior to her death from cancer on Jan. 31 at age 62.

"Molly Ivins said people need to get outside and get their voices heard," she said, waving at the occasional passing car honking its horn in solidarity. "Congress has got to start listening. The American people don't want this war."

While one vigil participant banged a set of cymbals, Kent native Lisa Lilly, PDC secretary, held a "Wanted" poster with President George W. Bush's photo on it. She urged passersby to "Fight apathy!" with a shake of her fist.

Joining the protest was Mike Carano, state organizer for the Progressive Democrats of America, of which the PDC is a chapter.

"We've been against the war and the occupation from the beginning," he said.

One way Americans can support ending the war, he said, is to support U.S. House Resolution 508. Sponsored by Rep. Lynn Woolsey, a California Democrat, and introduced Jan. 17, it would require United States military disengagement from Iraq and to provide United States assistance for reconstruction and reconciliation in Iraq, among other requirements.

"You wonder if Congress is in touch with the heartland" of the United States, Hawk said. "What are they thinking? We don't want this war."

Frank Batch, a former Kent resident who now resides in Hudson and is a self-described child of the Vietnam War, said "putting a ribbon on isn't a real war effort."

"I've seen what happened to the troops. They're being used as pawns for monetary gain," he said as he stood holding a sign next to the gazebo. He blamed the war on the fight for control over the Middle East's oil resources, fright and anger over the Sept. 11, 2001 terror attacks and lies about Iraq having weapons of mass destruction.

Carano said there are many more important domestic issues facing the United States, including health care and education, on which the