

Ground Zero

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August Resisters Face Federal Trial

By Leonard Eiger

The eight nuclear resisters arrested for “trespassing” on the Bangor Trident base in August 2015 had their initial day in US District Court in Tacoma on November 4th. All eight received notices to appear before Magistrate Judge Karen L. Strombom for arraignment. The maximum penalties for the trespassing charge are six months in prison and a \$5,000 fine.

The eight defendants are Mary Gleysteen of Kingston, Anne Hall of Lopez Island, Ann Kittredge of Quilcene, Betsy Lamb and Emilie Marlinghaus of Bend, Oregon, Peggy Love of East Wenatchee, Elizabeth Murray of Poulsbo, and Michael Siptroth of Belfair.

On August 10th the activists crossed the blue line onto Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor. Some staged a die-in, spreading ashes around others’ bodies on the asphalt,

while others attempted to deliver a letter to the base commander urging him to uphold international law.

The defendants were supported by a large number of supporters who witnessed the arraignments. There were not enough seats in the courtroom, and many had to wait in the hallway.

The defendants were called one by one to enter their pleas; all defendants pleaded “not guilty.” Michael Siptroth, who represented himself, pleaded “not guilty on behalf of all the children of the world.” Betsy Lamb, also representing herself, said that she was pleading “not guilty on behalf of our Mother Earth...”

Attorney, and longtime friend and legal supporter of nuclear resisters, Ken Kagan assisted the defendants dur-

August Resisters... continued on page 2

ing their arraignments, and will be representing many of them in their April trial.

Judge Strombom expressed her concern to Kagan about him representing so many defendants together, as she believes it can be difficult for so many defendants to have cohesive and consistent defenses. Ken explained the unique situation that exists in the case of this affinity group (as well as the historical context), and stated that he is confident the defendants can work together and be consistent in their defenses.

The government is evidently not pursuing prison time for the defendants, although the potential maximum \$5,000 fine still stands. Therefore, this case still presents the possibility of prison time for any defendant who would refuse (on moral grounds) to pay the fine, assuming the defendants are found guilty and the fine assessed.

The April trial will present the opportunity to attempt to introduce defenses and expert testimony almost universally prohibited in previous Federal trials of nuclear resisters. This includes information about necessity, international law, Nuremberg Principles, First Amendment protections, the immorality of nuclear weapons, good motive, religious, moral or political beliefs regarding nuclear weapons, and the U.S. government's policies regarding nuclear weapons. In previous trials prosecutors have introduced motions to prohibit the use of any of these defenses, and Judges have almost always agreed, thereby prohibiting defendants from being allowed to present a reasonable defense.

At a time when the US government continues to move ahead at breakneck speed modernizing the nuclear weapons infrastructure, delivery systems, and the very weapons themselves, it is critical that people bear public witness and challenge such destabilizing policies. The courageous defendants who will face trial for their public witness will have their day in court. We can only hope that the judge will find the courage to apply sound jurisprudence and allow the defendants to mount a proper defense.

The defendant's trial date – all will be tried together – was set for April 1, 2016 at 1:30pm before Judge David W. Christel in Courtroom C, at Tacoma Union Station Courthouse. They invite supporters to join them in witness to the proceedings. Information on the trial, pre-trial courthouse vigil, and any other related activities will be posted on the Events Calendar on the Ground Zero website.

Leonard Eiger chairs the Media Committee of the Stewardship Council. He took the photo of the discernment and planning meeting on the cover, at which the defendants met with supporters and attorney Ken Kagan to discuss the charges and their options.

“You don’t need to know”

The Navy sues to block release of emergency plans

Compiled from the Associated Press and the Kitsap Sun

The Navy is suing Kitsap County to try to stop it from releasing Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor emergency plans. The U.S. District Court in Tacoma issued a temporary restraining order stopping the county from releasing the records. In January, Ground Zero's Glen Milner asked Kitsap County Emergency Management for records regarding potential consequences of a radiological accident at the base and planned response. The Navy denied the request and said it will inform residents how to respond if a catastrophic incident occurs.



The Navy is threatening to bring Glen Milner to court for receiving emergency plans that impact a wide, populated area around Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor. *Graphic from the US Navy.*

In June the U.S. attorney's office in Seattle, representing the Navy, threatened to sue deputy prosecuting attorneys Alexis Foster and Shelley Kneip. The Navy contends some of the documents have national security implications and should be protected.

The Bangor "response plans are in place, and nobody knows anything about them, so they don't really do anybody any good," Milner said. "They've gone to the trouble of creating the plans, but they don't want to tell anybody about them."

The county and U.S. attorney's office continue to release information to Milner as it's processed, though their relationship is chafed by different disclosure laws — the Washington Public Records Act and the federal Freedom of Information Act.

Because the emergency response plans were created by the county and are held by the county, state law applies. Normally the county would process Milner's request and if the feds disagreed, they could seek an injunction.

“You don’t need to know”... continued on page 11

All invited to annual Peace Walk in honor of MLK

By Mira Leslie

The annual Martin Luther King Peace Walk will take place from January 14th through the 18th. On January 18th walkers will join with members of Ground Zero to participate in the annual Martin Luther King, Jr., march that starts at Garfield High School and proceeds through downtown Seattle.

Peace walking is a nonviolent action with interfaith prayer and solidarity, lead by Nipponzan Myohoji Buddhist monks who do this in many parts of the world. The Seattle MLK march theme this year is “We have the Power to Make Change” – a theme worthy of reflection during the walk. The visibility of peacewalkers along roads sparks conversation and education for drivers, shopkeepers, families, and communities.

This walk will cover new ground, including Indian Island where vigils against the weapons depot have been held for years, Port Townsend where several Ground Zero members and affiliated activists live, Point Julia on Port Gamble Sklallam tribal land, Kingston, and Edmonds. We walk approximately 10 to 15 miles per day and welcome anyone who wants to join in this nonviolent harmonious action.

For more information, please look at the Ground Zero website, www.gzcenter.org.

Mira Leslie serves on the Leafletting Committee for Ground Zero, and has participated in many Peace Walks.

Ground Zero to join Seattle March and Rally, January 18

By Leonard Eiger

Ground Zero Center continues its tradition of celebrating Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday this year, with a twist. Instead of our traditional vigil and nonviolent direct action at the Bangor Trident nuclear submarine base, we

will join the 34th Annual MLK Seattle Celebration on Monday, January 18th at Garfield High School.

It will be a full, rich day, beginning with workshops beginning at 9:30 AM, a rally at 11:00, followed by a march from the high school to the downtown Federal Building. The march begins at 12:30, and there is a final rally at the Federal Building. Buses will be available to take people back to the high school.

Ground Zero will be there, marching with banners, and will distribute a special leaflet in honor of Dr. King.

Join us and help make this march the biggest ever as we come together in the nonviolent spirit so central to Dr. King’s spirit and vision. We will gather outside the school on the grassy knoll along 23rd Avenue before the march.

More information on the MLK Seattle Celebration is at mlkseattle.org.

Leonard Eiger chairs the Media Committee for the Stewardship Council.



A life-size Trident missile got plenty of attention during the 2015 MLK march and rally. *Photo by Leonard Eiger.*

How Do Our Lives Change?

By Elizabeth Murray

I was honored to co-lead a workshop entitled “How Do Our Lives Change” at Jim and Shelley Douglass’s annual Advent Retreat in Birmingham, Alabama in early December, along with my friend and colleague, Ray McGovern.

I spoke about the seeds of transformation within my own life that led me from a career as a CIA intelligence analyst for 27 years (1983-2010) to becoming an activist with the Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action.

McGovern, also an ex-CIA analyst and outspoken

critic of US policy, spoke on the same theme, from the perspective of having been an analyst and presidential briefer at the CIA during the Vietnam era and Cold War years – a career that spanned from 1963 to 1990.

McGovern returned his Career Intelligence Medal in 2006 to protest torture at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo. He described his nonviolent protest against Hillary Clinton in Washington, DC, in which he was brutalized by security men and dragged away in full view of the audience – as well as for his frank questioning of Donald

How do our lives change?... continued on page 11

“Being Arrested for Peace is an Honor”

By Leonard Eiger

Mack Johnson, Brenda McMillan, Doug Millholland, and Michael Siptroth appeared before Judge Stephen Olsen on October 27 in Kitsap County District Court for mitigation hearings. They presented their reasons for blocking traffic entering Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor. All had been charged by the Washington State Patrol with being “pedestrians on the roadway illegally” during last August’s nonviolent direct action.

In contrast with the historical gagging of free speech in Federal courts, Kitsap County judges have generally allowed nuclear resisters to speak to the full spectrum of subjects applicable to their defense. The defendants did just that, and with all the spirit and passion they could muster.

Judge Olsen listened to each defendant’s testimony, and reduced each person’s fine from \$63 to the minimum \$25. He also thanked the defendants for what they had done.

Ever the teacher, Mack Johnson educated the court on the Hague Conventions, Nuremberg Principles, and the International Court of Justice Opinion on the Legality of Nuclear Weapons, and how they inform the argument for abolishing nuclear weapons.

Brenda McMillan closed her testimony by stating, “I protest because my senators and representatives ignore me. But as I can’t remain silent, protest is my only recourse. The Bangor Submarine Base is an accident waiting to happen. Hopefully, there will come a day when we protestors will not be punished, but thanked.”

Michael Siptroth read a prepared statement to the judge in which he pleaded with him to abolish nuclear weapons. Here are excerpts from his testimony:

“My fellow citizen protestors used the anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to draw attention to the horrors of nuclear weapons. We gave public witness, wrote letters to our President and members of Congress, and committed nonviolent civil disobedience in order to repent and prevent our country’s horrible crime against humanity and say, ‘Never Again!’

“While the US spends \$60 billion a year on weapons of mass destruction and proposes using another \$100 billion to upgrade the Trident submarine program, we cannot provide an excellent, affordable educational system, healthcare for all, social security, or decent homes. Why?

“My mother died from Alzheimer’s disease and I

have early symptoms. It is estimated that millions of Americans will suffer from this disease and that we need \$2 billion yearly to research causes and cures, but we don’t have the money. Why? We are wasting current lives and threatening our future because of outdated models of thinking about defense and security. The US nuclear weapons industry and US military’s willingness to build and deploy Trident submarines are a crime against

humanity, targeting millions of civilians, and threatening the continuation of life on our planet. I am doing my part to stop this immorality and insanity and I urge you to do yours!”

After the hearing Doug Millholland offered his thoughts on the August action, the hearing and nonviolent civil resistance. Here’s part of that reflection:

“I am one of thousands questioning the latest round of military growth here in Puget Sound. When I hear the growlers, airplanes designed to detect and destroy radar systems, I know that a nuclear war is being prepared and is practiced for daily. I think of the military not so much as servants of our freedom, but rather

part of the military-industrial-congressional-media-drug-thug complex. War is very profitable for a few, and a job for many thousands of us.

“Our government is constantly sowing seeds of war. More guns, bombs, planes, and subs must be sold, the empire must have control of oil, military full-spectrum dominance must be upgraded, all paid for by borrowing money our children will have to pay so that the on-tenth of the 1 percent billionaire class that owns capitalism, incorporated, can rule the world. Being arrested for peace is an honor. Helping the coming lawsuit that will challenge the Navy’s abuse of the Environmental Impact Statement process is a duty. Come together! We can change the direction the rulers of the world are headed (dead end). In the names of our grandchildren let’s claim the power to survive! We are many and all of us want a world that is not at the edge of destruction.”

Indeed, doing anything for Peace is an honor. We are honored to have so many people give of themselves in the struggle for a nonviolent, peaceful and just world without nuclear weapons.



“I can’t remain silent.” Brenda McMillan, Doug Millholland, Mack Johnson, and Michael Siptroth before their court hearing. *Photo by Leonard Eiger.*

Leonard Eiger authors the blog *The Nuclear Abolitionist* at <http://nuclearabolitionist.blogspot.com>, and leads the *No to New Trident* campaign.

Priorities and Positions for 2016: Ground Zero's Annual Meeting

By Glen Milner

The annual Ground Zero membership meeting was held on November 14 at Ground Zero. Members reflected on our ongoing activities throughout the year, and discussed new ideas and upcoming plans. Appreciation was expressed to our many members working for a more peaceful world free of nuclear weapons.

We're excited by plans for a Peace Pagoda at Ground Zero and expect to celebrate ground-breaking in 2016. Ground Zero will also be working to sponsor the 2016 northwest tour of the historic peace vessel, the *Golden Rule*. A third project is working with Mike McCormick's new low-power/internet radio station in Seattle and producing a regularly scheduled nuclear disarmament/nonviolence radio show.

New dangers and challenges were discussed involving the escalating nuclear arms race with Russia and other developing threats to peace. Our *No To New Trident* campaign continues to speak against the Trident submarine replacement program. We explored new ways to connect with the public and gain new allies.

Eight Ground Zero members are preparing for federal trial in Tacoma in April, for the Hiroshima/Nagasaki 2015 action when members blocked the base entrance and spread ashes on the highway on the base.

Members expressed their appreciation for the work of Tim Russell, our friend and former treasurer, and for our new treasurer Bob Trutnau.

One purpose of the annual meeting is to fill Stewardship Council and committee positions in order to divide the responsibilities and work of Ground Zero into manageable sections. The Council meets once a month, alternating monthly between meetings in Seattle, Tacoma and at Ground Zero. Meetings are open to all members and we encourage new visitors.

Member positions decided at the annual meeting for 2016 are the following:

- Secretary: Marianne Mabbitt
- Treasurer: Bob Trutnau
- Co-chairs: Mary Hanson and Michael Siptroth
- House and Grounds: Tom Rogers and Mack Johnson
- Leafletting: Elizabeth Murray, Mary Gleysteen, Mira Leslie, Sallie Shawl and Rodney Brunelle
- Media: Leonard Eiger

- Communications/Outreach: Leonard Eiger, Tom Shea, Mona Lee, Mary Hanson, Rodney Brunelle and Glen Milner
- Legal/Research: Glen Milner
- Website: Matthew Rankin, Leonard Eiger
- Financial Planning/Budget: Bernie Meyer and Tim Russell

- At Large (three positions): 1. Gilberto Perez and Senji Kanaeda; 2. Mona Lee and Rodney Brunelle; and 3. Mack Johnson and Michael Hill
- Member-in-Residence: Elizabeth Murray
- Newsletter: Alice Zillah
- Thank you notes: Betsy Collins
- Too much to list: Sue Ablao

There are also two ad hoc committees – for the construction of the Peace Pagoda, and for the northwest tour of the *Golden Rule*.

Those present reflected on the lives of departed Ground Zero members Fr. William "Bix" Bichsel, Jerry Schlaman, Renee Krisko, and others from past years. We are fortunate to share time and space with so many wonderful friends.

Glen Milner chairs the Legal/Research Committee for Ground Zero. He and his wife Karol live in Lake Forest Park.



A sunny outdoor meeting. One of the Stewardship Council meetings in 2013. Photo by Leonard Eiger.

10th Annual Pacific Life Community Meeting in March

The Pacific Life Community, a network of anti-nuclear activists across the western states, will have its 2016 gathering in Montecito, California (near Santa Barbara).

The first gathering of the renewed Pacific Life Community took place in 2007, near the Nevada Test Site. Since then, the community has come together in Washington and California several times, as well as Nevada. Each gathering includes witness and nonviolent direct action at a site of nuclear weapon activity.

The dates for the gathering will be March 4-6, 2016. For more information and to register, contact Denis Apel at jdapel@yahoo.com, or visit <https://pacificlifecommunity.wordpress.com>.

Golden Rule Sailing to the Northwest this Summer

By Helen Jacard

The historic wooden sailboat, the *Golden Rule*, will spend the summer traveling throughout the waters of the Great Northwest, helping to energize local struggles against nuclear weapons, nuclear power and life-threatening energy sources such as coal. Ground Zero Center for Nonviolence will be one of the key partners for this momentous voyage.

"We are really looking forward to hosting the *Golden Rule* and her crew," said Ground Zero's Glen Milner. "This historic anti-nuclear boat will bring much needed attention to the dangers of nuclear-armed Trident submarines in Puget Sound."

In 1958, the *Golden Rule* and her intrepid crew of Quaker peace activists tried to sail to the Marshall Islands to interfere with atmospheric nuclear bomb testing. They stopped in Honolulu and twice tried to complete their journey. The *Golden Rule* was boarded by the Coast Guard and returned to Honolulu, where the crew was arrested and spent 60 days in jail. Considerable publicity created a worldwide outcry that halted the nuclear blasts that year. In 1963 President Kennedy and the leaders of the UK and USSR signed the Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. The *Golden Rule* was the inspiration for Greenpeace and many other peace boats.

After decades of private ownership, in 2010 the *Golden Rule* was rescued from a watery grave in Humboldt Bay in northern California. She was in terrible shape and had two big holes in her side.

Members of Veterans For Peace (VFP) and the Quakers decided to restore the 30-foot ketch and resume her mission to stop the nuclear insanity. A crew of dedicated volunteers made this their daily labor for five years. Hundreds of people donated and several local businesses provided materials and equipment for the restoration.

Now the *Golden Rule* is sailing again for a peaceful, nuclear-free, world! In July we sailed from Humboldt Bay to San Diego in time for the Veterans For Peace national convention. On our return voyage, we visited Long Beach, Marina del Rey, Santa Monica, Santa Barbara Morro Bay, Monterey Bay, Santa Cruz, Half Moon Bay, San Francisco, Berkeley, Sausalito, and Ft. Bragg to talk with supporters and the public about nuclear and peace issues.

In San Francisco, we provided an alternative pres-

ence during the Fleet Week celebration of militarism.

Planning is underway for a four month voyage to Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia, for summer 2016, with much of that time in the Puget Sound area.



More than a half-century ago, in 1958, the *Golden Rule* set sail on her mission for peace. *Photo courtesy of the Golden Rule.*

"We will be sailing throughout the northwest for a peaceful and sustainable world," says Gerry Condon, Vice President of VFP, which has adopted the *Golden Rule* as a national project. With her red sails emblazoned with a huge peace symbol and VFP logo, the *Golden Rule* will be hard to miss when she sails by the Trident Nuclear Submarine base on Hood Canal or arrives into Elliott Bay during Seafair.

When the *Golden rule* is in port, the public will be invited to tour the boat. Friends

and supporters can even go sailing with us! Tentative plans and ideas include:

- Initial trip from Humboldt Bay to Astoria in late May
- Fleet week, Portland, Oregon, June 8
- Hanford Nuclear Reservation, late June
- Peace Fleet during Fleet week, Seattle, August 3
- Bangor Trident Submarine Base, August 5-9
- Wooden Boat Festival, Pt. Townsend, September 9-11
- Actions against a proposed Liquid Natural Gas Facility in Coos Bay, Oregon
- Actions against oil and coal trains and ports, Vancouver, Washington
- Port Angeles, Vancouver and Victoria, BC, late July
- Various Puget Sound and Lake Washington locations July through early September
- Return trip to Humboldt Bay mid-September

We are now forming a Golden Rule Northwest Committee and we need your help to schedule and organize events, to outreach to media and to raise funds to make this journey possible. We welcome your ideas and invitations. We are also looking for volunteer crew members (sailing experience preferred) and qualified Captains. We look forward to a profound collaboration with activists throughout the Northwest and another powerful voyage of the *Golden Rule*.

Helen Jacard serves as the VFP *Golden Rule* Project Director. To offer help or advice, she can be reached at 206-992-6364. Gerry Condon can be reached at 206-499-1220, and you can also email vfpgoldenruleproject@gmail.com.

Backstage at Ground Zero's Buy Nothing Day Action

A Comedy of Errors

By Mona Lee

"Maybe we could get in the Thanksgiving weekend Santa Claus Parade or just show up at Seattle's Westlake Park carrying a giant inflatable earth ball tied up like a gift with a big red bow and a banner that says, *The Greatest Gift We Could Give Our Children Would Be A Safe And Healthy Planet.*"

The idea popped into my head during the August Stewardship Council meeting. The room fell silent. A few eyebrows lifted. A couple people smiled, but no one laughed out loud.

It didn't even cross my mind to worry about how we would pull it off. After all, isn't Ground Zero the same organization that in 1980 sent a flotilla of boats out into the frigid waters of Hood Canal to block a submarine 220 feet longer than a football field? Isn't Ground Zero the organization that shows up every year for MLK Day with a 34 foot simulated Trident missile and carries it all the way from Garfield High School to the Federal Building? Why would I wonder whether we could carry a big beach ball a couple of blocks down a city street?

By September I had obtained a permit to set up a small exhibit downtown in Westlake Park, but the prospects for getting in the Santa Claus parade were not looking good. Just trying to find out who was really in charge of the Parade was daunting. Michael Sipthoth and I made brief contact with two different corporate officials, but neither returned our calls. Rodney Brunelle got a polite reply from another Macy's manager that this was a Santa Claus Parade. Content smacking of anything remotely serious was out of the question.

Never mind, we would be there anyway and reach a thousand people by handing them leaflets disguised as holiday cards. I wondered whether it would be nearly enough, what with 15,000 shoppers plus another thousand or so Black Lives Matter protesters expected downtown at the same time.

Not being a graphic artist, I still had to come up with an irresistible card. So I cut an earth globe image off the cover of Scientific American and pasted over it a red bow printed from a selection of free images off the internet and scanned the design into my computer. I set it all up in Word and sent it to Cheri at our neighborhood print shop.

Sight unseen, the Stewardship Council agreed to spend a couple hundred dollars on the fancy leaflets. I phoned Cheri and said I wanted those words in 10 inch high black Algerian script on, well not on paper, (What if it should rain?) but rather on some white water proof material. She said, "Fine. No problem!" But a little while later she phoned back and said, "I really don't think you

want this."

"Why not?"

"It will be longer than this building."

With Cheri still holding on the phone, I found my husband, Dick Burkhart, a brilliant mathematician sitting as usual in front of his computer and tapped him on the shoulder. "What is the circumference of a circle nine feet in diameter?" I asked.

Without looking up, he mumbled, "About 28 feet."

"The banner can't be any longer than 28 feet," I told Cheri.

"Oh! You want a 28 foot banner? Twelve inches high with ten inch letters?"

"Yes . . . I think so."

Next day I brought home the scrolled up banner, and eyed the floor of my house wondering where I would lay it out flat. I had never before wondered how wide our house is, but when I set the scroll down at the far side of the front entry way and unrolled it all the way across the living room, it fit perfectly. Our house is exactly 28 feet across.

Next I called up Rodney Brunelle, of inflatable missile fame. We agreed to meet at Ground Zero and make a trial run at setting up. I don't drive a car, so how was I to get all the stuff to Ground Zero? Simple. I would load everything into my trusty shopping cart: the uninflated ball (in its original two-foot shipping box), two boxes containing the thousand leaflets, the bow and scrolled up ribbon banner (shoved into kitchen garbage sacks) and haul it all onto the ferry where Mary Hanson would meet me with her car. I'm sure I did not look out of place en route to the ferry that cold rainy morning as I wheeled my cargo toward the terminal, passing the many homeless folks camped under the viaduct.

I had thought it would be easy for Rodney to blow up a nine-foot ball. That sounded much easier than inflating a 34-foot missile. But unfortunately the nozzle of his electrical inflating machine was much smaller than the hole going into the ball so air escaped out every which way with very little entering the ball. For hours the missile inflating machine sat in back of the room grumbling, huffing and puffing its heart out. Rodney tried taping the nozzle on and plugging the hole in various ways, but at the end of the day, the thing bore more resemblance to a colossal fungus or a mucous glob from the nose of a giant rhino than the earth from space.

Rodney said not to worry. He took my shopping cart home with all its contents, assuring me that on the morning of November 27, Buy Nothing Day, he would show

A Comedy of Errors... continued on page 9

Gift Commemorating Ground Zero Cloud of Witnesses Presented at Ash Interment Ceremony for Father Bix

By Elizabeth Murray

On December 12, 2015 — the Feast Day of the Virgin of Guadalupe—the beloved community of the late Jesuit priest and nuclear disarmament activist Father William “Bix” Bichsel held a ceremony commemorating his life with a procession to Jean’s House (his home and community gathering place) where a portion of his ashes was interred.

During the opening ceremony at St. Leo’s church, I was privileged to present a beautiful piece of stained-glass artwork to the Community on behalf of Sue Ablao, who was unable to be present that day. I read aloud Sue’s citation which said, in part:

“When Jackie was released from Victorville [prison in 2005, where she served two and a half years for a nonviolent demonstration at a Minuteman III nuclear missile silo site in Colorado on October 6, 2002, along with two other Dominican nuns — editor’s note] a woman from Grand Rapids sent her this wonderful piece of stained glass art. It is an oval window hanging of the Holy Spirit. I would like to present it to Guadalupe Community in memory of Bix and also Jackie Hudson, Lynne Greenwald and Anne Montgomery and their collective work to stop the nuclear madness. It could hang in a window at Guadalupe House, Jean’s House of Peace or the Erma Geary House. It just seems like a fitting time to give it to them.”

A procession led by Senji Kanaeda of the Bainbridge Island Nipponzan Myohoji Buddhist monastery then made its way to Jean’s House, where those in attendance — young and old, rich and poor, insider and outsider — all of whom had been touched by Bix’s life in some way — braved the chill of a cold and wet December afternoon to confer a blessing on Bix’s ashes and on one another.

Among the many beautiful prayers and songs cited



“A lamp for those without light.”

It’s hard to imagine that we’ve been without Father Bix’s physical presence for one year. His light lives on. *Photo by Leonard Eiger.*

that afternoon was the following Buddhist prayer from Shantideva, a Buddhist monk from the eighth century, which was among Bix’s favorites:

“May I become at all times,
Both now and forever
A protector of those without protection
A guide for those who have lost their way
A ship for those with oceans to cross
A bridge for those with rivers to cross
A sanctuary for those in danger
A lamp for those without light
A place of refuge for those who lack shelter
And a servant to all in need.
For as long as space endures,
And for as long as living beings remain,
Until then may I, too, abide
To dispel the misery of the world.”

-Shantideva

Bix’s ashes were encased in a beautiful wood box created by Ground Zero activist and master carpenter Tom Karlin. The box was passed around among Community members — many of whom kissed it in a final farewell — before being gently lowered into the earth by two young children. Accompanying the burial were songs of peace and love, and the beating of Senji’s drum.

Community members took turns adding a handful of Mother Earth to cover the box holding Bix’s ashes. Dottie Krist-Sterbick spoke moving words about the need for all of us to become more like Bix, serving as bridges between young and old; hate and love; insider and outsider.

A community gathering and reception hosted by the Tacoma Catholic Worker followed. The Tacoma Catholic Worker is also known as Guadalupe House, named after the Virgin of Guadalupe. She was especially venerated because of her significance in the Catholic Church as a symbol of God’s love and preferential option for the poor.

Videos of the interment ceremony for Bix were made by Rodney Herold and Laura Karlin, and are available on Youtube.

Elizabeth Murray serves as Member-in-Residence for the Ground Zero Center. She joined Father Bix on a ten-member solidarity trip to South Korea’s Jeju Island in 2014, where they joined local villagers in resisting the construction of a massive military base.

up at 8:00am in West Lake Park, and we would successfully inflate the ball.

I didn't sleep well on the eve of Buy Nothing Day. I don't know whether it was from nervousness or too much Thanksgiving dinner, but the next morning I had a bad case of diarrhea. It was 8:15 before I even got to the Othello light rail station to head downtown and meet Rodney. Pacing back and forth on the platform, I dialed his number, anxious to assure him I would be there soon.

A woman answered, probably Rodney's wife.

"Tom came and got the stuff this morning." Tom Karlin was our wizard carpenter who had promised to make a four-foot cylindrical wooden stand for the ball and meet us in the Park that morning. But Tom lives in Tacoma. How could he have driven all the way to Rodney's house in Kenmore, picked up the rest of the stuff, and arrived downtown by 8:00?

I called Tom's number. A male voice answered. "Hi Tom, this is Mona."

"Oh, hi. Tom and I are at Westlake Park. We have the ball, but we can't find the Parks Department folks who are supposed to get us into the electrical hook up."

"Isn't THIS Tom? I thought I was talking to Tom." By this time a very crowded train had pulled up, but I kept the phone to my ear as I got on. Because I am an old lady, someone gave me their seat.

"Yes, this is Tom Karlin. But Tom Kreshbach brought the stuff down here from Rodney's house."

Oh that was it! There were TWO Tom's! In fact there are lots of Tom's in Ground Zero: Tom Karlin, Tom Kreshbach, Tom Shea, Tom Rogers, to name a few. Every time you turn around in Ground Zero, you're looking at another Tom. It was Tom Kreshbach who had saved the day by getting up in the wee hours of the morning, going to Rodney's house to get the stuff.

"Do you know how to get hold of the Parks Department?" asked Tom. "There's a mob of people here. But I don't know whether any of them are Parks Department employees. Do they wear uniforms?"

That was when a sinking feeling came over me. Not only did I not know the Parks Department people's phone number or what they looked like, I had forgotten to bring the permit. Maybe the cops would kick us out of the Park

if we couldn't get hold of Kyle from the Parks Department to vouch for us that we have a permit.

Crossing Pine Street into the West Lake Park I could see that there were indeed lots of people. Most noticeable were the police. Then off in the distance I spotted two pickup trucks, and finally the Toms rushing toward me: the big sturdy Tom Kreshbach and the handsome white-bearded Tom Karlin. I hugged them both.

"We still haven't found anyone from the Parks Department," said Tom Karlin.

I shrugged. "Wonder if the police know anything."

We asked the largest and most impressive police officer we could find. He didn't even ask to see our permit but rather very obligingly showed us an electrical outlet hidden under the pavement and assured us that we were welcome to use it. With excitement and trepidation, I watched Tom plug it in and click the button to start the inflating machine.

Nothing. Not a sound.

"The power is turned off to the socket," said Tom.

Starting to panic, I began running in and out of stores and businesses trying to convince someone to let us use their electrical socket. No one would, of course. They probably thought I was crazy.

Ground Zero leafletters were starting to arrive. Mary Hanson suggested we ask at the carousel. Maybe they would know the Parks Department folks. They didn't, but by the time we came back from the carousel, a man from the Parks Department had magically appeared and was unlocking for Tom an electrical box under one of the trees. I hugged the man from the Parks Department even though I had never met him before.

While the Toms were blowing up the ball, the rest of us started handing out leaflets. The parade was in full swing with more marching bands wearing hundreds of Santa hats, huge floats with giant inflated animals and toys, and much more.

The Mother Earth ball looked pretty sweet sitting in her four-foot cylindrical stand. So we taped the red bow on her and draped more ribbon down her belly. But where would we put the 28-foot ribbon banner with the words, *The Greatest Gift We Could Give Our Children Would Be A Safe And Healthy Planet?*

But before I had even finished doing the math, I



Despite a countless series of snafus, Ground Zero and supporters came together to create a "perfect" day. Photo by Beth Brunton.

looked up and there was Tom Kreshbach, climbing up on a teetering garbage can and tying one end of the banner ribbon high on the trunk of a tree. Then he pushed the big garbage can over and tied the other end to another tree which somehow magically was exactly 28 feet away.

Families started coming up and having their pictures taken in front of her. They could have taken their pictures in front of the carousel or the Christmas tree, or anything else, but they chose Mother Earth.

By the time the Labor Chorus, having been invited to our event by Mary Gleysteen, came to sing at noon, we were running low on leaflets. The parade was long since over, and that entertainment had been replaced by popular Christmas songs blaring over a mammoth sound system. We could hardly carry on a conversation what with *Here Comes Santa*

"That was when my soul rose up out of its worries into the light..."

Claus and Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer pounding on our eardrums. The Chorus, of course, refused to try and sing under those circumstances.

So I started running around again searching for the Parks Department guy or whoever might be in charge of the sound system and beg them to turn it off. Finally we did get the music turned off, and the Chorus began to sing in beautiful four-part harmony.

But that was not the end of our worries.

About halfway through the choral performance, the biggest and most impressive looking policeman came up behind us again pointing at Tom Kreshbach's truck. "Do you know whose truck that is?" the officer asked.

"Yes, it's his," I said, pointing at Tom Kreshbach who was busy handing out the rest of his leaflets.

"He'll have to move it."

Tom ran off to move his truck, and I went back to listen some more to the chorus. I was grooving on their beautiful sound again when Tom came up behind me. "We have to load up now," he said, gesturing toward his truck which was now parked by the curb with several other vehicles.

I looked around. The Chorus was still singing, the ball still inflated, the banner still hanging high in the trees. "We can't load up now. We aren't finished," I said.

"Well, I have to go," said Tom. With no further explanation, he got in his truck and drove away.

With the chorus still singing, I sat down on one of the big Westlake Park flower pots with a sinking heart. What to do? I didn't have my shopping cart. And even if I had the cart, Tom Karlin's four-foot wooden cylinder would not have fit in it.

After the Chorus stopped singing, I told the others my problem which, huddled together on that cold No-

vember afternoon, they quickly solved. Firefly's truck was parked up on Capitol Hill. He and his partner Bill would come back and get the stuff. And by miraculous coincidence, Mary happened to know a guy nearby tending a tent booth where we could store our stuff in the meantime.

While kneeling on the pavement crushing Mother Earth back into her garbage bag, I started thinking what a fool I was, and how much trouble I had caused everyone that day. But then I looked up and saw people gathering round us saying what a beautiful action it had been. Someone even described the day as "perfect." That was when my soul rose up out of its worries into the light of that beautiful sunny plaza full of kids and carousels, and music and Christmas trees and realized that the day had actually been a miracle of triumph over obstacles, proving how wonderfully adaptable are my Ground Zero friends. I was having one of those rare experiences, like on Christmas morning in childhood, when you glory in the present moment.

Shortly after our people left, lots of others started gathering in the park chanting, "Black lives matter! Black lives matter!" There were literally thousands of them, young, strong, vigorous, loud, in stark contrast with the little gaggle of graying Ground Zero geezers who had occupied a fraction of the same space only moments before. I joined them for as long as my 76 year-old legs could still hold me up, praying all the while that before I die there will be an even bigger demonstration in this same Park, thousands of folks demanding the abolition of nuclear weapons.

I reflected on how this huge Black Lives Matter movement had been triggered by the tragic incident of a young man murdered in my home town of Ferguson. It is chilling to think about what kind of tragedy it might take to trigger a movement large enough to deliver all life on earth from the very real dangers of nuclear annihilation.

My part of the story ended there. But later Firefly told me the rest. When he and Bill finished up downtown, they got on a bus heading up to Capitol Hill. However, the bus could not get through because the streets were blocked off for the Black Lives Matter protest, so Firefly and Bill got off and walked up to get their truck. But when they tried to drive it back downtown, the streets were still blocked, so they had to park on Ninth Street, walk back down to West Lake, and get our stuff. To get Tom's four-foot circular stand back to Ninth Street, they had to roll it up hill through mob of protesters.

Sometimes our humble efforts on behalf of Mother Earth have their trials and errors. We just have to be adaptable.

Mona Lee serves on the Stewardship Council, and has been deeply involved with the struggle against Trident since the 1970s.

Rumsfeld on the latter's lies in the run-up to the Iraq war. Both events are still readily available on YouTube.

Our stories and experiences seemed to find resonance among the different generations represented in the audience that weekend. About 35 people attended – a mix of seasoned activists and young people. Everyone shared individual stories of personal transformation, obstacles encountered, and the role of community and/or faith in their lives during a three-hour workshop on Saturday that included small breakout sessions.

I discussed the fraud, deception and manipulative tactics I witnessed as the US Government attempted to concoct a justification for war against Iraq in 2002-2003, and shared how these and my experiences overseas – particularly my years living in the Middle East – helped to shape and develop my worldview into an arc that arched toward nonviolence and peace work.

I also talked about key moments in my “pivot toward activism,” such as the 2007 organized protest at the Bush compound in Kennebunkport – which I participated in while still employed by the CIA – and the opportunity to meet influential women activists such as Col. Ann Wright and Cindy Sheehan. Other influencers in my life included CodePink's Medea Benjamin, Kathy Kelly and Howard Zinn.

I participated in my first action at Ground Zero in August 2012 and got to know Bix that weekend, who at the time was still wearing an electronic monitoring cuff on his ankle following his release from jail after his 2011 Ploughshares Action. I remember thinking how absurd it was that the government seemed to consider this frail, gentle human being more of a threat than the massive stockpile of nuclear weapons on the other side of the fence!

Bix would later make it possible for me to learn much about solidarity, resistance and persistence when I joined him and nine others on a trip to Jeju Island to join in solidarity with villagers resisting the construction of a new South Korean naval base through disciplined bows, prayer, and other forms of transformational nonviolent resistance.

Question-and-answer sessions were wide-ranging, and at one point a participant asked about the govern-

ment's withholding of the facts surrounding 9/11, including 28 pages of the 9/11 Commission's report. We all agreed this was part of the realm of the “unspeakable”

that includes the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy, his brother Robert, and Martin Luther King — unspeakable in the sense that many, including government entities, fear what disclosure of the truth would unleash in American society.

I suggested that it might be appropriate to convene a People's Tribunal and/or Truth and Reconciliation Commission on the issue of 9/11 to air the facts and hold officials accountable, as needed.

James Douglass proposed that the Ground Zero Center might be the perfect venue for such a tribunal. Jim, author of “JFK and the Unspeakable: Why He Died and Why It Matters” as well as a host of other books, is currently working on a new book about common connections among the assassinations of Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Gandhi.

Elizabeth Murray serves as the Member-in-Residence at the Ground Zero Center and on the Leafletting Committee.

“You don't need to know”... continued from page 2

tion. Instead, the feds are making redactions and withholding records based on federal law. The county then reviews the actions to ensure they conform to state law.

Michele Earl-Hubbard, an expert in public records with Allied Law Group, said Milner's request is clearly a county responsibility and covered by state law. The U.S. attorney's office should stay out of it unless it wants to file for an injunction. Milner's request hasn't transpired that way, however, and at this point, for timeliness, records should go straight to him without county review, which can be performed later.

“The local agency has to provide the ‘fullest assistance’ and ‘most timely response,’ and they're not giving that when they sit on a request for nine months,” she said. “People need to know where to evacuate, not just the bureaucrats.”

Glen Milner serves on the Stewardship Council, and leads legal efforts against nuclear and other illegal weapons in Washington State.



The Advent Retreat organized by Jim and Shelley Douglass allows attendees time for reflection and fellowship. *Photo courtesy of Mary's House.*

GROUND ZERO

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*“If you want to go quickly, go
alone. If you want to go far, go
together.”*

— African proverb

Begin the New Year With a Vow of Nonviolence

By Pax Christi Seattle

Pax Christi Seattle would like to invite you to make a one-year Vow of Nonviolence. The Vow of Nonviolence was composed by Eileen Egan and Rev. John Dear, S.J. The Vow can be pronounced privately, with a local peace community, as part of a parish liturgy, or any other way that suits you. Many profess the Vow each year as part of their New Year observance.

Some parts we find easier to live out than others. One thing we hope is that the loose community of people who gather around these words and the hope behind them will support one another by prayer and action, in living them out. If we do this, we are hopefully confident that this community will grow. The vow reads as follows:

Recognizing the violence in my own heart, yet trusting in the goodness and mercy of God, I vow for one year to practice the nonviolence of Jesus who taught us in the Sermon on the Mount:

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons and daughters of God... You have learned how it was said, ‘You must love your neighbor and hate your enemy’; but I say to you, Love your enemies, and

pray for those who persecute you. In this way, you will be daughters and sons of your Creator in heaven.”

Before God the Creator and the Sanctifying Spirit, I vow to carry out in my life the love and example of Jesus:

- *by striving for peace within myself and seeking to be a peacemaker in my daily life;*
- *by accepting suffering rather than inflicting it;*
- *by refusing to retaliate in the face of provocation and violence;*
- *by persevering in nonviolence of tongue and heart;*
- *by living conscientiously and simply so that I do not deprive others of the means to live;*
- *by actively resisting evil and working nonviolently to abolish war and the causes of war from my own heart and from the face of the earth.*

God, I trust in Your sustaining love, and believe that just as You gave me the grace and desire to offer this, so You will also bestow abundant grace to fulfill it.

Rodney Brunelle submitted the Vow of Nonviolence on behalf of Pax Christi Seattle. Rodney serves on the Communication/Outreach Committee.