Long Tradition of Leafletting Continues After Law Enforcement Challenge

By Elizabeth Murray

Ground Zero volunteers leafletting in front of Main and Trigger Gates in the early morning of November 15th were caught off guard when sheriff’s deputies unexpectedly approached and informed them they were not allowed leaflet on the median, as they normally do each month. The leafletters involved were Mack Johnson, Mary Glysteen, Tom Rogers and Elizabeth Murray.

Despite leafletters explaining that Ground Zero had been engaged in leafletting on median islands in front of the base gates for many years mostly unhindered with a few exceptions (for example Mary Glysteen and Sallie Shawl were arrested and jailed last December for leafletting at Trigger Gate, but released the same day after the County Prosecutor declined to press charges), deputies insisted that by standing on the median volunteers were “obstructing the roadway.” They also said they had arrived in response to a 911 complaint.

After a public records request initiated by Glen Milner revealed the call’s origin as being from one of the security offices inside the Kitsap-Bangor naval base, Ground Zero’s Tom Rogers contacted Michael Mitchell, head of base security, to request an immediate meeting.

During the Dec. 1st meeting at Ground Zero (which was attended by several Ground Zero members and naval base security staff), Mitchell said base security was keen to maintain the mutually respectful working relationship with the Ground Zero Center. Ground Zero regularly informs base security and local law enforcement of forthcoming leafletting events and base actions. Mitchell said he had been unaware that the call had originated from base security, for which he apologized, saying there were several new members in the security unit who were not aware of the base’s good relationship with Ground Zero.

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He said he would circulate an advisory note to base security staff to ensure that “we are all on the same page.”

Ground Zero urged Mitchell to intercede on our behalf with local law enforcement. In response, Mitchell sent an email to State Patrol and Sheriff’s Office personnel, noting that he had apologized to Ground Zero for the 911 call and stating that while the base did not explicitly “condone protests or leafleting on our bases,” Naval Base Kitsap “recognizes and proudly defends the First Amendment rights of all individuals.”

The email also said that the base would put out sawhorses on either side of the median during future leafletting events to improve safety for both leafletters and drivers, “in keeping with being good stewards in our community and fostering a good relationship with our neighbors.”

Ground Zero subsequently received a communication from State Patrol officers, who said they would not interrupt leafletting activity as long as leafletters “do not enter or block the roadway,” although they failed to specify whether they consider the median as part of the roadway, as officers had indicated to leafletters during the Nov. 15th incident.

Ground Zero leafletters turned out in force again on December 12th to leaflet at both gates. This time members Glen Milner and Rodney Brunelle (pictured on the front page) took the early-morning ferry over from Seattle to join the ranks of those prepared to risk arrest in order to protect Ground Zero’s leafletting tradition and free speech rights. Others who leafleted include Tom Rogers, Chris Rogers, Mack Johnson, Mary Gleysteen and Elizabeth Murray

This time, all reported that leafletting proceeded smoothly and without incident. A total of 56 leaflets were accepted by employees at both gates. Despite receiving the customary leafletting advisory from Ground Zero, officers from State Patrol and Sheriff’s Office were not seen, and base security officers showed up only for a few minutes of friendly banter with leafletters. Sawhorses had been erected on either side of the medians as promised, and leafletters reported feeling safer with them in place.

Ground Zero has leafleted at the Kitsap-Bangor Naval Base intermittently since 1977. For a number of years, leafletting took place on a weekly basis at multiple gates; currently leafletting takes place monthly. Leaflets are posted and archived at the Ground Zero website, and supporters are invited to print out the leaflets and distribute them at other locations, as is often done by our members based in Seattle and Bremerton.

Elizabeth Murray serves on the Stewardship Council and as Member-in-Residence at Ground Zero. Mack Johnson took the front page photo.

A Reflection on Standing Rock

By Mira Leslie

In the interest of organizational sustainability and growth, Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action, churches, and many activist groups commonly discuss recruitment. How do we attract and maintain new members, particularly youth and people of color?

In my opinion, the gathering at Standing Rock is a pivotal point, advancing activism and our national morality more than any event or movement in my lifetime.

For me, Standing Rock will always be much, much bigger than the pipeline issue that catalyzed the gathering. Here is my humble attempt to bring words to this transformative experience.

Standing Rock trained thousands of activists in spiritual nonviolent resistance. Standing Rock strengthened Native American land, water, and human rights. Standing Rock fortified and fertilized a youth movement that is our future. Standing Rock welcomed everyone, and generously provided thousands of white people, who visited the site, an opportunity to take a small step to decolonize – to learn in a cultural context outside of our experience of social superiority, unconscious racism, shame, and privilege. Standing Rock demonstrates to the US government and the world, the power of

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Join the MLK Rally Jan. 16 in Seattle!

By Mack Johnson

For the past several years, Ground Zero has marched in the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. events in Seattle. This year Ground Zero members Mary Hansen and Mack Johnson will present a workshop, with a presentation designed by David Hall, titled “Nuclear Weapons: Forgotten But Not Gone.” The workshop will be at Seattle’s Garfield High School, from 9:30 to 11:50am, followed by a rally and march. The purpose is to inform the public about the dangers and costs of the United States’ nuclear weapons and modernization plans, distribute literature to help people become more educated, and make available ways to contact political leaders and urge them to cut or defund America’s nuclear modernization program.

Ground Zero supporters are invited to attend the workshop (more information soon will be on the event website, mlkseattle.org) or other workshops at Garfield, and to participate with Ground Zero in the march afterwards.

It’s very exciting to demonstrate at such a big and diverse event, and to carry on a vital part of Dr. King’s message about the triple evils of racism, militarism, and poverty. We hope to see you all there.

As Dr. King repeatedly said, militarism conspires with racism and poverty to undermine human survival. In his words, “When scientific power outruns spiritual power, we end up with guided missiles and misguided men.”

Our workshop will ask: how do we nonviolently challenge current plans to spend a trillion dollars rebuilding the entire U.S. nuclear arsenal? How do we redirect these resources to eliminating poverty, overcoming racism, and meeting the challenge of climate justice? After a 20 minute PowerPoint presentation/slide show, we will engage in Q&A about what workshop participants have been doing, plans currently underway, and new ways we might deal with the nuclear issues that continue to confront us.

The Pacific Life Community (PLC) will hold its annual retreat March 5-7, 2017 at the Pilgrim Firs retreat facility in Port Orchard, WA.

This year’s theme is “The Passion of Resistance” – encompassing both the joy and pain that comes from struggling against the status quo – and will feature a retrospective on the remarkable life work of Raymond G. Hunthausen, archbishop of Seattle from 1975 to 1981. A principled peacemaker of profound integrity, Archbishop Hunthausen gained national attention when he became the first US bishop to urge tax resistance as a way to oppose the nuclear weapons buildup. Archbishop Hunthausen participated in numerous nuclear resistance activities at Ground Zero in the early eighties, sometimes turning up in ordinary clothing and identifying himself simply as “Ray.”

Sisters Chauncey Boyle and Kathleen Pruitt, of the Seattle Diocese (both of whom were longtime associates of Archbishop Hunthausen) will co-deliver the keynote address on Archbishop Hunthausen’s remarkable contributions to his community and to a
Annual Meeting Brings Members Together

By Glen Milner

The annual Ground Zero membership meeting was held on November 13 at Ground Zero. Members reflected on our ongoing activities throughout the year, and discussed new ideas and upcoming plans.

Appreciation was expressed for the number of Ground Zero international travelers this year: Elizabeth Murray visited six cities in Russia with Center for Citizen Initiatives; Leonard Eiger went to Kazakhstan to attend a conference with Parliamentarians for Non-Proliferation and Nuclear Disarmament; and Bernie Meyer traveled to India this year for the 16th time to portray Gandhi in numerous cities. These three members arranged and paid for, or obtained funding, for their journeys for peace.

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. We all help one another on our tasks. 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 2017 are the following:

- Secretaries: Mary Gleysteen and Mack Johnson
- Treasurer: Bob Trutnau
- Co-chairs: Mary Hanson and Tom Rogers
- House and Grounds: Tom Rogers and Mack Johnson
- Leafleting: Elizabeth Murray, Mary Gleysteen, Mira Leslie, Sallie Shawl and Rodney Brunelle
- Media: Leonard Eiger, Elizabeth Murray, Glen Milner
- Communications/Outreach: Leonard Eiger, Mary Hanson, Rodney Brunelle and Glen Milner
- Legal/Research: Glen Milner
- Website: Leonard Eiger
- Financial Planning/Budget: Bob Trutnau, Bernie Meyer and Tim Russell
- Member-in-Residence: Elizabeth Murray
- Newsletter: Alice Zillah
- Thank you notes: Betsy Collins
- Too much to list: Sue Ablao

There is also one ad hoc committee, for the construction of the Peace Pagoda at Ground Zero, which we hope to begin in 2017.

Vow of Nonviolence
A Journey Toward Disarming the Heart

Submitted by Rodney Brunelle on behalf of Pax Christi Central Seattle

Each year in mid-January our country commemorates the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. We, the members of Pax Christi Central Seattle, believe that it is especially appropriate to recognize and honor in a personal way the centrality of nonviolence in Dr. King’s struggle for justice. Therefore, remembering his commitment to nonviolence, we invite you to join us in making a public profession of the Vow of Nonviolence on Saturday, January 14, at the 5:00pm evening mass at St. Joseph Catholic Church, 732 15th Ave. E., in Seattle.

Pastor Fr. John Whitney and Bishop Eusebio Elizondo will preside and receive our vows. This is the fourth year of highlighting our commitment to nonviolent peacemaking, by publicly sharing the vow, a one-year commitment to strive for peace in our lives, our relationships, and our world. We also welcome those who wish to come as witnesses in support of those who do take the vow. Further, we encourage anyone who cannot attend the ceremony, to take this vow themselves privately, and to then notify us that they have done so.

Hopefully, the efficacy of active nonviolent peacemaking is gaining wider acceptance. We are especially heartened to see more discussion of just peace rather than “just war” within the Catholic Church. For example, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and Pax Christi International issued their “Appeal to the Catholic Church to Re-commit to the Centrality of Gospel Nonviolence.” And in his message “Nonviolence: A Style of Politics for Peace,” to be celebrated on January 1, 2017, Pope Francis returns to and stresses a fundamental Christian perspective that “to be true followers of Jesus today also includes embracing his teaching about nonviolence.” As he has done many times since becoming pope, Francis again pleads for disarmament and the abolition of nuclear weapons. He is clear that “nuclear deterrence and the threat of mutually assured destruction are incapable of grounding” us in an ethics of fraternity and peaceful coexistence. Please consider joining us for The Vow of Nonviolence on January 14, 2017.

Glen Milner leads legal efforts on behalf of Ground Zero. He lives in Lake Forest Park with his wife Karol.

Rodney Brunelle serves on the Stewardship Council.
Longtime Ground Zero Supporter Rick Turner Dies

By Connie Mears

Rick Turner, co-founder of the Meaningful Movies Project and long-time ally of Ground Zero, died on Dec. 16 from idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis.

For years, Turner included a link to the Ground Zero website on the Meaningful Movies homepage, seen by thousands of Seattle-area activists each week. Meaningful Movies began hosting film and discussion nights in early 2003 as a project of Wallingford Neighbors for Peace and Justice. He and his wife Diane regularly scheduled films on nuclear weapons to coincide with Ground Zero events. Turner also participated in the 2015 MLK action, as one of the pallbearers for planet Earth.

In 2012, Turner began mentoring Ground Zero in starting a film series. “Regarding starting a ‘Meaningful Movies at Ground Zero’ – I think that’s an incredible idea!,” Turner wrote in an email in fall of 2012. “There are three of us in our group of eight that are big supporters of nuclear abolition issues, and we’d do just about anything to help support your efforts.”

Ground Zero members had been talking at North Kitsap 99% meetings about starting a “meaningful movies”-type series on the Kitsap peninsula. With Turner’s generous advice and support, Free-Range Films + Discussion emerged in 2013. The series continues as a cooperative project co-sponsored with the Kitsap 99%.

Meanwhile, Turner formed a separate, nonprofit entity, “The Meaningful Movies Project,” to provide ongoing support to neighborhood groups operating with a similar model. The groups show social-justice documentaries followed by a brief comment by a local expert on that topic. Topics range widely, including nuclear weapons, which Turner admitted did not draw crowds as compared to films on environment or food issues.

“We’re determined to show them anyway because it’s important to get that information out and make it available,” Turner said in an interview with City Living Seattle in 2014.

“Rick was a visionary and a selfless leader who throughout his life dedicated his many talents to family, friends, and community,” wrote Jack Fogelberg, a director of the Meaningful Movies Project. “His career as an architect led him to pioneering designs for intergenerational living spaces as well as Elder Care facilities. His final, great passion was the Meaningful Movies Project.”

In 2014, the group formed Meaningful Movies Network, a collective of now 20 community-based Meaningful Movies groups in the Seattle area. In 2015, they expanded to communities across Washington state, and even beyond, with the latest venue in Ogden, Utah.

“Our vision is to bring Meaningful Movies to communities across the country,” Fogelberg said.

A celebration of life event for Rick is planned for early 2017. To learn more, and/or donate, go to: www.meaningfulmovies.org.

Connie Mears is an artist and writer, and the former Member-in-Residence at Ground Zero.

If You Want Peace, Don’t Pay for Nuclear Weapons

By Tom and Darylene Shea

“The taproot of violence in our society today is our intent to use nuclear weapons. Once we have agreed to that, all other evils are minor in comparison. Until we squarely face the question of our consent to use nuclear weapons any hope of large scale improvement of public morality is doomed to failure.” (Richard T McSorely, S.J. survivor of Bataan Death March and lifelong teacher/activist for peace.)

Ground Zero offers us choices for resisting the use of nuclear weapons. One strategy is resisting taxes. Paying for weapons of war violates our sense of justice, so we may choose to become conscientious objectors to income taxes. No other tax impacts more U.S. citizens than the income tax, and today taxpayers are faced with a tax bill of one hundred billion dollars for the Navy to build a new fleet of ballistic missile submarines.

Many Ground Zero newsletter readers may already be exempt from the income tax because their income falls below the taxable amount. Others may choose not to pay any tax or withhold a symbolic portion of what they owe.

The National War Tax Resistance Committee

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leadership based on generosity, respect, truth, dignity, forgiveness, and love.

Standing Rock is located in North Dakota, also known as the Mississippi of the north. It is a place where jails are always filled disproportionately with Native Americans, where police brutality toward people of color is ingrained and unaccountable. North Dakota is the stage for millions worldwide to witness courage and nonviolent resistance overwhelm and undermine the forces of injustice. Standing Rock’s tribal Chairman David Archambault has demonstrated a strong commitment to continue to heal relationships with local officials – forgiveness in action.

Personally, Standing Rock expanded my world view, fortified my reverence for water, earth, and humanity, renewed mindfulness of socially oppressive patterns, and inspired profound respect for indigenous leadership and solidarity movements.

Ground Zero has deep roots in nonviolent efforts to abolish to nuclear weapons. As I change the page on my peace calendar to December I read the month’s theme – “The creation of the world: how to be an ally to indigenous people.” My body remembers inhaling the sacred smoke, my heart expanding in solidarity, the comfort of ceremony and prayer, and I honor Ground Zero and the essential work to protect the earth and all living beings from destruction.

Mira Leslie serves on the Leafletting Committee for Ground Zero and joins in Peace Walks around the country.

Tom and Darylene Shea are longtime activists, tax resisters, members of Veterans for Peace, and Ground Zero supporters.

If You Want Peace… continued from page 5

provides information for those who openly withhold the taxes for war despite threats and possible consequences. For example one may be requested to pay the past due amount or possibly get a citation for arrest. The IRS has a rule that any person writing a complaint or other statement on their personal income tax form may be guilty of “a frivolous” submission which is subject to a $5,000 fine. Sending a complaint on a separate piece of paper that goes along with your tax form does not violate this rule.

You can educate the public about tax resistance by distributing the annual War Resistance League leaflet in front of your post office, local government, civil, or religious centers; and to friends and relatives.

Another educational action you can take is to set up a “penny poll” on where income taxes should be spent. Have a table with five or more options—for example, you can label quart sized canning jars “Health,” “Weapons,” “Veterans,” “State Department,” or “Infrastructure.” Alert local media and at the end of the day publish the results for the same media and send results to all of your elected government representatives.

Ground Zero’s work to abolish nuclear weapons also includes educating our fellow citizens about the true cost of nuclear weapons as well as their contribution to global warming in both the making of these weapons and their potential destruction of our Earth by accident or intent. Resistance is at the heart of our work, and tax resistance is a natural and integral part of it. So let’s get creative with tax resistance this year at tax time.

Elizabeth Murray serves as Member-in-Residence at Ground Zero. She recently returned from a citizens’ peace delegation to Russia.

Next PLC Gathering… continued from page 3

peaceful, nuclear-free world. An interactive discussion will follow with the aim of helping activists and peace-makers draw important lessons from the life example set by Archbishop Hunthausen.

In preparation for the discussion PLC attendees are asked to read “A Still and Quiet Conscience: The Archbishop who Challenged a Pope, a President, and a Church” by John A. McCoy, available either at libraries or for purchase online. Archbishop Hunthausen, who currently lives at a retirement home in Helena, Montana, will not be able to join us, but there will be an opportunity to send him a message of greetings and gratitude.

An action and Mass/vigil is planned at the Bangor Naval Base – home to eight Trident nuclear submarines – during the retreat weekend. Further details including a full agenda will be provided upon receipt of an RSVP. Please send to both Sue Ablao at sablao1@yahoo.com and Elizabeth Murray at emurray404@aol.com.

The per-person fee is $135, which includes two nights’ lodging at Pilgrim Firs and all meals starting with dinner on Sunday, March 5, through breakfast on Tuesday, March 7. Checks should be made out to retreat co-organizer Sue Ablao and mailed to her at: 4040 Dyes Inlet NW Bremerton, WA 98312. Any further inquiries may be directed to Sue at sablao1@yahoo.com or Elizabeth at emurray404@aol.com.
Spiritual Activism: Leadership as Service
A book review
By Leonard Eiger

We live in desperate times, with humans increas-
ingly in conflict with each other and our planet. From
climate change to nuclear weapons, we continue to push
ourselves ever closer to the brink. Never has there been a
time when activism was more necessary, and neither has
there been a time that has demanded so much of activists.
We face challenges so daunting that it requires more than
sheer will to keep on going and avoid burning out.

How do we, then, keep our activist fires burning?
How do we learn to be in solidarity with each other in our
common work? How do we grow as individuals, while
learning to lead the way, finding a healthy balance of
power in our relationships? How do we build a basis for
sustaining the long struggle?

These are the challenges addressed in “Spiritual Ac-
tivism: Leadership as Service,” coauthored by Alastair
McIntosh and Matt Carmichael (Green Books, 2016).
McIntosh is a Scottish writer on social, environmental
and spiritual issues. A pioneer of modern land reform, he
brought the Isle of Eigg into community ownership. He
also negotiated the cancellation of plans for a “super
quarry” on the Isle of Harris. Carmichael has campaigned
on issues including global justice, climate change and
fuel poverty since the mid-1990s.

The authors introduce the subject of spiritual activism
by stating that “the causes to which any one of us might
apply ourselves in life should be more than must mere
passions.” As we have so often seen in our activist orga-
nizations, many people have shown up all fired up to
change the world, and have left not long thereafter, when
their brief, yet brilliant, fire burned out. The passion was
there, yet something important was missing.

Alastair and Matt write, “What makes ‘spiritual’ ac-
tivism so exciting is that it approaches demanding issues
in ways that invite an ever-deepening perception of real-
ity and of our positioning – individually and collectively –
within it.” They understand that “activism entails an
openness to life and how it might change us; it is not just
about us changing something or someone else. One thing
leads to another; we become both transformers and trans-
formed.” Through their life journeys, the authors have
come to a deeper understanding of activism as a “process
of building community in all three of its dimensions –
social, environmental and spiritual.”

The book states up front that “religion and spirituality
are not necessarily the same thing.” This starting point
looks at spirituality in the broadest terms in order to wel-
come all to the table. Religion can either support the de-
velopment of spirituality or “inhibit or kill it,” and that
“most of the great religious teachers have been reform-
ers.” The authors see healthy spirituality as “a way of
waking up intellectually to the depth of the problems we
face today” so that we may reform the world in our
sphere of influence.

This book speaks volumes to the complexities and
nuances of “leadership,” all with a firm understanding
that “a movement is a community… a psychological
complex.” They speak to the need for “accountability and
the legitimate exercise of power,” while remembering
that “it takes the whole crew to keep the ship afloat.” Ul-
timately, it’s about “servant leadership,” which is “a lead-
ership of doing, seeing and being. It means, quite simply,
enquiring constantly where we can be of most service,
and usually this requires a willingness to move in and out
of roles of greater and lesser prominence.”

Those of us who take on difficult tasks, such as the
abolition of nuclear weapons, have, (to quote the authors)
grown in awareness.” To do so “is to take on a burden.”
And therein lies the origin of our journey. Each of us has
grown in our awareness, each in a unique way through
our individual experience, and have thus taken on this
burden. To look away is not an option. To stay the course
and not burn out, we must develop a strong, deep, spiritu-
al well in order keep ourselves nourished for the difficult
journey. In this way, they conclude, “the burden of
awareness becomes a precious burden.”

As if the journey has not been difficult enough, it is
about to become even more so as a new administration
comes to Washington, D.C. We are going to need what
Gehan Macleod (in one of the book’s case studies) calls
“spiritual bravery… To live each moment by balancing
head, heart and hand not by the day-to-day dogma that
keeps you ‘in the right,’ but by being willing to take the
risk with each step that you may be wrong. Being wrong
can be a wonderful thing. It’s learning. It’s growth. It is
the kind of vulnerability that opens up the space of soli-
darity. It’s connection.”

Drawing from the Hebrew prophets to Carl Jung, and
with case studies that include Sojourner Truth and Julia
Butterfly Hill, “Spiritual Activism” makes a strong case
for the “transformative power of spiritual principles in
action.” “Spiritual Activism: Leadership as Service” is a
book for our times, one that can provide guidance and
strength for the journey. May it help us deepen our con-
nection and leadership in humble service to humanity.

Leonard Eiger chairs the Communication and Outreach Committee, and
sends out press releases and information on behalf of Ground Zero.
Save the date, save the planet!
By Michael “Firefly” Siptroth

On Friday April 21, Ground Zero and allies, featuring Native Americans sisters and brothers, will paddle, walk, and speak out against nuclear weapons and the destruction of our planet! We will demand that the trillions of US citizens’ tax dollars dedicated to destroying our planet be redirected to healing her, all the beautiful beings, and to respect the sanctity of life. We will gather in Seattle, bearing witness, making our voices for peace, justice, and protection of Earth’s Waters, Lands, and Air heard.

Please save the date and help get the word out now and as more details are firmed up, and join with us. Our Friends at Standing Rock are showing us the way to sustain our spirits and determination to stop the madness of nuclear weapons and all other life-destroying actions. We must help heal our Earth!

Join Ground Zero for MLK Action
By Edward Digilio

On Saturday, January 14, Ground Zero will hold a vigil at the Trident Gate of Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor as part of our continuing resistance to the Trident nuclear weapons system. Interested participants should meet at the Ground Zero Center at 1:00 pm.

Please go to our website at www.gzcenter.org for directions and more details. You can email us at info@gzcenter.org with any questions about the event. We hope to see you there!

Michael “Firefly” Siptroth serves on the Stewardship Committee. He lives in Belfair where he has an organic farm.

Edward Digilio serves on the Planning Committee for the January 14th events. The photo above was taken at the 2013 MLK action by Leonard Eiger.