

Ground Zero

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PLC Retreat Highlights Solidarity With Area Activists, and Taps Roots of Ground Zero's Nuclear Resistance Beginnings

By Elizabeth Murray

Members of the Pacific Life Community (PLC) who gathered for their annual retreat at Pilgrim Firs in Port Orchard were no doubt grateful for the fortuitous timing of the February 28th-March 2nd event, which may have been their last opportunity to commune with beloved friends, colleagues and spiritual soul-mates prior to the lockdown and social isolation ordered by authorities in the wake of the deadly coronavirus pandemic.

It was a precious opportunity for the faith-based nuclear resisters - who come together once a year from points along the Pacific coast and inland (such as Las Vegas) - to draw spiritual strength, inspiration and courage from one another as they pursue their nonviolent campaign against the nuclear weapons — which threaten every man, woman and child as indiscriminately as the Covid-19 virus.

The four-day PLC event, whose theme - "Making Connections" - highlighted the urgent need of the nuclear resistance movement to make common cause with fellow

Earth Stewards in order to cultivate and educate the next generation of nuclear disarmament activists. PLC keynote speaker Steve Dear of Eugene, OR described his organizing work with Extinction Rebellion, Planet Versus Pentagon and other rights of nature movements and how the nuclear resistance movement can benefit from such alliances.

PLC panelist and Seattle climate activist Abby Brockway - who famously joined other members of the 'Delta 5' resistance group in Everett, Washington in placing her body directly in the path of toxic oil trains [see <https://www.pcusa.org/news/2016/2/8/pcusa-ruling-elder-abby-brockway-continue-battle-a/>] - shared a powerful and moving presentation about her path to activism and quest for climate justice.

Co-panelist Larry Morrell, cofounder and former Executive Director of Sound Defense Alliance [<https://>

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sounddefensealliance.org/], educated PLCers on the environmentally toxic scourge of the Navy's Growler jets, whose deafening and heart-stopping roar terrorizes residents of Whidbey Island, Port Townsend and the rest of the Olympic Peninsula. Larry's presentation included a recorded sample of the Growler's unbelievably loud and intrusive sonic pollution, which has resulted in health problems including heart palpitations in some affected humans and wildlife.

Highlighting the Pacific Life Community's ongoing concern over the continued and prolonged incarceration of 'Kings Bay Plowshares 7' activist Father Steve Kelly S.J., a number of PLC members who attended the October 2019 trial in Brunswick, GA shared their impressions of the proceedings, which found all seven activists guilty for their nonviolent witness against nuclear weapons.

Some of the PLC members who witnessed the court proceedings said they believed the defense's argument was weakened by the court's refusal to admit any reference to international law or the Nuremberg Principles.

Six of the 'Plowshares 7' group remain on ankle monitors or other forms of restricted house arrest, while Father Kelly has remained locked up in Georgia's Brunswick Prison since April 4, 2018 - the date the Plowshares 7 entered the Trident submarine base at Kings Bay, and the anniversary of the assassination of nonviolent prophet Martin Luther King in Memphis, Tennessee.

In a quote that seems increasingly relevant amid the aggressive US production of the so-called "low-yield" nuclear weapons - whose deployment is more likely, bringing the world closer to nuclear warfare - King famously said: "Our scientific power has outrun our spiritual power. We have guided missiles and misguided men."

In another expression of solidarity with fellow nuclear resisters, Redwood City Catholic Worker Susan Crane talked about her trip to Buechel, Germany last year, where she joined a contingent of international nuclear resisters for a series of direct actions — heavily attended by young people — to protest the stationing of US nuclear weapons in Buechel and other military bases scattered throughout Europe.

Susan, along with NukeWatch director John LaForge and Andrew Lanier of the San Jose Catholic Worker, joined other internationals who entered the base on several occasions to demand that the German government reject the presence of U.S. nuclear weapons on German soil. At one point they asked to speak to the base com-

mander - who, much to Susan's surprise, came out and greeted them cordially. Such open and relaxed dialogue between high ranking military officials and nuclear disarmament activists is rare here in the U.S., she noted. Susan reported that in Germany, nuclear resisters are treated with respect and civility by base security and law enforcement.

To keep the group grounded in the stark realities of the nuclear weapons threat, Ground Zero Center's Mack Johnson played a brief but very impactful cartoon video showing the devastating effects of nuclear weapons on the health and mortality of humans caught in the different zones of a nuclear blast. Mack delivered a PowerPoint presentation prepared by Ground Zero's Dr. David Hall, a

member of Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility (WPSR). Dr. Hall and his wife Anne were unable to attend this year's PLC event since it coincided with their WPSR delegation's visit to Gaza.

Lifting our voices and spirits amid discussions of impending nuclear threats, climate and environmental disasters were the minstrels of The Irthlingz Duo, an Orcas Island-based group with a repertoire of politically aware music drawing deeply on the tradition of Pete Seeger in their advocacy of universal peace, love and respect for nature. Irthlingz Duo musicians Sharon Abreu and Michael Hurwicz also accompanied PLCers to their direct action in front of Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor on March 2, providing musical and moral support as activists crossed into the road holding banners that read: "Trident is a Threat to All Life on Earth" and "Abolish Nuclear Weapons."

This year's PLC also screened two films: 'The Arms Race Within' on the early nonviolent 'White Train' nuclear resistance actions of the Agape Community, precursor to the Pacific Life Community and Ground Zero community; and an uncut documentary on the life of the legendary and much beloved Tacoma priest and Catholic Worker Father Bill Bichsel, S.J. by local filmmaker Lucas Dambergs.

Next year's Pacific Life Community will be hosted by the Las Vegas Catholic Worker in Las Vegas, Nevada. For more information check the Pacific Life Community Facebook page or website, <https://pacificlifecommunity.wordpress.com/>.



Maurice "Rush" Rehm (drama professor at Stanford University) reads the provisions of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons as the group blocks the road. *Photo by Clancy Dunigan.*

Elizabeth Murray is a member of Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS) and the Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action, where she serves as Member-in-Residence. *Cover photo by Clancy Dunigan.*

Thirteen disarmament activists arrested in nonviolent blockade of Trident nuclear submarine base

By Felice and Jack Cohen-Joppa

Thirteen nuclear abolitionists blocked traffic leading into Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor on March 2. The direct action came at the conclusion of the annual gathering of the Pacific Life Community, a network of spiritually motivated activists from the Pacific Coast and other western states committed to nonviolent action for a nuclear-free future.

Washington state police arrested nine people for obstructing traffic after they carried banners that stretched across the roadway just outside the base main gate. Their banners read “Trident Threatens All Life on Earth” and “Abolish Nuclear Weapons”. While they stood in the road, one of the blockaders read aloud from the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. (Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in July 2017, the Treaty will enter into force when ratified by 50 nations. Thirty-five nations have ratified to date.)

Shortly thereafter, four people carrying signs crossed one at a time onto base property. Before stepping over a blue line painted on the pavement, each made a statement to the assembled activists, police and military personnel. Each in turn was arrested by Navy security and taken into custody. They were issued trespass citations and released shortly thereafter, pending arraignment in U.S. District Court in Tacoma. The nine arrested by state police had also been quickly cited and released.

Those cited by state police are: George Rodkey, Gary Cavalier, Sue Ablao, Julia Ochiogrosso, Rush Rehm, Ed Ehmke, Mary Jane Parrine, Elizabeth Murray and Clancy Dunigan. Arrested on base property were Jim Haber, Charlie Smith, Betsy Lamb and Steve Dear.

Sam Yergler dropped a 20-foot banner from a nearby overpass visible to the demonstrators and traffic. It read, “Base closed for survival”.

Activists also held a sign that read “We love you, Fr. Steve Kelly”. Kelly, a Jesuit priest and member of the Pacific Life Community, has been in a Georgia county jail for almost two years after his April 5, 2018 arrest with six other Catholic nuclear disarmament activists at the Kings Bay Trident base in Georgia.

The weekend gathering and protest, attended by about 50 people, was hosted by the local Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action. The annual Pacific Life Community gatherings and actions are scheduled to mark the anniversary of the largest nuclear weapons test ever, Castle Bravo, that devastated Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands on March 1, 1954.

Jack Cohen-Joppa and Felice Cohen-Joppa are editors and coordinators of the *Nuclear Resister*, providing comprehensive information about and support for imprisoned anti-nuclear activists since 1980.

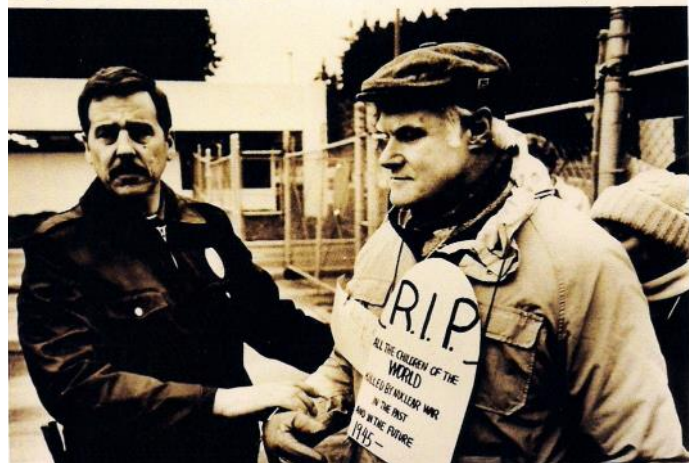
Rest in Peace and Power Bill Wahl

By Glen Milner

Glen Milner gave this eulogy for his friend Bill Wahl at St. Therese Parish in Seattle on February 22, 2020. Later that evening Glen realized that the last White Train carrying nuclear warheads arrived at Bangor on February 22, 1985—exactly 35 years and almost to the hour of Bill’s memorial. When trying to determine the date of Kim’s favorite photo, Glen realized he had been arrested with Bill both on February 22, 1985 and on December 27, 1987.

I am a friend of Bill Wahl. I know Bill mostly from one type of activity—from Bill’s work for peace, which can be pretty revealing about someone. I have known Bill since 1985.

Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen was one of Bill’s inspirations in life. Bill was very successful, a physician and a person who could learn to do most things—yet his faith led him and caused him to put himself at great risk. Bill had spent days in jail for peace and once had a lien on his house for war tax resistance.



Bill Wahl when he was arrested at the Feast of the Holy Innocents action at Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor on December 27, 1987. *Photo by Larry Steagall, Bremerton (Kitsap) Sun.*

To me, Bill was the calm within the storm. He was a quiet man. He seemed always searching to do the right thing. I was first at Bill and Kim’s home in late 1984 or early 1985 for a meeting and the house was completely packed with people. I didn’t know who lived there at the time, but the energy was amazing. I had never seen anything like it.

In February 1985, Bill was arrested for blocking a moving train that was loaded with nuclear bombs. Demonstrators knew that the prosecutor for Kitsap County would likely be seeking a maximum punishment of 90

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National Security or Human Security?

By Leonard Eiger

Crazy times! As we move through this time of health and economic crisis I find myself reflecting on the importance and power of language. Trump recently said of the fight to deal with COVID19 that it is [“our big war... It’s a medical war. We have to win this war. It’s very important.”](#) And yet, this sort of rhetoric is nothing new. Presidents have long declared wars – J Edgar Hoover on crime, Lyndon Johnson on poverty, Richard Nixon on drugs, and now Trump’s war on a virus. We know how well how these “wars” have gone.

And now we face a crisis that is harming people and devastating our economy, while we would have been far better prepared to protect lives had we invested proactively in public health programs. President Trump is not the first president to cut funding for critical public health programs intended to deal with the very situation we now face. And the underlying reason for this lack of focus on real, human security is the iron grip of the National Security State.

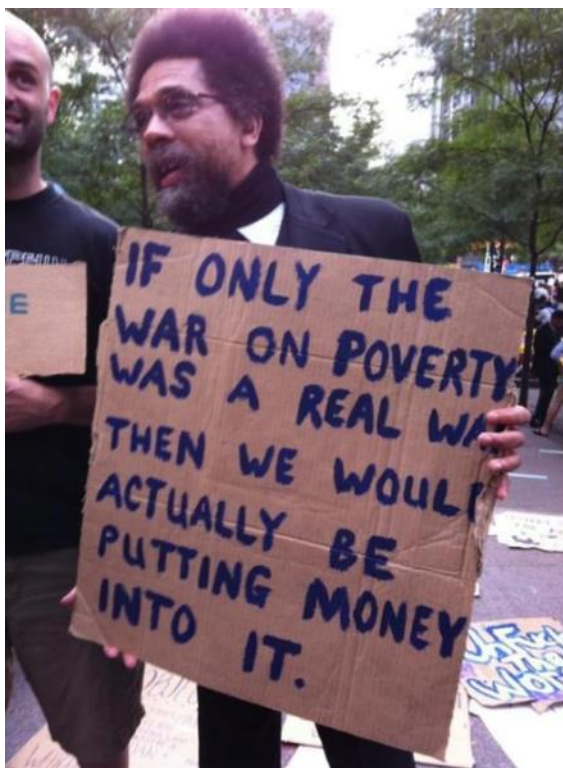
Dr. Cornel West said, [“If only the war on poverty was a real war then we would actually be putting money into it.”](#) The National Security State pours countless billions into the business of war (and it is big business), carefully developing enemies with which to justify such spending, while minimizing or in many cases ignoring issues like pandemics that are of very real concern and consequence to our nation and all of humanity. And then, when a crisis occurs, that same State wrings its

“...we are grossly under-prepared in every way to deal with real, human needs.”

hands, points fingers, and spends a bunch of money (until things quiet down), while continuing to spend as usual for the war machine.

While the planet’s temperature continues to increase, and we continue squeezing out the last of the Earth’s fossil fuel reserves and other precious resources, we continue creating enemies to justify our huge military expenditures and war preparations, including those for nuclear war. Whether Korea, Iran, China or Russia, each of these nations is trumpeted as justification for the need to build up our nuclear capabilities.

And then came the Coronavirus! [While global military spending ran \\$1.8 trillion in 2018](#) (with the US spending nearly as much as the next eight largest-spending countries combined) it only took a tiny infective agent (roughly one two-hundredth the diameter of a human hair), that can multiply only within the living cells of a host, to bring our nation to a grinding halt.



Activist, professor, and author Dr. Cornel West at a demonstration in Washington, DC. Photo courtesy of Facebook.

We should be humbled by this and re-evaluating our priorities as a nation and as a human family. Yet, the apparatus of the state is so automated, so programmed for its own survival – rather than for the survival and well-being of its people who, quite ironically, are the ones needed to keep the state functioning - that it is unable to be truly introspective. If the State was truly invested in its citizens, it would be listening to the experts who have previously presented sound arguments for preparing for pandemics, and it would have spent our tax dollars wisely and in full preparation for such an event.

We are led to believe that the enemy is everywhere, lurking in the shadows, preparing to strike should we be ill-prepared, just like the bad old days of the Cold War and the Communist menace. Of course, we are grossly overprepared, bankrupting ourselves in the

process – economically and morally. In reality we have manufactured each enemy in due course in a carefully crafted narrative generated by Think Tanks and experts with the experience of the Military-Industrial Complex’s revolving door.

We need to step back and ponder the significance of unfolding events, find humility, and reconsider our direction as a nation. As much as we are hugely overfunded and overprepared militarily, we are grossly underprepared in every way to deal with real, human needs. The coronavirus debacle in our nation is a glaring example of that.

A pandemic is as deadly as war, yet the resources committed to pandemic prevention and response are a fraction of the resources we commit to military expendi-

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tures. A [2016 report by the Commission on a Global Health Risk Framework](#) for the Future estimates that an incremental global investment of \$4.5 billion per year would strengthen national public health systems; fund research and development; and finance global coordination and contingency efforts.

Rather than continuing to pour billions of dollars into nuclear weapons, wouldn't it make more sense for the nuclear-armed nations to realize the folly of their continuing preparations for nuclear war? Isn't it time for a paradigm shift? And who will initiate such a shift? Shouldn't the only nation to have used nuclear weapons against another be the one to initiate such an effort, working with Russia to lead the other nuclear-armed nations to the table?

It should be clear to us that it is time to move beyond discussions of "no first use" and "presidential authority" to "moving swiftly to zero". This will require not only a paradigm shift, but a president who will build a working relationship with Russia, supporting the rule of international law in supporting existing nuclear-weapons treaties, including the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, and dramatically reducing the role of nuclear weapons in our foreign policy to send a clear message to other nations of our intentions.

Above all, we must stop building new nuclear weapons and delivery systems that only ensure humanity's ultimate demise! A nuclear war will be the last war!

Perhaps a [recent news item from Fox News](#) sums up the madness of our nation's serial militarism. The commander of U.S. nuclear forces recently said that the coronavirus outbreak has had "no impact" on his ability to launch nuclear weapons. Are we supposed to find comfort in that statement in this time of existential angst?

Where is the logic in preparing for global health pandemics while simultaneously preparing for the ultimate pandemic of nuclear omnicide? Do we want the false security of national security or do we want real, human security. Do we want to care for each other at home and around the globe, the human family, understanding the deep interconnections of all life on Earth?

As long as our elected leaders in Washington, D.C. abdicate their responsibilities, it will be up to us as We The People to take responsibility and demand a new paradigm – one that puts human security above national security, one that seeks nonviolent and non-military solutions to conflict, and one that puts the needs of the people above the wants of powerful corporations. Only through such a paradigm shift can we build a safer and more secure nation and world for all people. And isn't such a goal priceless?

Leonard Eiger chairs the Communication and Outreach Committee, and sends out press releases and information on behalf of Ground Zero.

Ground Zero Commemorates MLK Day in Seattle and at Bangor

Photos by Glen Milner

Activists with Ground Zero commemorated MLK Day with a vigil at the main gate to Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor on Jan. 18, below right, and then marched in Seattle with several thousand others on Jan. 20. *Photos by Glen Milner.*



"Military Worship is a Prominent Component of U.S. Culture:" An interview with Marilyn Sherry

By Rodney Brunelle

Ground Zero Center's Rodney Brunelle interviewed long time Ground Zero supporter and generous financial contributor Marilyn Sherry about how and why she was inspired to work for peace.

Brunelle: Why are you a peace activist or are you?

Sherry: Am I? Absolutely! I am somebody who wants to keep people alive until God calls them. In the middle years of the Viet Nam war I had young children. I did not want my boys to grow up to be drafted to become either killers or "kill-ees." So being a mother got me started against war and militarism. I got into the peace movement to save young people from this horror that the government is doing. One of the first groups I belonged to back in those days was the Committee Opposed to Militarism and the Draft (COMD). I still belong and donate to them. Here, on their January-March, 2020 newsletter I have underlined in red, "Military worship is a prominent component of U. S. culture." I think that's huge. If you do any kind of article from this interview you put that at the top, as the title of the piece. Do you understand?

Brunelle: Yes, of course. You once told me you started Mothers Against the Draft. Can you tell me about that?

Sherry: Yes, I founded Mothers Against the Draft right here in my living room. We started with eight mothers in the neighborhood. One day Archbishop Hunthausen sent out a reporter from the Catholic Northwest Progress. Here is a picture with my son featured. It's dated August 1, 1980. The caption reads, "Killing is wrong, I won't go," quoting my son Richard Sherry. Another article in the same paper is titled "Mothers Against the Draft are mad." MAD; that was our rallying cry. Our group grew to be 200 mothers against the draft. Some of the mothers were afraid to go alone to demonstrations because they had children to raise and couldn't risk going to jail, so they brought their husbands with them. Can you imagine? They were afraid because they were standing up against the government. But they cared enough about their boys to still organize against the draft. Because of my work with MAD I was invited by the ACLU to be on their draft committee. Can you imagine? Me, a Catholic, being invited by the ACLU? I'm still a member.

Brunelle: So you started Mothers Against the Draft in the late 70's or early 80's, but that wasn't your first effort in

social activism, was it?

Sherry: No, I first got going with Human Life of Washington probably about 1970, when abortion became legal in Washington state. My medical doctor husband was helping the founder of that group, Kenneth VanDerhoef. That's exactly when I got started, got going further on into the life movement. So I got into being against killing with this abortion thing and then about 1979, when my son was starting at UW, I realized that if another war got started my son would have to register for the draft and have to go off and become a killer or "kill-ee" like I said before. I got involved in the peace movement by starting Mothers Against the Draft.

Brunelle: So, Mr. VanDerhoef was very instrumental in lighting your fire to protect human life. Were there others in those days that inspired you?

Sherry: Another biggy-wiggy was Archbishop Hunthausen. You know that Hunthausen wasn't treated well by other bishops, right? When he withheld part of his income tax that was for war, he encouraged his brother bishops to join the peace movement with him. He couldn't get many of them. He was mostly by himself, along with Bishop Gumbleton and a few others. Most of the American bishops sided with Reagan, and Pope John Paul II, and the military-industrial complex. My husband and I back then didn't have a lot of money with five children to raise, but when I realized that Hunthausen was

anti-war we decided to send \$200 a month to the archbishop for his peace work. During that time we couldn't donate to any other cause. You asked who has inspired me. He [Hunthausen] has. He stuck his neck out as anti-nuclear. And you know what happened next? I used to go to Ground Zero all the time when the White Trains came in. Here is a picture from the United Press International of my husband and Archbishop Hunthausen walking on the White Train tracks. That was the only time my husband was able to go there. The next day relatives from Chicago called me and said, "Guess what, Marilyn? Your husband made the Chicago Tribune." UPI took this picture and sent it to newspapers all around the country. Under the picture is written, "Archbishop Hunthausen, left, is greeted by Dr. Stanley Sherry. The Archbishop, active in the peace movement, has been stripped of authority in



A 1980 article in the Catholic Northwest Progress profiled Sherry's work with MAD. Photo courtesy of Marilyn Sherry.

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five areas of administration in the Seattle Archdiocese.”

Brunelle: What about you? Did you stand on the tracks to stop the white trains?

Sherry: Oh, oh, stop. Marilyn never did. You want to know why? I had five children and I couldn't afford to have my children brought up by nobody. So I, as a mother, could not stand on the tracks and risk jail. But I always went because that was my thing, to support them.

Brunelle: You said you wouldn't tell me how old you are. Given our world with so much suffering and so much to worry about, what makes you—not a young person—stay involved in our world?

Sherry: Oh, very easy. It gives my life meaning. Number one is my religion. Becoming interested in the peace movement made me understand better what Christ was saying. I became more purely religious on certain things where I was more selfish before. So to the end of my life I need to work for good because I am a natural born organizer and a natural born leader. I am not afraid at all about opposition. You know a lot of people are afraid to death to even open their mouth for fear that someone will disagree with them. I'm not like that. When I go up to church and talk to somebody about some issue I think the Church is doing a bad job on, they look at me like I'm crazy. They are totally militaristic. If I say, let's denuclearize, you know, de-killing, get rid of guns and all that, these people, they think they have to have all these things. The Church, sadly, is brainwashed.

Brunelle: Personally, I know for a fact that you have contributed very generously to Ground Zero in recent years. Has that been the case since the days when you rubbed shoulders with the Douglasses and Hunthausen?

Sherry: No, with five kids I probably did not have the resources to give as I have more recently. I had to make sure my children got a college education so they could use the gifts God gave them.

Brunelle: We can't thank you enough for your generous donations, that's for sure. So, what makes Ground Zero different from other organizations that you know about? Or is it different?

Sherry: Oh, it is, it is. It is the only one that is particularly going against nuclear war and is anti-nuclear. That is the reason you guys are totally unique. Others fiddle around and do their thing.

Brunelle: Ground Zero members are getting old. Got any ideas how Ground Zero can survive?

Sherry: Yes, let me think. I like your question. We older people understand, but younger people don't know about

what it's like to go through war. Even those of us who didn't see actual combat, we did see how much suffering wars inflict. I don't think young people want to hear anything but how to be cozy and happy. You know that's an extremely important question you guys have to work on. I have to pray on that. One idea I do have, is using a real popular political idea that everyone is talking about, and using that as an entrance into getting them into Ground Zero?

Brunelle: You hit on what we are trying to do. We are trying to connect with the environmental movement.

Sherry: That's it. That's it. You're doing the right thing. Is there anything else that is hot, hot potatoes? I do my own thinking but I try to read all I can about what others think. So then I will apply what I think are their good ideas and try to incorporate their good stuff into what I'm doing. Maybe you can identify experts to help you bring more people in. Like using technology. I hate that stuff. But if you can find some outside expert skilled in social media or whatever, maybe later in the year I could help with another donation to pay for one of those people. You need some outside help.

You are all competent people, but still you need specialists in knowing how to instill your political ideas into the mainstream. Maybe I can come up with a couple thousand to help specifically for that.

Brunelle: Well, thank you so much Marilyn. The Stewardship Council is pretty amazed and extremely appreciative of the amount of money you've been donating the last few years.

Sherry: If you come up with something I agree with I'll see what I can do. I don't want to just throw away money at nothing. I like the bus ads that you've done. So maybe later when I don't have so many expenses and your bus ads get up and running again... Well, we'll see.

Brunelle: Do you have any final messages for peace activists today?

Sherry: Oh, boy. I think it is terribly important that you people keep bringing up to the public that this military worship in America is growing. We are more and more militarized, not less. The anti-militarization is what you gotta work on. It's just terrible. You know, we don't need any more new Tridents.

Brunelle: Marilyn, thank you for your time today and I can't thank you enough for your support of Ground Zero. Thanks again.



Natural born leader and activist Marilyn Sherry. Photo courtesy of ACLU San Diego.

Rodney Brunelle is a member of Pax Christi and leads the overpass banner effort for Ground Zero in the warmer months of the year.

Bob Aldridge's "The Goodness Field"

"Rocket Scientist Turned Satyagrahi" Publishes New Book

By Jim Douglass

Bob Aldridge, whose courageous witness alerted many to the first-strike capabilities of Trident, recently completed his book "The Goodness Field." Below is an excerpt from a letter from Bob to Glen Milner, followed by the forward to The Goodness Field written by Jim Douglass.

Our daughter, Mary, is sheltering-in-place with us during this crisis. At our age it is a comfort to have a well-experienced nurse to help us.

Mary and I are working together to take advantage of these horrible times as a trigger event for greater global consciousness leading to Global Satyagraha. Hidden in the quiet of the COVID-19 pandemic is a current of the collective consciousness that crosses political boundaries, and widens the focus of human connection. Ironically, within social distancing comes the benefit of reconnecting with ourselves and each other simply by slowing down. As the world comes to a halt in normal activity and isolation abounds, the US government seizes the opportunity (trigger event) to enact policies that are likely to be the new status quo. However, the same trigger event allows for a response of *contagious nonviolence* (K. Butigen) to reshape the priorities of our planet. Given the current social isolation, the technological talents of the younger generations can redirect the protectory of government policy through innovative social connectivity and action. *The Goodness Field – A Guidebook for Proactive Nonviolence* engages nonviolent warriors in a global constructive program through the lens of historic pitfalls and successes and the required measured actions moving forward.

Consequently, I have halted physical distribution of *The Goodness Field* and am making it available digitally. It is available to be circulated widely and posted on websites. Let us all make the most of this opportunity.

Bob Aldridge has the knack of paying attention to an urge to do the right thing whenever he feels it. Then he does it -- to the discomfort of those who know how the force of his example can change lives. In the almost half-century I've known Bob, the trails this nuclear weapons engineer turned peacemaker has blazed, following the whispers of his still small voice, have kept on redirecting my life. Be wary of reading *The Goodness Field*, if you

are not open to meeting a man who could inspire you to climb mountains.

Feeling such an urge when he began the tenth decade of his life, Bob Aldridge researched thoroughly and wrote what he first described as "A Guidebook for Proactive Nonviolence." What he saw brilliantly through that process, he identified in his final title as "The Goodness Field."

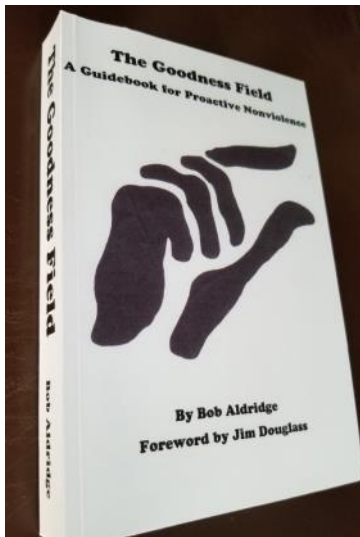
In August 1972, my wife Shelley and I met Bob and Janet Aldridge when they came from their home in Santa Clara, California, to Honolulu, Hawaii, to support our catholic Action of Hawaii community in a trial. Three of us were liable to ten years each in prison for doing an act of moral and legal necessity by obeying a greater law. We had poured our blood on top-secret electronic warfare files at Hickam Air Base, Pacific Air Force Headquarters -- exposing Hickam, as Bob writes in this book's last chapter, "as the intelligence and targeting center for the Vietnam air war."

In a scene Shelley and I have recalled often from that intense week, we watched Bob sitting at a microphone on a stage in a theater at the University of Hawaii. He was flanked by two Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal attorneys, who were assisting us in the trial. They had explained to the audience why our disruption of the

electronic warfare office was a legal resistance, if not obligation, to a crime against peace.

When it came time for Bob to speak, as peace representative of the National Catholic Lay Association, he pushed the mic away and remained silent. He was responding to an urge. Shelley and I were unaware of Bob's occupation as a nuclear missile designer, which he had begun to question. The Nuremberg lawyers' presentations intensified the questioning. It provoked in Bob a pregnant silence. Taken up by the trial, we simply thought Bob a very shy man.

Two years later, following my resignation from the University of Hawaii faculty, Bob visited us at our house in the little town of Hedley, British Columbia, Canada. He told us of his resignation from his Lockheed job designing a nuclear first-strike weapon, the Trident missile system. Spreading out a map on our kitchen table, he pointed out the chosen site for the first Trident submarine base, on a peninsula across from Seattle, not so far from Hedley.



The Goodness Field is available online and through Ground Zero.
Photo courtesy of Bob Aldridge.

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Bob's visit became our invitation to co-found Pacific Life Community, which initiated a Gandhian campaign in resistance to Trident, prompting our move into the last house beside the railroad tracks going into the base. Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action, whose site bordered another part of the Trident base fence a mile away, was founded in 1977. The Trident campaign led in 1981 to the tracks campaign to stop Trident weapons shipments to its bases on both the Pacific and the Atlantic. That resulted in our further move in 1989 to another tracks house, along the trains' southeastern route, in Birmingham, Alabama.

If ever a satyagrahi, a Gandhian practitioner of truth-force, has redirected Shelley's and my lives, it has been Bob Aldridge through the quiet talk he walks, along with Janet, their children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren, who are a nonviolent wave all their own. We have learned with many others how to walk from the example of Bob, Janet, and their family — all the way from their decision that Bob resign at age 49 from Lockheed (now merged with Marietta as the #1 military industrial contractor), sparking the Trident campaign; through Bob's groundbreaking books on our near extinction from the Pentagon's nuclear first strike strategy spearheaded by Trident; to this pioneering work on

our nonviolent transformation, *The Goodness Field*. I've had the gift, with others he asked to critique his manuscript, of seeing his nonviolence guidebook evolve into its present form. Bob has been mining everyone and everything he could for this work, re-climbing the mountain of his life, seeking a way to enlighten the night. He succeeds. Bob Aldridge's relentless persistence has broken through finally, at the peak of his life and work, into the fundamental forcefield in the

universe, the source of our necessary enlightenment through proactive nonviolence — goodness.

The goodness field, as Bob explains in an intriguing introduction and astounding appendix, is the pervasive force field of not only Earth but the entire universe. Goodness is the singular force needed to modulate the four fundamental forces of nature to support life. As

our own creations of nuclear war and climate change remain on track to end our species after destroying countless others, goodness is coming right back at us, through billions of years in the evolution of the universe. The power of goodness is arising from the subconscious of humanity, as Bob suggests from C. G. Jung. We have been propagandized into fatal sleepwalking by our entertainment culture and the invisible government of

egothink, a term Bob coined via Sigmund Freud and George Orwell. Yet we can still awaken to a volcanic energy in our collective unconscious, formed from the beginning of time. We can discern at the current crux of history a power erupting from the depths of our origin, if we only remove its obstacles through proactive nonviolence. Goodness is the transformative force of human existence. Goodness can be our cosmic companion, as we walk the Earth and talk the truth. Goodness is in the stardust empowering our every action concentrated nonviolently on the dark matter of this world, down to the jail cell of my own ego. Goodness is here, as we awaken, walk the Earth, and speak the truth of a uni-

versal force that has brought us this far so far. Goodness is the truth in proactive nonviolence that will set us free. Seed a Gandhian constructive program in the goodness field of this Earth, and it will grow.

Our crucial task in letting goodness work, Bob suggests with Gandhi, is taking on experiments with truth as near as our fingertips, pushing away obstacles to goodness. Washing our dishes to wash the dishes, in Nhat Hanh's image of mindful practice, will free us to be where we need to be, catching a wave of proactive nonviolence just in time. Converging drops of goodness and courage, becoming an ocean of waves of nonviolent movements, will prevail. Ours is the goodness story told all the way from its origin in the creative urge behind the Big Bang of the universe.

Maybe it does take a rocket scientist turned satyagrahi to see humanity's redemptive truth of goodness. Is that Gandhi grinning through his microscope?

"Truth," as Mohandas Gandhi said from his experiments with truth, "is God." Or as Bob Aldridge has put it in a further step through his experiments, "Truth is goodness." The ultimate truth of goodness, it turns out, is confirmed by the story of the universe. Our humanity's radical goodness is seen, step by step, through our experience, in the discoveries of proactive nonviolence. We learn to walk truly in the dust of a million galaxies of goodness. Test and see.

An empire began to give way when a little man, with 78 committed friends from his ashram, marched to



Bob Aldridge. Photo courtesy of Amazon.com.

For single paper copies of *The Goodness Field*, please check on availability at info@gzcenter.org. Books, offered by Bob and Janet Aldridge as their personal contribution to Ground Zero, are provided for a suggested \$15.00 donation, which includes postage.

Golden Rule preparing to set sail for the Marshall Islands

By Leonard Eiger

Sixty-one years since first sailing to the Marshall Islands to stop US atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons, the Golden Rule will set sail from Hawaii to the Marshall Islands once again on her continuing mission to prevent nuclear war. If you aren't already familiar with the Golden Rule, it is a project of Veterans For Peace to advance its opposition to nuclear weapons and war.

The Golden Rule and crew are currently in Hawaii, and their departure for the next leg of this historic journey will be significantly delayed due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Its crew had planned to leave Hawaii by April 1st, and currently hopes to set sail by November or December. Although there is enough funding to cover the voyage to the Marshall Islands and on to Japan, additional funds are needed to cover docking and other expenses until then.

You can keep up with the Golden Rule and learn how to donate to keep the wind in its sails at www.vfpgoldenruleproject.org.

Leonard Eiger serves on the Stewardship Council and chairs the Communications and Outreach committee.



There are worse places to be stuck than Hawaii during a pandemic. However, the Golden Rule crew is eager to continue spreading their message about the need to eliminate nuclear weapons. *Photo courtesy of the Golden Rule.*

Pacific Northwest Peace Pagoda construction on hold during pandemic

By Rev. Senji Kanaeda

On March 4, a pipe was set in concrete at the center of the Peace Pagoda. This will be a standard during construction. The top of the Pagoda will be 22 feet tall, about three feet taller than the scaffolding in the photo. We will continue to work when it is safe for all of us. I pray for the health and safety of all people of the Earth.

Jim Lyman, a long-time friend of the Nipponzan Myohoji order and Ground Zero, is the person in the photo at the center of the Peace Pagoda. Jim Lyman is a general contractor and has been providing his considerable skill and guidance toward the completion of the Peace Pagoda. Jim Lyman stated, "*The pipe [at the center of the Peace Pagoda] will serve two functions. First, it is constructed in removable sections. The bottom section is at the exact height of the top of the footings. The next 11' section will be the exact height of the vertical concrete wall while the final 11' section is collateral with the apex of the dome. All the sections are at the precise center point to establish perfect radii for inner and outer critical diameters. Additionally, with attachable fittings the pipe will be able to anchor scaffolding at any desired height. It is designed to be easily removed upon completion.*"

We shall overcome and keep going to work for peace together. Na Mu Myo Ho Ren Ge Kyo and gassho (palms together).

Senji Kanaeda Shonin serves on the Stewardship Council, and has led and participated in Peace Walks around the world.



The ground is clear and level, the construction permit is approved, but COVID-19 has thrown a wrench in the plans for the Peace Pagoda, for now. Above, Jim Lyman installs the center pipe. *Photo by Rev. Senji Kanaeda.*

the sea to pick up a grain of salt. Our way into non-violent transformation may be no more than our willingness to say yes to an urge of goodness at inconvenient moments in our lives, leading us to ashram disciplines and nonviolence training in the fire of goodness that can nurture a new way of life. Turn, turn, turn. Faith in goodness, acting through newly forged lives in a nonviolent community, is hope for our world.

Bob Aldridge is a nonviolent warrior for our time. *The Goodness Field: A Guidebook for Proactive Nonviolence* is the testament of his life. Its practical, nonviolent truths are carved out, hammer to chisel, with the help of Gandhi, King, and their disciplined disciples; the Standing Rock Sioux and the new paradigm of Sarvodaya via Wopida; a host of young people standing on their own feet, encircling the globe in resistance to gun violence and climate change; Bob and Janet Aldridge with their children, grandchildren, and great-great grands walking the way of proactive nonviolence before us.

We know we dwell in a time of deepening darkness. We are at two minutes to midnight—the nearest the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* Doomsday Clock has ever been. The question before us, as Dr. King put it, is: Nonviolence or nonexistence? Transformation or annihilation? Stated starkly, how can we transform a cultural dogma of inevitable evil, implanted by the invisible government of one's ego, into the prophetic truth of proactive nonviolence? How can we turn our lives around in time toward the hope of the universe?

However, if we pay attention to the lessons from proactive nonviolent movements more powerful than war, we know we can live out the truth that we are on a planet in a universe grounded in goodness. Cosmic experiments with truth, turning our own lives around first, are one step away from us. They are no big deal. Yet through them we can know, as real as the Earth on which we stand, the power of goodness at our fingertips at two minutes to midnight. Goodness has our back from way back. Goodness is our given. We can allow its power from the collective unconscious to emerge in a globally transforming proactive nonviolence.

It can be done here and now by living out our first truth of goodness, older than the hills, written with the ink of love in the words on these pages.

Read them, rejoice, and be good.

Jim Douglass founded Ground Zero with his wife Shelley in 1977. Today the Douglasses live in Birmingham, Alabama where they extend hospitality at the Mary's House. Digital copies of *The Goodness Field: A guidebook for Proactive Nonviolence* are available on the Pacific Life Research website, at www.plrc.org. For single paper copies of the book, please check on availability at info@gzcenter.org.

days in jail. During Bill's testimony at the trial in June 1985, Bill broke down and wept while speaking of the devastating effects of nuclear weapons. It was eye-opening to me — to see such a strong man reveal his inner self. The next day, all demonstrators were acquitted by a Kitsap County jury.

Years later, Bill and Kim would still have Ground Zero meetings at their home. The last meeting—and they insisted that Ground Zero members come—was in September 2019. Bill was in his hospital bed, stretched out in the middle of the meeting with people sitting around him. It seemed right. It was always an honor and a joy to be at the Wahls'.

When Kim asked me to speak about Bill, I wanted to make sure that whatever I said was correct—so naturally I went to the Internet for help. And there is a YouTube video from June 2012 in which Bill and Kim are interviewed on KEXP radio—early in the morning and on a live radio broadcast. (Google search Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action and Bill Wahl.) The interview was 29 minutes. Bill was very engaged but as you might guess—Bill spoke for about seven minutes of the 29 minutes and Kim spoke the rest of the time. During the interview, Bill ended up asking most of the questions, but it never seemed like he was in control. This video verified my thoughts of Bill. Of course, Bill knew the answers to most of the questions he was asking.

Bill was interested in nearly everything, and he appreciated small things. A few years ago, I fixed the light on his front porch. It needed a new light and a new photocell. Bill held the extension ladder while I climbed it—never letting go until I was done and off the ladder. And every time I saw Bill after that, he would tell me something like, “Last night it got dark, and the light came on.” “And when I awoke in the morning the light was off.” Sometimes he would tell me how it would come on earlier on dark days. “It works!” he would say. Bill wanted to pay me, of course, but after some time, I felt like I owed Bill. He was delighted.

At peace actions—one would seldom see Kim or Bill without the other. Bill always knew where Kim was at any event. For as long as I can remember, and for no better words, I always thought they were the cutest couple. Soulmates. I had the feeling that Kim would sometimes gently lead Bill on peace issues. And that sometimes Bill might play the devil's advocate. They obviously learned well from each other.

I never asked Bill what his greatest achievement in life was, but I am pretty certain it was his marriage to Kim. They were married for 60 years.

And I know what Bill would say to us now, “Come and check on Kim once in a while, Call her, See how Kim is doing. Please.” And so that is what we should do. Help check on Kim, and each other. Care for each other. In that way, Bill lives with us.

Thank you, Bill. Peace be with you.

Glen Milner leads legal struggles on behalf of Ground Zero. He lives in Lake Forest Park.

GROUND ZERO

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*“Faith in goodness, acting
through newly forged
lives in a nonviolent community,
is hope for our world.”*

— Jim Douglass

Nuclear Policy Adviser Lilly Adams To Keynote Ground Zero's May 9th Mothers Day Event/Webinar

By Elizabeth Murray

Ground Zero Center will host a webinar for its annual Mothers Day event on Saturday, May 9. Lilly Adams, a nuclear weapons outreach consultant for the Cambridge, MA-based Union of Concerned Scientists and formerly with Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility, will deliver the keynote address. Please check our website, at www.gzcenter.org, on how to join with the webinar and community discussion.

Ms. Adams - who received a grant from the Ploughshares Fund Women's Initiative for a project to build connections with nuclear frontline communities and amplify issues of nuclear justice, is scheduled to begin her 30-minute keynote address at 11 AM May 9th on the 'Zoom' platform. Her speech will be followed by a 30-minute Q & A discussion period. Her talk will center on



building the nuclear weapons movement for the next generation, as well as on the human impacts of nuclear weapons and connections to social justice.

Ms. Adams recently authored an article entitled “The human cost of nuclear weapons is not only a “feminine” concern” published by the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists [<https://thebulletin.org/2019/11/the-human-cost-of-nuclear-weapons-is-not-only-a-feminine-concern/>]. Her website, Nuclear Voices, hosts a database and other resources for working with nuclear

frontline communities: www.nuclear-voices.org.

Elizabeth Murray a member of Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS) and the Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action, where she serves as Member-in-Residence. Photo courtesy of Lilly Adams.