



Nonviolent Peaceforce Local Chapter Newsletter November 2005

Welcome and thanks to all of us for creating this newsletter. And a special welcome to two contributors from new Local Chapters: San Diego, California, and Greater Boston, Massachusetts. The circle continues to grow!

In this newsletter you'll find reports by our busy Local Chapters and our friends at NP Minneapolis. Also

MISSIVE FROM MINNEAPOLIS

Dear Friends,

A couple of weekends ago I attended the protest at the School of the Americas, a school within Ft. Benning, GA, whose purpose is to train Latin American soldiers in the art of guerrilla tactics and torture techniques.

In 1989 a small group of concerned activists began a fast at the gate of Ft. Benning, to protest the SOA. Each year the number of protesters has increased. The gathering on the 16th brought 19,000 people to the gates.

The Nonviolent Peaceforce has had a presence for 5 of those years by having a table with information to hand out, as well as NP people available to talk with folks from all over the country about NP. This year was different. We did not have to work as hard to engage people in talk of NP because of YOU. Many of the people who stopped at the table were already connected to NP and others had heard about us and wanted to be connected. This, dear friends, is primarily because of you and the work you do for NP. College students from California to Massachusetts stopped to talk. Each saying, in his or her own way, "we know who you are, someone from NP spoke at our school, or our church."

This is a perfect time to say to each of you how grateful we are for all your efforts on behalf of NP. It is a joy to walk the journey with you.

In gratitude,

Mary Lou Ott, MOtt@nonviolentpeaceforce.org

(Editor's Note: Congratulations to Mary Lou and her husband Gene! They received a 2005 Honorary Award from the Vincent L. Hawkinson Foundation for Peace and Justice, in recognition of their lifelong involvement in peace and social justice causes and issues. A veteran volunteer and activist, Mary Lou is a co-founder of the Nonviolent Peaceforce. (Mel calls her the "founding mother.") Gene is a retired physician who has volunteered locally and internationally to improve the health of the poor and disadvantaged. They are an amazing pair!)

included is an article by Joan Bernstein, NP North America Regional Coordinator, highlighting many exciting opportunities for Local Chapters to enjoy. In fact, you've all shared so much news there's no room for my regular closing. You are the inspiration!

Faith Edman, news gatherer

peaceforce_agnews@yahoo.com

CHECKED OUT NP WEBSITES LATELY?

I sometimes forget to, so this morning I visited the US site and found good news. Recruitment for new team members for **Sri Lanka** has begun. The job description and application are available on the website. And, quoting from the press release: NP "will soon begin recruiting for a five-person international team to be sent to **Mindanao in the Philippines** which has experienced several armed conflicts in recent decades...the NP team will focus on expanding the ability of local peacekeepers to carry out their work...NP will begin implementation (starting with recruitment) of the Mindanao Peacekeeping Project once \$250,000 USD in funding is identified." To read the entire press release, and also to see a **calendar** of the US Public Event Tour schedules of Rajiv Vora, Asia Regional Coordinator, and of Erika Shatz, Major Gift Officer, go <http://nonviolentpeaceforce> and click on "Visit our pressroom for 4th quarter 2005 activities".

And for other interesting NP news, check out NP Europe's website at <http://npeurope.org>. Click on "News" at the top to read their **newsletters**. Both NP websites are great sources of info for us as we do our work.

---Faith

2006 NEW ACTION OPPORTUNITIES IN NORTH AMERICA, BY JOAN BERNSTEIN

In 2006, the NP will be moving to a new stage of activity worldwide, as we create a much larger pool of regular and reserve field team members who are fully trained and ready for international deployment. In North America, our long-awaited 1-day general public training—specially created for our Chapters to use in local organizing—is also almost ready to go. Here is a brief “menu” of organizing opportunities that are upcoming—in addition to the speaking, tabling, and general fundraising you are already doing! We hope that these opportunities will interest and bring into your Chapters many new NP activists! There will be more details in the next newsletter, and I can also send you particular details sooner as you may request and as they are developed.

1. We will be recruiting people—especially those who already have relevant international experience—to be assessed and fully (3 week) trained this summer and next winter as either long-term or reserve NP international field team members. We hope to fully train 50 North Americans (and assess many more than that) before the end of 2006. You can begin now to speak with people who will indicate interest by joining our Registry, which will soon be available on-line. By the fall, we plan to have simulation assessment weekends taking place in 3 locations within North America, as a prelude to the second core training. Please note that the minimum NP deployment age is 25.

2. In North America, we will be asking assessment and training participants to themselves pay or raise much of the costs, including travel, food and accommodations, and trainer fees. Chapters can assist individuals with raising these costs, and we encourage you to also raise “matching funds” for NP trainees in the global south, where community funds may not be available to cover these costs. These very specific fundraising objectives can help you to target new donors in new constituencies.

3. “Training-for-Trainers” of our 1-Day “General Public” Nonviolent Conflict Intervention training: After completion of the pilot stage, we hope to have given training weekends for trainers in 10 locations around North America by the end of 2006. As local trainers would generally be current

or future NP chapter activists, please begin to identify now 4-10 people in your group, or in your circle of contacts, who are interested in becoming a trainer. If there is a foundation in your local area who you think might donate up to \$1000 to help cover the costs of such a local training-for-trainers, please let me know ASAP! We will combine the trainer-training with a “regular” 20-person Saturday training to cover the remainder of the training costs, and we are assuming that your local group will provide housing hospitality, airport pickups, etc. for the trainers!

4. 1-Day General Public Trainings: After trainers are trained, we hope that chapters will be able to organize and give at least 1 “general public training” per month in your area—to church or synagogue groups, to community groups, to people you meet at talks and tables. Start thinking about what groups you will approach, and also start taking a list of people who are interested in attending at your tables, speaking engagements, and fundraising events.

5. Intermediate Domestic (Local) Peace Team Trainings/Trainings for Trainers: We are hoping to also find funding by the middle of 2006 to finish developing our intermediate curriculum and to train intermediate trainers in 4 locations in North America before the end of 2006. This will enable chapters who are interested in developing local peace teams to offer 6 “intermediate” 4-6 hour segments to develop the necessary skills.

6. Support for Field Team Members (FTMs) and their Families: As the NP begins to deploy a larger number of FTMs, both long and short-term, the need for local-group emotional and practical support for deployed and returning FTMs and for their families will become greater. We will begin to plan for this in the first half of 2006. In the meantime, if there are people in your area who are applying to be trained as potential long-term or reserve FTMs, those who would like to provide such support might begin to discuss with them what (non-financial) support they are likely to need in the event of deployment.

--Joan Bernstein, NP
North America Regional
Coordinator, db3@usa.net

TWO PEACE BOND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON!

*Hi everyone! I wanted to remind all of you wonderful local chapter folks about two different (but connected) Peace Bond opportunities for this holiday season. The first is the exciting Peace Bond Design Competition that we are holding. The competition is being held for both juniors and adults to design our 2006 Peace Bonds, and it would be something fun to let your friends, colleagues, children, grandchildren, and anyone else know about that might want to enter the contest. Winning artwork will appear on 2006 Series A Peace Bonds, and the winning artists will receive a trip to Washington DC during the spring of 2006 for the awards ceremony and unveiling of the artwork. All of the details, entry forms, and instructions for the competition are on www.buypeacebonds.org or contact Natalie Brenner at nbrenner@nonviolentpeaceforce.org for more details.

The second is the opportunity to give 2005 Peace Bonds as gifts- they are a thoughtful and meaningful way to show someone that you care during the holidays! After all of the family gatherings, big meals, and festivities, Peace Bonds are a gift that lasts a lifetime- when Peace Bonds are purchased, those contributions support active peace work and alternatives to violence in the field! Building safer communities and allowing people to resolve conflicts nonviolently is an invaluable gift, and the Peace Bonds are such a good way to celebrate this nonviolence over the holidays. The \$10 Bonds are available for purchase, or we could send as many as your chapter might want to sell at holiday tabling events, churches, peace gatherings, or anywhere else you may creatively come up with! Another nice feature of the Peace Bond is that you may purchase them online and either download or send them electronically to your friends and family if you think they'd like to receive them that way. For more information on giving Peace Bonds as gifts, or if your chapter would like to request more Peace Bonds to sell, please contact Natalie Brenner at nbrenner@nonviolentpeaceforce.org.

Happy Holidays everyone! -Natalie

BAY AREA CALIFORNIA USA WORKING ON SPEAKERS MANUAL

The Bay Area Chapter is busy getting ready to celebrate another successful year of the NP which will be combined with a visit from Rajiv Vora, the Asia Regional Coordinator. He'll be speaking in San Francisco on December 7th at 7:00 p.m. and Marin County on December 8th. We also were lucky to have

Canadian Shall Sinha, the husband of new field team member Pramila Sinha, who has pledged to speak to as many groups like the Rotary Clubs as possible. He spoke to many groups in California and on the west coast while he was here. It was a great pleasure to have him in the area for several weeks.

The speaker's committee, Rebecca Bryson & Delia McGrath have been very busy completing a Speakers Manual that will soon be available to be used throughout North America. The chapter training committee, Rebecca Bryson, Delia McGrath, and Joan Bernstein worked to finish the pilot draft of the NP's new 8-hour Nonviolent Conflict Intervention training, to be in use soon by local chapters. Rebecca and Delia led the first pilot training here on September 17th. Joan used that experience to revise the training for the next pilot (which was held in Boston the following month). Melissa Fafarman, the tabling coordinator, has organized NP tables at least a half dozen events, including at the Tikkun national spiritual activism conference, at the September demonstration against the war in Iraq, and at a major street fair.

It's clear that we need more actively involved members to move our chapter and the NP forward--we have mostly committee coordinators without committees to back them up--so the chapter's outreach coordinators, Jan Herzog and Carol Mosher, are planning how to accomplish this. We are also fortunate to have Mary Tarczynski, the NP's US Communications staff, living here and actively helping with media and communications issues, and Gilda Bettencourt, NP strategic relations and capacity building support staff, who also currently forms our local chapter's fundraising committee. Upcoming in the spring, two local chapter members who raised over \$1000 for the NP at a house party last year want to do more this year, and are organizing a bluegrass band fundraiser among their musical contacts.

--Jan Herzog, jankaye@juno.com

BUCKS COUNTY PENNSYLVANIA USA BUSY WITH PRESENTATIONS

Bucks County Chapter has been gradually gaining more exposure and that yields more requests to make presentations. We are actively seeking more active members as we realize how difficult it is to do some of the things we want to do with only 5 or 6. We participated for the 3rd time in the annual Peace Fair held on the grounds of a Quaker meeting. This year we were able to show the new NP DVD continuously and many people stopped to look at it. We actively engaged passersby. Our efforts yielded several more names for our mailing list and we hope to cultivate some into active members.

We currently are seeking invitations to present at local churches. We sent letters to a small number of churches asking to be invited and are about to do phone follow-up. Coincidentally, during this effort, another peace group asked us to join them in presenting 5 Sundays at a local church on "The Search for Peace in an Increasingly Violent World."

--Carol Miller, camil888@aol.com

SR. PAT KEEFE, NP'S U.S. OUTREACH COORDINATOR, TO SPEAK IN PENNSYLVANIA

I am going to Pennsylvania in December primarily to be the speaker for the annual Peace Pilgrimage from Nazareth to Bethlehem, PA. on the 10th. This Pilgrimage has been held every year since 1960 and has had some illustrious presenters. Last year's was the CEO for the National Council of Churches in the U.S. I can provide the details or they can be found easily on the website: www.peacewalk.org. The site has the pilgrimage flyer and a short biography about me as the speaker. For more info about my itinerary while I'm in Pennsylvania, email me at pkeefe@nonviolentpeaceforce.org

PHILADELPHIA AREA PENNSYLVANIA USA CONFIRMS MISSION STATEMENT

We met October 19 and confirmed our chapter's mission statement:

We meet and correspond in order to:

- Educate ourselves about the Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP)
- Spread the word about the NP
- Support the NP - fundraising, volunteering, moral support
- prepare to be supportive of those who will be deployed with NP teams

We agreed on a new draft of a goals statement:

Goals for our Nonviolent Peaceforce Philadelphia Chapter:

- Create awareness and support for using principles of nonviolent conflict intervention to preserve peace amongst all communities locally and around the world --
- Near-term Goal: Nonviolent Peaceforce peacekeeping community initiatives in Sri Lanka and elsewhere as invited
 - Long-term Goal: 2000 unarmed peaceforce workers trained and ready for global deployment by 2010

We will use these on our chapter's insert for the NP brochure.

An exciting part of our meeting was planning for the visit of Rajiv Vora, NP's Regional Coordinator/Asia, and Erika Shatz. Our member Raji Malik is Rajiv's nephew and is coordinating our planning.

Rajiv will speak Dec. 1 at the BAPS Philadelphia Indian Community Center in Levittown on the use in Sri Lanka of Gandhi's nonviolent techniques. That will be followed by an Indian dinner and a joint meeting of the NP Philadelphia Area and Central Bucks County Chapters.

At noon on Dec. 2 he will speak at Drexel University on Gandhian ideas as being practiced now. Then in the evening he will speak again on use of Gandhi's techniques at the Bharatiya Cultural Center in Montgomeryville, PA.

-Clarkson Palmer ctpalmer@aol.com

SAN DIEGO CALIFORNIA USA CHAPTER CREATED IN OCTOBER

Nonviolent Peaceforce San Diego formed on October 8, 2005. On that evening, Michael Nagler, NP Advocate Team Member, and Erika Shatz, Major Gifts Officer-USA, gave a public NP presentation to about 28 attendees. At that time nine persons said they were interested in creating our Local Chapter. Since then, two others have expressed interest and will be helping us in our first public event, on December 10, when we will participate in the Annual Peace on Earth Holiday Bazaar. This Bazaar is promoted by Peace, Justice, and Environmental groups in San Diego.

We will offer NP Peace Bonds, Bumper Stickers, mugs, DVDs, video tapes, Peace books, handmade tote bags, baked goods, homemade English Lemon Curd in jars, handmade ornaments and candle holders, etc. We will have a portable DVD player showing our NP video, and have NP brochures and copies of Rumors of Peace. We hope this will be a good public relations opportunity to make NP better known among the San Diego Peace Community, as well as a modest fundraiser for NP.

Four of our group are retired, with relatively flexible time. To accommodate employed members, we have our group meetings on Saturdays at noon. Networking and outreach have often been done by groups of two or three, as well as individuals. We joined in the Gulu Walk; two meetings of Economic Conversion; were present at a lecture at USD's Institute of Peace & Justice; attended a book signing-lecture of Peace in Our Lifetime; distributed NP flyers at USD, attended SD Foundation for Change's "Changemaker Celebration," placed NP ads in local newspapers and church newsletters. Two groups in the City of Claremont are interested in learning about NP, and some of us will help them to plan for an event in 2006.

We have decided to join the Association of NP Local Chapters which Joan Bernstein promoted.

--Gloria Joyce, gloria@npsand.org

MILL CREEK YOUNGSTOWN OHIO USA FARMS PEACE

Our chapter had a table for nine of the ten weekends of our local Farmers' Market this past summer. We sold used books on peace, and related topics; Peace Bonds; Palestinian Olive Oil; Pesto and Tapenade made by a Palestinian/Israeli company, called Meditalia; had a sign-up sheet for people who wanted to be kept informed of our activities; and of course, our donation can! One of our more artistic members created wonderful Peace Sign decorations from recycled optic lenses! After sending Peace Bond money to the national office, we made enough money to pay the cost of the food products, order a new shipment, and then start planning what to do with our excess funds. A project in the planning stage is to purchase peace-related books for local libraries, and have our group's information inscribed in the book.

We also tabled at a community arts street fair, and most recently, at a day-long seminar at Youngstown State University called EcoJustice: Searching for a Nonviolent Future - A Conference on Sustainability. At this conference we also sold Peace Calendars from Syracuse Cultural Workers.

Some of our members are meeting regularly to discuss Randy Shaw's book, "The Activist's Handbook." This is giving us some nuts & bolts ideas on creating positive change.

In August, our chapter became an endorsing organization for The Peace Alliance's campaign to create a Department of Peace. (www.thepeacealliance.org)

Finally, we are in the planning stages of hosting another Gathering for Peace, and hope to sponsor our 3rd annual Nonviolence Training, possibly with our good friends from Michigan Peace Team.

We are excited about becoming part of an Association of NP Chapters in the United States, and look forward to that process!

-- Susan Sexton, sextonius@cboss.com

GREATER BOSTON MASSACHUSETTS USA

EXPANDS (see also Sev Bruyn's note about networking with other groups)

The Greater Boston area chapter has been building well over our first 6 months. We are meeting monthly in Severyn Bruyn's large living room, and are watching and discussing a half hour segment of the PBS documentary "A Force More Powerful" each month, to better understand the history of nonviolent struggle in the 20th century. We have recently purchased 7 copies of Gene Sharpe's book "Waging Nonviolent Struggle" from his powerful institute, the Albert Einstein Institution, and will read chapters and discuss them to continue educating ourselves and others with whom we discuss nonviolence.

We have sponsored 3 workshops on "Imaging a World with Nonviolent Peaceforces instead of Armies: How Do We Get There from Here?," based on scholar-activist Elise Boulding's wonderful model. These workshops have gotten enthusiastic responses at the Wellesley Friends Meeting House (outside of Boston), and at the Cambridge Friends Meeting House last spring, and last week at the Rocky Mountain Peace & Justice Center in Boulder CO.

We offered a well-attended pilot training in October on Nonviolent Conflict Intervention at the Peace Abbey, which engendered a lot of useful feedback for the final version of the training, which will be offered throughout North America. Thank you, San Francisco, for going first and giving us suggestions for changing the curriculum. We look forward to hearing how the 3rd and final pilot went this month in Seattle!

Elise Boulding and Sherry Zitter represented the Peaceforce on Oct. 29th at a Peace Abbey ceremony awarding Cindy Sheehan their "Courage of Conscience" award, and David Kimball and Sherry represented the Peaceforce as part of a volunteer team helping with the AFSC "Eyes Wide Open" exhibit on the Boston Common Nov. 5th.

More trainings and workshops are in the works, as well as tabling to sell Peace Bonds. Our 5-member steering committee is actively working on chapter infrastructure (website, bank account, membership) and our 10 member "core group" that usually shows up for meetings is enormously committed and supportive. We feel enthusiastic and grateful.

--Sherry Zitter, for the steering committee,
sherry@sherryzitter.org

Severyn Bruyn is helping to coordinate the work of this chapter with other organizations in the region. He brought Michael Dolan on November 13 to a meeting of the Newton Dialogues on Peace and War to speak on International Law. Dolan is a lawyer who has a striking new article on how to deal with weapons of mass destruction through the UN Security Council. The Newton meeting talked about the various ways to stop war on a legal nonviolent basis.

Severyn is bringing Timothy Smith to the Cambridge Friends Meeting on November 20 to talk on the practice of Social Investment. Smith was Director of the ICCR (an interfaith council for churches to allocate capital for ethical purposes) for thirty years and is now President of The Social Investment Forum, a trade association of ethical investors. He was instrumental in advancing the movement of investors that encouraged corporations to withdraw from South Africa and ultimately to achieve the release of Nelson Mandela. He will speak on nonviolent strategies that reduce the need for war.

David Lewit came to the chapter to speak about preparing for a Gandhi celebration on 9/11 in 2006. Check with Sherry and Nancy Wrenn for more information on this meeting and other chapter activities.

--Severyn Bruyn, bruyn@rcn.com

NORFOLK VIRGINIA USA INSPIRES FILM FESTIVAL

Our local group helped inspire a Film festival of peace in December. It is entitled Light in the Dark, Festival of Peace. We will have seminars and speakers and theatre and children's art and a fair trade festival as well as movies. Our local Movie Theatre, the Naro, is co-coordinating first run films with the Peace Alliance, a new group of folks from various places that came together to actualize this event. I will distribute Nonviolent Peaceforce literature.

--Alexandra Kedrock BAKedrock@aol.com