

Ground Zero

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“What a wonderful world we could live in”

By Elizabeth Murray

On October 25, 2018, seven nuclear resistance activists appeared before Kitsap District Court Judge Kevin P. Kelly in a mitigation hearing to explain why they blocked the main entrance to Naval Base Kitsap Bangor on August 6, 2018 by walking into the roadway holding up a large banner which read: “Trident is the Auschwitz of Puget Sound.”

The litigants were among twelve nuclear disarmament activists cited and released by the Washington State Patrol for being in the roadway illegally: Phil Davis of Bremerton; Susan Delaney of Bothell; Lisa and Mack Johnson of Silverdale; Ann Kittredge of Quilcene; James Knight of Altadena, CA; Brenda McMillan of Port Town-

send; Elizabeth Murray, of Poulsbo; George Rodkey, of Tacoma; Ryan Scott Rosenboom of Bothell; Michael Sip-troth of Belfair; and Jade Takushi.

Their statements, read out to Judge Kelly at Kitsap District Court in Port Orchard bore witness to the unconscionable (not to mention illegal) US policy of nuclear weapons deployment—which makes no distinction in its targeting but can kill everything in its path, as it occurred when the US dropped a nuclear bomb each on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945.

These twin tragedies are commemorated each year at the Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action with a

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nonviolent direct action, in the belief that positive, nonviolent grassroots direct action is an essential in a larger national movement that seeks to ensure that such weapons are never again used.

Here are selected highlights from several of the nuclear resisters' court statements:

Explaining what compelled her to take action on August 6th, Lisa Johnson stated that she "went into the road because the unthinkable is not being thought about. Most of us go about our lives, never considering that Armageddon is on our doorstep. We have a president who, as a candidate, asked: 'If we have nuclear weapons, why can't we use them?'" Johnson said she would unhesitatingly engage in another pro-disarmament nonviolent action because "I love my country" and because she refuses to be a silent party to the "destruction of this beautiful, fragile planet."

Susan Delaney provided Judge Kelly with documentation detailing 80 military nuclear mishaps, as well as an article about how US nuclear weapons systems

"Imagine if \$100 billion yearly and \$1.7 trillion went to uplift Americans and others; what a wonderful world we could live in!"

could be hacked. She noted the 1987 signing of the INF Treaty between then Presidents Reagan and Gorbachev was a positive development that resulted in 75 percent fewer nuclear missiles on the planet. She praised the 1991 move by the late President George H.W. Bush to end the round-the-clock state of alert for armed aerial nuclear

bombers. Delaney said standing in the road at the naval submarine base is "the right thing to do. We offer our peaceful protest to the court and to our community, and invite you to join us so that we can continue to bring attention to this issue."

Phil Davis said he was "proud" to "block traffic briefly in front of Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor to protest and call attention to this madness." Davis noted that "attacks on civilians, on children, on innocent bystanders were made illegal by the 4th Geneva Convention" which is "binding on all nations." By their very nature, he said, "nuclear weapons kill and injure civilians. Therefore, they are illegal. It's that simple." In the 1990s, Davis said, the US and Russia acted like "sensible, civilized nations" and through disarmament treaties were able to reduce international nuclear weapons stockpiles from 70,000 to the present level of 15,000. "We need to end the 'New Cold War before it starts,'" he warned.

Michael Siptroth said he spoke from the perspective of someone who grew up during the Cuban Missile Crisis and the "duck-and-cover" era of the Cold War. "On the brink, again!" he said, lamenting the ongoing push for a trillion-dollar nuclear upgrade, space weapon-

ization and US serial withdrawal from international disarmament treaties, not to mention Washington's refusal to support the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Siptroth said: "I say no to destruction and yes to beautiful life, creativity and peace!" In contrast to the trillion-dollar federal spending on weapons of mass destruction he noted the revival of Martin Luther King's historic Poor People's Campaign and said that in the United States more than 40 million people suffer in poverty while homelessness is out of control and healthcare out of reach for many.



Calling attention to the madness. For many activists, speaking truth to power in court is the second part of the action that begins with civil disobedience. *Photo by Leonard Eiger.*

"Imagine," Siptroth said to Judge Kelly, "if \$100 billion yearly and \$1.7 trillion went to uplift Americans and others; what a wonderful world we could live in!"

Eight of the US Navy's fourteen Trident ballistic missile submarines are based at the Bangor Trident base, which is just 20 miles west of Seattle. It is home to the largest concentration of deployed nuclear weapons in the US. The W76 and W88 warheads at Bangor are equal respectively to 100 kilotons and 455 kilotons of TNT in destructive force (the bomb dropped on Hiroshima was between 13 and 18 kilotons). The Trident bases at Bangor and Kings Bay, Georgia, when combined, represent just over half of all warheads deployed by the United States.

The Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action welcomes all who wish to explore the meaning and practice of nonviolence in the context of promoting universal nuclear disarmament and averting the possibility of another nuclear war. We seek to go to the root of violence and injustice in our world. Our focus is resistance to Trident.

Elizabeth Murray served as Deputy National Intelligence Officer for the Near East in the National Intelligence Council before retiring after a 27-year career in the U.S. government. She is a member of Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS) and the Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action. **Mary Gleysteen** took the photo on the cover.

War Tax Resistance and Nukes—Then and Now

By Ruth Benn

This year will mark the 74th anniversaries of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. War tax resistance spans the nuclear age, and many war tax resisters have been motivated by the horror of those bombings, by the frightening possibility that nuclear weapons will be used again, and by the human and financial costs of the whole process of producing those weapons.

In the dangerous moment that we find ourselves today, one of the bravest pioneers of the modern war tax resistance movement, James Otsuka (1921-1984), comes to mind. As with other war tax resisters from the 1940s, he was a conscientious objector during World War II and



Members of the National War Tax Coordinating Council at the Kansas City nuclear weapons plant in 2011. Photo courtesy of www.nwtrcc.org.

refused to serve the military in any capacity. For that he was jailed for three years in violation of draft laws. As an American of Japanese descent, he had already been confined to a Japanese prison camp in California and continued to confront racism from courts and authorities in response to his acts of conscience.

After prison, Otsuka attended Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana, where the Quaker philosophy led him to begin refusing to pay 29 percent of his tax (\$4.50). This debt led to an appearance in Indianapolis District Court on August 19, 1949. At one point the judge looked at Otsuka and asked, "How would you like to go back where you came from?" He ordered Otsuka to pay the tax by September 1 "or face serious consequences."

Otsuka was back in court on September 1 facing the same judge, who sent him to prison for refusing to pay the tax. The 90-day sentence included an additional fine of \$100, which Otsuka made clear he would not pay. (You can read the text of their back and forth in court in *War Tax Resistance: A Guide to Withholding Your Support from the Military*.) Due to be released from the federal prison in Ashland, Kentucky, on December 28, the U.S. Commissioner ordered that Otsuka be kept in prison indefinitely until he paid the fine. This led to protests by pacifists and others around the country.

Otsuka was released on January 15, 1950, after serving 136 days though he paid no fine and no tax. Two months later, on tax day (then March 15), James Otsuka rode a bus into the restricted area of the atomic bomb plant at Oak Ridge, Tennessee. He was arrested when passing out leaflets to workers, which read in part:

I have come to Oak Ridge... to dramatize to my fellow citizens that our tax money is being used in large part for the destruction of the world. At 10:45 on an August morning in 1945 the first atomic bomb was used for human destruction. I came today to burn, at that hour, 70% of a dollar bill, symbolizing the percentage of taxes that, according to our President, Harry Truman, is being used for military preparation and for fighting the "Cold War." (Radical Pacifism by Scott H. Bennett, p. 190)

Flash forward to today with a U.S. President who is quoted as saying to advisors during the campaign months something to the effect of "What's the point of having nukes if you don't use them?" We'd be drawn to the obvious conclusion: get rid of them, starting with the U.S. However, this President may well decide to use them. On NBC's "Today Show" in August 2017, Senator Lindsay Graham quoted Trump as saying that Trump would risk war to stop North Korea from having missiles and nukes that can reach America, and "If thousands are going to die, they'll die over there."

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Two Ways to Commemorate MLK with Ground Zero

Ground Zero will have a vigil in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on Saturday, January 19, 2019 at 1 pm at the Main Gate at Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor. For more information, see www.gzcenter.org.

On Monday, January 21, 2019, we will join with the annual march in Seattle in honor of MLK at Garfield High School. We will begin to assemble outside around noon. See www.seattlemlkcoalition.org for details.

We're losing an important local media outlet

Mind Over Matters is canceled by KEXP

By Glen Milner

Mind Over Matters is a program on KEXP-FM, a Seattle-based radio station, that has been an ally of Ground Zero delivering local news and information from the community and for the community for over 27 years. One of the hosts and producer for the program, Mike McCormick, has had numerous Ground Zero members on his Saturday morning show, including Jackie Hudson, Lynne Greenwald, Father Bill Bichsel, Jim Douglass, Kim Wahl, Bill Wahl, Mary Hanson, Elizabeth Murray, Brian Watson, Tom Rogers, Dave Hall, Karol Milner, Glen Milner, and probably more.

Since 2011, Ground Zero members, along with Lake Forest Park for Peace and Veterans for Peace members, have shown their support for the show by answering the phones for KEXP's fundraising telethons during a three-hour period of *Mind Over Matters*. Ground Zero members wanted the KEXP management to know how important the show was to the Seattle progressive community.

On September 17, just before the fall fundraising drive, KEXP told Ground Zero members that the *Mind Over Matters* fundraising shift was canceled. Eventually we learned that the show was being canceled in January 2019.

On September 25, 25 *Mind Over Matters* supporters picketed at KEXP during the radio broadcast. Four Ground Zero members were present at this event, and members attended seven subsequent events, including a board meeting at the station. The issue of a public broadcasting station canceling all its news and information programming without any community involvement will continue to be challenged.

Unfortunately, we will probably see continued disintegration of news and information platforms for our region. We have seen the end of progressive local newspapers like the *Washington Free Press*—that would carry serious reports about the Bangor submarine base and efforts for nuclear disarmament. We have appreciated very helpful editors and reporters over the years for both the *Seattle Post Intelligencer* and the *Seattle Times*. But the paper version of the *Seattle Post Intelligencer* ended in 2009. *Crosscut*, an online paper, and the *Real Change* street newspaper remain as helpful media outlets.

In January 2017, the *Seattle Times* op-ed editor pulled an op-ed the paper had encouraged a Ground Zero member to write and had accepted for publication. The editor explained that two op-eds a year addressing nuclear weapons in our area was enough. *Crosscut* later ran the article instead.

As a side note--after seeing a Ground Zero bus ad in October 2016, a *Seattle Times* media strategist contacted Ground Zero about an advertising proposal in which the *Times* would publish content supplied by Ground Zero for \$1,000 a month in the online version of the paper. It was not difficult to point out the irony of this—when the *Seattle Times*, as a news source, should be covering the issue of nuclear weapons anyway.

Media outlets today have less space for news and fewer resources to address the extremely critical issues of our time and have regressed to soft news or “infotainment” for higher ratings and print sales. Competition with Internet content and social media further degrades the quality of factual news. Much of the Internet and social media is driven by algorithms which automatically

rank the news and determines which stories are presented to end users. The threat of nuclear weapons is as great as ever, but it is seldom addressed in mainstream media.

KEXP, a public radio station, has followed corporate media by ending *Mind Over Matters* after 27 years of community service. KEXP, as with many nonprofits in the Puget Sound region, seeks to recruit board members with ties to wealthy donors and influence. These types of board members may be less responsive to an open discussion of issues such as climate change, income inequality, homelessness, gentrification, race and gender issues, U.S. wars, and nuclear weapons.

One of the reasons Ground Zero began to run bus ads in downtown Seattle in 2016 was the decline in local media coverage of nuclear weapons. The ads have resulted in an increased awareness by members of the media and the public of the Trident submarine base at Bangor—just 20 miles from downtown Seattle.



Calling on KEXP to reverse its decision, Ground Zero members and others rallied on Sept. 25. Mary Hanson is in the foreground and Glen Milner stands behind. Photo by Karol Milner.

Mind Over Matters... continued on page 5

Ground Zero is very grateful for all that Mike McCormick has done to address the issues of nuclear weapons and militarism in the Puget Sound region. We are disappointed in the decision of KEXP to end his show and will continue to support Mike McCormick with KODX-LP, 96.9 FM, a low-power station in the University District in Seattle. See <https://kodxseattle.org> We are

searching for someone to help develop a monthly Ground Zero program for Mike McCormick's new radio station.

Glen Milner serves on the Stewardship Council and coordinates the annual Peace Fleet action.

Annual Meeting Wrap-Up

By Mary Gleysteen

Ground Zero members convened November 10, 2018 for the annual meeting chaired by Mack Johnson. Those present enumerated and briefly discussed the activities and events of 2018, which involved gatherings for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Mother's Day, Hiroshima/Nagasaki (including Boats by Bangor and the arrival of the Peace Walk), monthly leafletting at the base, support for Peace Pagoda planning, hosting class visits, and appearances in Kitsap County District court as a consequence of blocking entrance to the Trident Base.

In Seattle we participated in the MLK march and Hiroshima to Hope, held an Earth Day event, sailed at Seafair with the Peace Fleet, sponsored another round of Metro bus ads, engaged in freeway bannerling and co-sponsored a forum "Disarmament as a Humanitarian Issue." Ground Zero members were active in speaking and networking locally, nationally and internationally.

Ideas for actions and events in 2019 were proposed including participation in Seattle Martin Luther King, Jr. events, a MLK vigil at Ground Zero, a Mothers Day event featuring a keynote talk by Kathy Kelly from Creative Voices for Nonviolence, the Peace Pagoda groundbreaking ceremony, Peace Fleet, Hiroshima/Nagasaki weekend with keynote by David Swanson, and I-5 bannerling, including a Tacoma component. Peter Lumsdaine presented a proposal for Ground Zero's involvement in a Seattle campaign aimed at Boeing, Amazon and congressional offices and a committee was formed in support of the proposal. There was a proposal for increased social media activity, including Twitter.

Committee assignments for 2019:

Co-chairs: Elizabeth Murray and Tom Rogers
Secretaries: Mack Johnson and Mary Gleysteen
House and Grounds: Tom Rogers, Mack Johnson, Denny Moore, and Benjamin Moore
Leafletting: Elizabeth Murray, Mary Gleysteen, Tom Rogers, Mack Johnson, Rodney Brunelle, and Phil Davis

Media/Communications and Outreach: Leonard Eiger, Mona Lee, Mary Hanson, Rodney Brunelle, Heather Garish, and Glen Milner

Legal/Research: Glen Milner

Website: Connie Mears and Leonard Eiger (suggestion that hiring a web person be placed on an agenda for a Stewardship Council meeting)

Financial Planning/Budget: Bob Trutnau, Bernie Meyer, and Tim Russell

At Large (three positions): 1. Lani Kawasaki, Gilberto Perez, and Senji Kanaeda;

2. Mary Hanson and Rodney Brunelle; and

3. Caroline Wildflower and Michael Siptroth

Member-in-Residence: Elizabeth Murray

Caretakers: Elizabeth Murray, Tom Rogers, Mack Johnson, and Glen Milner

Newsletter: Alice Zillah

Thank-you notes: Betsy Collins

Too much to list: Sue Ablao

Peace Pagoda: Elizabeth Murray, Connie Mears, Kathryn Keve, Lani Kawasaki, Senji Kanaeda, Mona Lee, Gilberto Perez, Tom Rogers, Michael Hill, Rodney Brunelle, and Glen Milner (Note: this committee has evolved independently from the annual meetings.)

Liaison with Hiroshima to Hope: Mary Hanson

Liaison with Navy and law enforcement: Tom Rogers

Reflections and closing remarks: Despite mounting distractions, decreases in number of activists and donations, and disappearance of media across the board, we are still at it and that is a remarkable fact. Ground Zero has been a steady and unyielding presence in opposition to nuclear weapons, in particular the Trident submarine program.

We remain brothers and sisters in these hard times, grateful for one another.

Mary Gleysteen serves on the leafletting committee and as co-secretary for the Stewardship Council. She lives in Kingston.



Aligning with the Nuclear Ban Treaty

Ground Zero hosts Compliance Campaign Activists

By Leonard Eiger, with information from NuclearBan.US

On December 13, 2018, Timmon Milne Wallis and Vicki Elson, co-founders of the Treaty Compliance Campaign visited Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action.

The Treaty Compliance Campaign is about getting individuals, businesses, faith communities, schools, organizations, cities and states to work towards 'complying' with the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (Nuclear Ban Treaty) by disconnecting – as far as possible – from the nuclear weapons industry. They call this "Treaty Alignment". While only the government can bring the US into full compliance with the Nuclear Ban Treaty by signing and ratifying the treaty and dismantling our nuclear weapons arsenal, all citizens can work to align themselves and their communities with the Treaty and shift the political and cultural tide in favor of nuclear abolition. This will put pressure on the nuclear weapons industry and eventually force the federal government to implement the Treaty.

After a morning briefing on the campaign, Elson and Wallis joined Ground Zero members for a trip to the Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor Main Gate, where we were cordially welcomed by Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor security forces.

Participants took turns reading excerpts from the text of the Nuclear Ban Treaty. When we finished, Wallis presented a copy of his new book, *Disarming the Nuclear Argument: The Truth About Nuclear Weapons*, in addition to a copy of the Nuclear Ban Treaty to Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor Security Forces Director Michael Mitchell. Mitchell graciously accepted both on behalf of the base commander.

Disarming the Nuclear Argument: The Truth About Nuclear Weapons, analyzes the cost, accident risk, and legality of nuclear weapons, and the absurdity of the

whole concept of perpetuating nuclear weapons as "deterrence." The book played a role in the successful July 2017 United Nations negotiations for a Nuclear Ban Treaty, and it is a handbook for those seeking a safer, saner world.

The groundbreaking Nuclear Ban Treaty was adopted at the United Nations on July 7, 2017. It created the first comprehensive ban on nuclear weapons under international law. Article 1 of the Treaty makes it illegal to

develop, test, produce, manufacture, acquire, possess, stockpile, transfer, receive, use, or even threaten to use nuclear weapons or explosive nuclear devices.

Countries can't help, urge, support or supply another nation to do any of those things, or allow any of it to happen in their jurisdiction or under their control. This includes companies that build, banks that finance, and investments that support nuclear weapons.

One hundred and twenty-two of the 195 United Nations member

states voted to approve the Treaty in July 2017. Since then the leaders of 53 countries have signed the treaty, and 19 countries have ratified it. In other words, each of those nation's legislatures have voted to formally validate the treaty.

Once 50 countries ratify the Treaty it will enter into force becoming a legally-binding instrument for those who have signed and ratified the Treaty. As it enters into force and more countries ratify it, the Treaty will further stigmatize and strengthen the international norm against nuclear weapons and pave the way for their complete elimination.

The nuclear-armed nations have not signed the Treaty, and have exerted enormous pressure on their allies to not sign the treaty; they also exerted pressure on



Not just symbolic. Ground Zero members join Elson and Wallis to demonstrate for the adoption of the Nuclear Ban Treaty. Nearly two-third UN member states have signed onto the Treaty already. *Photo by Leonard Eiger.*

Aligning with the Treaty... continued on page 7

allies to not vote for the Treaty. The United States, France and the United Kingdom, which did not take part in the negotiations leading up to the Treaty, made a formal statement in July 2017 stating that they “do not intend to sign, ratify or ever become party to it [the Treaty].”



Timmon Wallis and Vicki Elson brief the group on the principles of the Nuclear Ban Treaty and the steps citizens can take to exert pressure on their governments to sign and ratify it. *Photo by Leonard Eiger.*

It is Elson's and Wallis' belief that the nuclear-armed nations and their allies will eventually sign on to the Treaty when enough citizen pressure is applied, and citizen support for the Treaty is growing in many countries. Our task, as citizens, is to take concrete actions, both personally and collectively, to bring pressure to bear on the companies engaged in nuclear weapons development, production, maintenance and financing, which will ultimately gain the attention of our government.

Beatrice Finn, Executive Director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, said of the Treaty that, “It’s not just a symbolic treaty. It will have concrete impact on policies and practice.”

The Treaty Compliance Campaign website (nuclearban.us) has a wealth of information and resources to help individuals, organizations, local and regional governments, and states to engage the issue and become “treaty aligned.”

Disconnecting the US from its dependency on nuclear weapons will require a paradigm shift away from the massive industrial complex that reaps huge profits from the production of nuclear weapons. The Treaty Compliance Campaign takes an important step in calling out those who benefit financially from nuclear weapons, and realigning our priorities.

By aligning with the Treaty, we will, as far as we are able, have nothing further to do with nuclear weapons. We will disconnect through our investments, purchases and work. We will let the affected companies know of our decisions and actions, and tell them that we will avoid them until they remove themselves from the nuclear weapons business.

The anti-apartheid movement of the 1980s, as well as the pro-Palestinian Boycott Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement and today’s fossil fuel divestment movement have all shown the power of people mobilizing to change harmful practices on a large scale. Together we can become a powerful force to move the world closer to becoming free of the scourge of nuclear weapons.

Find out how you can become Treaty aligned at NuclearBan.US.

Leonard Eiger leads media and outreach efforts for Ground Zero, and coordinates the No to New Trident campaign at www.notnt.org.



Activist and author George Lakey to visit Puget Sound

By Mary Gleysteen

George Lakey, activist, author and sociologist, will visit the Puget Sound area in January in conjunction with the release of his newly revised book, *How We Win: A Guide to Non-violent Direct Action Campaigning*.



Lakey's activism has included the Ban the Bomb campaign, civil rights struggles including the Mississippi Freedom Summer, and cofounding AQAG, a Quaker Action Group protesting the Vietnam War. An activist with the Gay Liberation movement, he also helped to found Men Against Patriarchy. He participated in the Puerto Rican struggle to stop the US Navy from using that territory for bombing practice, and more recently cofounded EQAT, the Earth Quaker Action Team, working to build a just and sustainable economy.

He will speak January 12 at Elliott Bay Book Company in Seattle, January 16, at Orca Books in Olympia and January 17, at Eagle Harbor Book Company on Bainbridge Island, at 7pm. Lakey's book and talk offer a terrific opportunity for us to increase our understanding and effectiveness of Nonviolent Direct Action in the new year and beyond.

Mary Gleysteen serves as co-secretary of the Stewardship Council.

Rest in peace and power: Karan Founds-Benton, who vigiled at Ground Zero

By Mike W. of the Los Angeles Catholic Worker

It is with great sadness that we announce that our beloved Los Angeles Catholic Worker (LACW) community member Karan Founds-Benton joined the heavenly cloud of witnesses on November 25. Karan recently gave up her three year battle with cancer, and with the approval of her doctors, stopped all treatment, except for pain medication. Two weeks she ago moved out of Hennacy House and went into hospice care with her family.

When first diagnosed with cancer she was given approximately six months to live. Rejecting the usual chemo therapy and radiation treatments, she chose alternative forms of treatment and lived far beyond anyone's expectations. She had a bucket list that she was dedicated to fulfilling before passing, and was able to fulfill nearly all of her wishes and dreams.

A former teacher, Karan joined the LACW in 2013 and immediately became active in a variety of projects including our clothes and shoes distribution, and foot care. Karan was dedicated to our war and nuclear weapons resistance efforts and was arrested several times up until one month before she died. Karan was also a poet, actor, and writer. She recently had a book of her poems published and was working on a novel. Along with the LACW community, Karan leaves behind a daughter and two grandchildren.

Ground Zero is deeply honored to have been able to help Karan complete one of her last wishes on this earth—which was to stand witness against the toxic, life-depleting scourge of nuclear weapons. Karan completed a three-day vigil at the main gates of Bangor just weeks before she passed away.

Sue Ablao reflected, "Coming to GZ and vigiling at Bangor brought her peace. I was grateful to have been able to spend an afternoon with her, as well as vigil on Sunday morning. She was ready for the next leg of her journey. Blessed be."

Elizabeth Murray wrote, "I am shocked and saddened. I can still recall Karan's joyful, triumphant face as she walked toward Ground Zero's front door after completing her final morning vigiling at Main Gate: 'I did it!' It obviously took every last ounce of her energy for Karan to complete the three-day vigil; but she hid her suffering well and never complained—in fact, she seemed far more energetic than I (especially in the early mornings) and it's now obvious this was because she knew she didn't have much time left. She told me she had postponed her last round of chemotherapy until after her Ground Zero vigil, since she knew it would leave her feeling weak and ill, unable to do much."

We are humbled by her presence. Karen Founds-Benton will be deeply missed.



Thank you to the Los Angeles Catholic Worker, which provided the picture of Karan Founds-Benton above. Sue Ablao and Elizabeth Murray also contributed to this article.

We need to channel the persistence and bravery of James Otsuka into our actions and our organizing.

A group of young people from South Korea visited New York City last year, and I had a chance to meet and speak with them about



Activists with Hope Butterfly, a South Korean group who tell the story of Japanese sexual slavery and campaign for an official apology from the Japanese government. *Photo courtesy of www.nwtrcc.org.*

peace actions in the U.S. Now I think of their faces and the dangerous times we are in. What more can we do to stop this insanity and protect the lives of the thousands that Trump and his administration do not care about?

For information about modern day war tax resistance, check out the Na-

tional War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee website. The site includes downloadable pamphlets & booklets on various tactics & risks for war tax resistance, information on our national meetings that happen twice a year, and a list of war tax resistance counselors by region and state.

Ruth Benn is a longtime war tax resister and former coordinator of the National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee..

Presentation in Olympia by Bernie Meyer on his Gandhi portrayal in India



Bernie Meyer, who serves on the Ground Zero Stewardship Council and has been a longtime activist against nuclear weapons, continues his work in India portraying Mahatma Gandhi. On January 13, at 7:00pm, Bernie will present an overview of his recent trip to India.

In September and October, Bernie traveled to Chandigarh, India to participate in the Global Youth Peace Festival. He was also a guest at the inauguration of the World Peace Dome in Pune, and attended the World

Parliament for Science, Spirituality and Philosophy.

All are invited to this free presentation at Traditions Café in downtown Olympia.

My Statement to the Court

By Michael "Firefly" Siptroth

I had prepared a statement for my mitigation hearing, but I misplaced it just before going before the judge, so I adlibbed. As I had listened to the testimony/songs before me and heard the judge repeatedly give defendants \$25 fines, I said to him directly, that the administrative and legislative branches of government had failed to stop nuclear weapons and we were appealing to the judiciary to uphold the US Constitution, laws, and international treaties. He heard, but still gave me a \$25 fine. I have resolved to go back into the road or sit down next time to get a jury trial and I hope more people will join me! Here is my statement from the Oct. 24 hearing.

On the brink, again! I've lived my entire life threatened by nuclear weapons from the "duck and cover," Cuban Missile era, to our current and on-going \$100 billion yearly support for nukes, and push for \$1.7 trillion upgrade of nukes, weaponization of space, withdrawal from International treaties, plus US refusal to support the UN approved world-wide Abolition of Nuclear Weapons agreement.

I say, "No to destruction" and "Yes to beautiful life, creativity, and Peace!"

The renewal of Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr's Poor People's Campaign remains critical: Over 40 million people suffer in poverty, more homeless children and families than ever, healthcare still unaffordable or not available, economic inequality, suffocating student debt, educational opportunities debilitatingly out of reach, and our Earth under assault!

Imagine if \$100 billion yearly and \$1.7 trillion went to uplift Americans and others, what a wonderful world we could live in...!

Michael "Firefly" Siptroth serves on the Stewardship Council. He lives on his organic farm in Belfair.

GROUND ZERO

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*“Nuclear weapons pervade
our thinking. Control
our behavior. Administer our
societies. Inform our dreams.
They bury themselves like meat
hooks deep in the base of our
brains.”*

— Arundhati Roy

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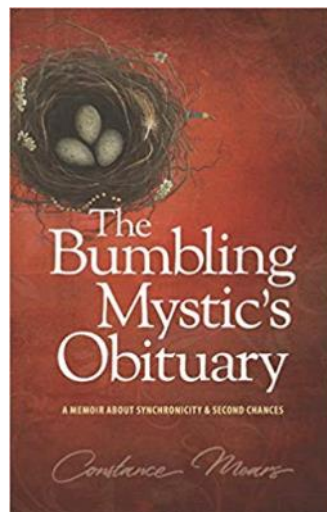
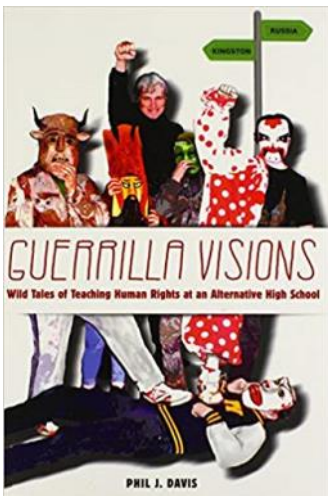
Book Notes: Ground Zero Members Write

By Mary Gleysteen

Two books by Ground Zero members should make it on to your 2019 reading list.

The first is *Guerrilla Visions: Wild Tales of Teaching Human Rights at an Alternative High School* by Phil Davis. *Guerrilla Visions* was first published in 2012, and is now going into a second printing which will benefit Ground Zero.

Retired from teaching, Phil is an active leafleter. His book about teaching at an alternative school in Kitsap County and taking his students on an exchange visit to Russia is told with humor, insight, and respect. It's a far-ranging tale that includes the author's coming of age in the 60's, a discussion of the philosophy of education, and an examination of the Cold War.



Also on your must-read list should be *The Bumbling Mystic's Obituary: A Memoir About Synchronicity and Second Chances* by Constance Mears. Connie graced Ground Zero as caretaker and member in residence with her handwork, vision and art, all of which are evident in her book. It is both funny and profound, inviting us to examine our lives and live them fully.

Mary Gleysteen worked at the Eagle Harbor Book Company for over 20 years. A dedicated member of Ground Zero, she serves as co-secretary of the Stewardship Council.