



Michigan Peace Team

Nonviolence works ... pursuing peace through active nonviolence in places of conflict

Michigan Peace Team (MPT) empowers people to engage in active non-violent peacemaking. MPT was started in 1993, in response to the growing need for civilian peacemakers both in the USA and abroad.

VISION:

- To pursue peace through active nonviolence in places of conflict

MISSION:

- Provide training in active nonviolence designed for the specific needs of participants.
- Recruit and mentor individuals seeking experience with violence reduction teams.
- Place violence reduction teams in domestic and international conflicts.

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Michigan Peace Team

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Sometimes We Dance Sometimes We Cry

by Lydia Wylie Kellermann, Member of MPT Summer 2008 Peace Team

"He [the string instrument] is my best friend. Sometimes he dances with me, other times he cries with me." The delicious meal has ended, and now Mustafa plays the string instrument for us. "We need to teach more music and less war," he says...

We were in the small village of Bil'in which is a community that is working hard to survive amidst the building of the wall, economic pressures, the destruction of their olive trees, and continual military violence. Yet, it also seems to be the place to watch for creative experiments in non-violence. This community is committed to working for an end to the wall and occupation through nonviolent means.

Every Friday they hold a nonviolent demonstration at the wall. In this case the wall is actually a series of fences that divides them from the illegal Israeli settlement cutting them off from their land and roads. So, for the past three years, they hold vigils with different creative themes. Once there was even a wedding held at the wall in protest! However, the military response has become increasingly violent and usually leaves multiple people injured weekly.

The village has called for international support at these demonstrations in hopes that it will decrease the military

violence. By law, Israeli soldiers are not allowed to use live ammunition when internationals are present. However, they do use sound bombs, tear gas, and rubber bullets. Rubber bullets are actually rubber coated steel bullets which can still injure and even kill you.

So, we went as international support to help decrease the violence and to witness the reality in Bil'in. After the Muslim noontime prayer, the protest began with a march down the street. By my guess there were about 200 people including many international and Israeli supporters. We walked down the winding road, past homes and shops, through the orchard of olive trees that dead ended into the wall. We carried signs with pictures of people who had been injured including a young man the week before who had been shot in the leg three times and has been in the hospital in bad condition having lost so much blood. When we arrived at the wall, we quickly saw the soldiers who were standing behind concrete rocks across the road...

Almost immediately when we arrived, we began to hear this screeching noise. Apparently the soldiers use this sometimes. It is a constant, high pitch screech used to try to disorient protestors and force them to leave. The loud

noise continued. People covered their ears. If you don't think noise can be violent, just listen to this. The Palestinians began to shout chants trying to be heard over the noise, though it was nearly impossible. "la, la al-jidar" or "no, no to the wall." Erinn and I stood a little distance from the wall taking in everything that we saw.

Suddenly...we began to hear shots coming from the soldiers as they started shooting tear gas canisters. They have new machines that can shoot as many as thirty at a time. We had no choice but to retreat and as fast as we could. It was one of the scariest moments I've had as I moved between olive trees. There were so many tear gas shots, it was almost impossible to know where they were falling.

Later...I thought about tear gas and what it is called. Gas that forces us to cry. Forced grief. It is not the Palestinians who need to weep anymore for this conflict. It is me. It is the soldiers on the other side of the wall. It is my country. Bush and Obama. It is Israel. And AIPAC. It is each of us who hold responsibility through our money, our political voice, or our own ignorance. We are the ones who must learn to grieve. We must stop shooting tear gas and instead cry our own tears. In freedom, we weep.



**Brenna Cussen with
a Palestinian
organizer**

*"There's a contradiction
that makes me wonder ...*

*here we are old and
young, without physical
strength, standing between
a huge war machine and a
people...*

*The work of a peace team
is important for so many
reasons. Our protective
presence allows people to
sleep more peacefully. It
enables families to love
and live more deeply. It
helps the soldiers to see
what they ought to do. It
gives all of us a glimpse of
what life should be"*

Martha Larsen



**Martha Larsen
Long Term
Team Anchor**

In Tuba, West Bank, by Brenna Cussen, Member of MPT Winter 2008 Team

On a Saturday in December 2007, three members of the Michigan Peace Team joined Palestinians, Israelis, and international peace activists who were accompanying a Palestinian farmer as he brought a tractor from the small village At Tuwani to his even smaller village of Tuba.

Since the Israeli military began occupying the West Bank in 1967, close to 500,000 Israelis have moved into settlements built on stolen Palestinian land. All of these settlements are illegal according to international law.

Palestinians have been farming and shepherding the South Hebron Hills the region of the West Bank that includes Tuba and Tuwani – since the end of the 19th century, living in homes they have built as well as in caves graciously provided by the undulating landscape.

For years, the families of Tuba, all of whom live in caves, were able to travel along a relatively flat road that connected them to Tuwani, where children attend school and adults find transportation to buy supplies. This "short" route only took them 20 minutes to walk. However, in the year 2000, Israeli settlers built the outpost of Havot Ma'on directly across this road from the larger settlement of Ma'on, built in 1984, forcing Tuba residents to pass between the two settlements in order to continue using their road. After continual harassment and beatings by settlers, Tuba residents began to take the "long" way around to Tuwani, 1-2 hours each way, walking over hills and

valleys out of the sight of the settlers. Members of the Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) and other human rights organizations began accompanying the children along the "short" road to and from school. (In 2004, when Israeli settlers beat two CPT members severely it made international news.)

Frustrated with harassment, as well as with countless other examples of persecution of Palestinians in surrounding villages, the residents have begun to organize a nonviolent campaign under the leadership of a local villager named Hafez. With Hafez's encouragement, villagers have gone through nonviolence trainings, invited Israeli and international peace activists to their homes, and led nonviolent demonstrations that have resulted in the dismantling of a major roadblock.

Hafez began to invite Israelis sympathetic to the Palestinian cause, as well as international peace activists, to Tuwani and surrounding villages for protection. Last summer, Hafez invited MPT to stay with families in Tuba and in Susiya in hopes that the presence of internationals would deter attacks by

Israeli settlers.

For the better part of July through December, MPT members stayed with families in their caves or tents. Often MPT stayed with a man named Omar, his wife, and their ten children. On one occasion when MPT was not present, Omar's wife was beaten by settlers while she was working in the fields.

As the MPT summer and fall teams had built relationships with Hafez, Omar's family, and others in the area, their participation in the December demonstration was especially meaningful. Walking with villagers who had become their friends, as well as with Israelis and other internationals, was an exhilarating experience. The demonstrators decided to walk directly beside Havot Ma'on rather than on the "short road" out of concern that the settlers would destroy the tractor. Soldiers attempted to stop the procession, but the group walked right past them! Settlers harassed the farmers, tried to grab the key to the tractor, and even stole a donkey from a Palestinian boy. Despite this Palestinian farmers were able to successfully prepare their field or January planting!



"Occupation 101" - A Review

by Andrea Podob

The documentary entitled "Occupation 101" details the daily life of Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza under Israeli occupation. The film explores some of the origins of the Israeli-Arab conflict dating back to the 1880s. It also covers major events such as the 1948 war, the Six-Day War of 1967 and the 1987 and 2000 intifadas.

The film focuses primarily on the West Bank and features Palestinians whose homes have been demolished by Israeli bulldozers as well as those who have been beaten

or have had family members killed for trying to protect their homes. It also includes interviews with Middle East scholars, historians, peace activists, humanitarian workers and journalists from both sides of the conflict. Former U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia James Akins, Executive Director of Rabbis for Human Rights Rabbi Arik Ascherman, peace activist Neta Golan and Ha'artez reporter Amira Hass are among those featured.

"Occupation 101" is well researched, has credible sources, good information

and clear statistics. It is also very moving. The film does an excellent job of portraying the Palestinians' struggle under occupation. It does however, leave out some key facts about Israel. When death tolls and statistics from violent conflicts are mentioned Israel's are often left out. The film could stand to have more information about Israel, perhaps citing some of the country's reasons for military build-up, as well as getting opinions from Israeli citizens, many of whom sympathize with the Palestinians' plight.



Celebrating a Special Friend Mary Ellen Jeffreys

On May 6, MPT sponsored a wonderful Retirement Party at "Gone Wired" to celebrate the life and work of Mary Ellen, and to thank her for her tremendous service to MPT.

Mary Ellen has been involved in MPT from the beginning. During recent years she volunteered at MPT 40 hours a week every week and then often added additional service hours on Saturday and Sunday.

In "retirement" Mary Ellen hopes to spend more time with her children and grandchildren. But she is still a very active member of MPT.

MPT's NEW Ambassadors Program:

by Nicole Rohrkemper

... Help MPT by doing what you already do - being active in the community ...

We've started a great new program for busy people who want to volunteer with Michigan Peace Team, right in their own home town! We need people all over the region—and nationwide—to represent MPT at community events. MPT is privileged to be involved with sister peace and justice organizations, and reciprocal community support is an important part of our work. Our small staff can't attend all the many events where MPT presence is needed especially those outside our area.

We need people to staff outreach tables, attend meetings as a representative, attend special events and gala dinners, and more. Many people are already doing this for MPT on an unofficial basis—we'd like to give everyone the tools and MPT resources to make this an easy thing to do, and maximize the benefits to all of us!

The Ambassadors Program is designed to do two things: (1) give you a low-commitment, flexible way to be involved with MPT when it works with YOUR schedule, and (2) help MPT continue to build relationships with organizations, support important peace and justice work, and continue to put the face of MPT out there.

"I can't be on an international team this year, but being an Ambassador is a great opportunity for someone like me," says one Ambassador candidate.

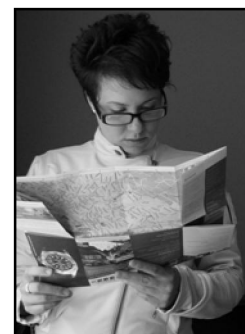
You can help MPT have an important presence at special community events, on your campus, or at the meetings of your organization!

TRAININGS (a quick and fun way to get updated on MPT's work and what's going on here) are being scheduled in your area. You'll leave feeling empowered

and comfortable representing MPT in your community. So far, there will be an Ambassador Training in Lansing on July 22nd, 008 at 6:30pm. A second training will be held later this month in the Detroit area, and we'll be working to train people in the North and West parts of the state (and further afield) as they make themselves known—so give us a call or email today!

Still not sure you want to be an Ambassador?

Come to a quick training in the coming weeks. It'll take less than an hour. Even if being an Ambassador's not for you, come to the info session to get an update on what's happening at MPT! Also, if you live in the **Detroit Area**, **you may be hearing from us soon by phone** about this opportunity. We want to reach out to our friends downstate, and take advantage of all that's happening in the Metro area!



Nicole Rohrkemper

Palestinian Olive Oil

Olive oil is great for cooking and it is a perfect gift for family and friends.

MPT has virgin olive oil available. **It is Fair Trade Palestinian Olive Oil.**

Price: \$20 per bottle. Every purchase benefits both the Palestinian farmers and the work of Michigan Peace Team.

To order and arrange pick up or delivery, please contact Darryl Haynes, MPT's olive oil coordinator.

Darryl can be reached via email at michigan-peace@team@gmail.com; or by calling 517 484-3178; or via postal services at Michigan Peace Team, 1516 Jerome, Lansing, MI 48912.

Living on Earth As If We Want to Stay Tour by Buddy Scarborough, MPT Intern

Our planet has been following a downward trend towards environmental catastrophe as our undying desires for profit and greed increase. Habitat destruction and an alarming rate of industrial development pose a monstrous threat not only to our immediate health and wellbeing, but for the wellness of future generations of humanity, or as Donna Dillman might say, "The wellness of our grandchildren."

Promoting sustainability
Michigan Peace Team had the honor of hosting two environmental activists to speak and to lead a discussion on environmental sustainability at the Downtown Lansing Library on July 16th.

The presenters were Donna Dillman and Mike Nickerson who were traveling throughout Canada and the USA on

their *Living on Earth As If We Want to Stay* tour. The couple resides in Eastern Ontario, an area threatened by uranium mining and pollution. Dillman recently went 68 days without food in protest of uranium mining in the Ardoch Algonquin First Nation Peoples' land. She demanded a community moratorium on the issue and refused food until one was called. Mike Nickerson has advocated for environmental sustainability for the past 35 years, writing a number of books, including his most recent *Life, Money, & Illusion, Living on Earth As If We Want to Stay*.

Their speaking tour focuses on environmental sustainability, the direction of our planet,



and what we can do to positively change it. Dillman and Nickerson challenge society's incessant need to grow by planting seeds of contemplation and temperance that will eventually help us achieve harmony with the Earth through sustainable practices and environmental techniques. Their speaking tour continues to inspire us to think of the future and act responsibly.

MPT thanks Donna and Mike for their sharing, for the challenges they lifted up, and for seeds planted!



"What an honor it is to be able to work for such a wonderful organization and with such a great team!"

Liz Walters

Liz Walters Has Joined the Staff of MPT

Elizabeth Walters, IHM (Liz) joined our Michigan Peace Team as a full time staff member on July 1. At the end of June, she moved to Mason, MI and is working at the Lansing MPT Office.

Liz is a member of the Sisters Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. She is deeply committed to the vision, mission, and work of MPT and she brings a lifetime of education and experience to the work of Michigan Peace Team.

Liz has facilitated nonvio-

lent conflict resolution training sessions from 1980 to the present. She is a peace organizer-activist and has been imprisoned a total of three years for nonviolent peace actions. She's a plowshares woman and has participated in two plowshares actions. She served a member of the Pax Christi Peace Team to Jeremie, Haiti during the 1994 crisis. She has also served as co-anchor for the MPT 2003, 2004, 2005 summer peace teams to the Gaza Strip and as co-anchor for the MPT December 2002 and summer 2006 peace teams to the West Bank. In addition to her social justice and peacemaking commitments, Liz has served as a high school administrator and teacher.

Educationally, Liz has a Masters Degree in Political Science from St. Louis University, a recently earned Master's Degree in Social Justice from Marygrove College; she is a certified school administrator and a certified technology/computer science teacher. At Marygrove Liz is known as 'scholar - activist.'

Here at MPT we are most grateful that she has joined the staff!

Consider joining an MPT peace team!



Elizabeth Walters in a Gaza neighborhood destroyed by Israeli Defense Forces

The Growing Field of Domestic Peace Teams

by Peter Dougherty

I checked recently in our Michigan Peace Team (MPT) files to see when we placed our first domestic violence reduction peace team. It was in June and July of 1996, in the Keewenaw Bay Indian Community in Michigan's Upper Peninsula near Baraga. There had been inner-tribal conflict that escalated to violence, and we were asked to place a team to help prevent more violence. During the six weeks our team was there, there was no violence.

We make clear that violence reduction peace teams are not part of any group involved in the event or situation - we are not "partisan." Our goal is to see that no one gets hurt or has their human rights violated. We are not there to work with police to enforce law, or work with any demonstrator or counter-demonstrator groups present. Our job is to deter or reduce violence from whatever source.

MPT has placed peace teams dozens of times. We are told that people feel safer when the peace team is present. Sometimes our interventions involve verbal diffusing; sometimes they involve bodily placing ourselves between people in potential or actual physical violence. We have had teams as small as two, and as large as more than 100.

Frequently we are asked by Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender (GLBT) groups to place a team because they often fear violence against them.

Domestic peace teams over the years have included events involving Ku Klux Klan (KKK); Neo-Nazis and other hate groups; the Timothy McVey execution; national conferences in Detroit; state conferences; big sporting game days at Michigan State University; and other events. There are many sto-

ries we can tell.

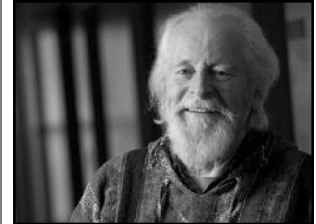
We have acted as personal nonviolent "bodyguards" when individuals are threatened. Once a peace team of three provided such accompaniment for me when my life was threatened. A few times we have been a peace team for a journalist whose life was threatened while covering events as a reporter. He was not attacked at those events.

We have done trainings to prepare groups to field peace teams in Sonoma (CA), Lansing (MI), Salt Lake City, Cincinnati, Detroit, Ann Arbor, Saginaw, Terre Haute, Grand Rapids (MI), and elsewhere.

MPT, a member of Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) North America, is working with NP groups who want to create peace teams and receiving the training in preparation.

MPT wants to be a resource

to help communities across the country create local peace teams as an alternative to violence in confronting violence in their communities. Contact us if you and your group might be interested in forming a domestic peace team or have a peace team training.



Peter Dougherty



A man wearing KKK insignia and his girl friend were attacked by a crowd at a Klan rally in Ann Arbor. Peace Team members encircled them and escorted them from harms way.

As they moved toward their car, one of the peace team members said: "I'd like to point out that an African American, an Asian American and a queer Jew just saved your life today."

The girl friend said: "You are helping us here today, so maybe we all do bleed the same blood."

Related to Sheri Wander by Ben Bieber



Orientation for Peace Team serving at Pride Day, June 28, 2008

The MPT Intern Program is a win-win situation. Interns get a real feel for what it's like to run a grass roots organizing community and to form peace teams to solve the problem of war through nonviolence. Past MPT interns have told us that they get an excellent education and it's free!

Mary Hanna

Are You Looking for an Internship Program?

If so ... we hope you will consider spending three months in the intern program at Michigan Peace Team. MPT internship experiences bridge the gap between theory and practice. The intern program explores the power of nonviolence. It is designed to increase participants' knowledge and skill in community outreach and peace team organizing. It is a supervised work experience in a social justice organization that is respected across the country and around the planet. MPT interns identify personal learning objectives and assess their internship experience.

At MPT, internships are a crucial part of our workforce. As an intern, your voluntary contribution will be integral to the mission and work of MPT. As an intern at MPT you'll have real responsibility, real work, and real opportunities to help build more peaceful and just communities ...

If you are interested and want more information, go to <http://www.michiganpeaceteam.org/> and click *Internships*, or contact Mary Hanna at MPT's Office. The phone number is 517484-3178



Whitney-Ann Mulhauser

Whitney-Ann Mulhauser - MPT Summer 2008 Intern

Whitney-Ann Mulhauser will be starting her final year at Michigan State University this coming fall. Dual majoring within MSU's James Madison College, Whitney is studying Social Relations and Policy as well as Comparative Cultures and Politics.

James Madison Students spend one semester interning

with an organization of their choice where they are able to apply what they have learned in the classroom to the professional world, while earning college credit. It is through James Madison and their field experience program that Whitney first heard of Michigan Peace Team.

Whitney is an intern for the Summer of 2008, but hopes to continue to work with MPT after completing her internship. After graduating next spring, Whitney hopes to go with Michigan Peace Team on an international team to Israel/Palestine. In the fall of 2009 she plans to join the United States Peace Corps and continue to work in the peace and justice field.



Buddy Scarborough

Buddy Scarborough - MPT Summer 2008 Intern

Buddy Scarborough has been an intern with MPT since early June. He is a student at Alma College, where he will enter his final year in the fall, studying Sociology. He is also a member of the Alma Scots football team.

Through a grant organization at Alma Buddy was provided the funds which made interning at MPT possible.

The grant was awarded on merit of the internship, its impact on society, and how the internship would contribute to the growth of the student.

At MPT Buddy has been involved with a domestic peace team, as well as the organization of an environmental speaking event in Downtown Lansing.

Upon Graduation in the Spring of 2009 Buddy plans on entering the US Peace Corps. Very passionate about education and childhood he hopes to work with educational development throughout the world. Eventually he would like to work for an organization like the Peace Corps or UNICEF in addressing global social issues.

Revisiting the Interns and Appreciating Humor

Our MPT Summer 2008 Interns bring the gifts of laughter and humor to MPT. For example, when we first asked them for their bios, they had lots of fun composing ... and we in turn laughed lots. Here's PORTION of what each submitted...Special note—this is a playful, fun-loving spoof.

Buddy wrote ...

Buddy Scarborough grew up in the deep forests of Sasquatchland, raised by a band of savage mountain wolves where he learned to bathe by only licking himself and hunt using only his teeth. The cold weather of the northern forests finally got to him, and he wandered south into the Lansing area. Ostracized because of his different lifestyle Buddy was forced to learn to walk on two feet, bath using water and soap, and use grocery stores. It was late one night on a full moon when he was howling for his comrades. He thought he heard a response somewhere along Michigan Avenue, and followed it near the Resurrection Church....

Whitney wrote ...

Whitney-Ann Mulhauser was born into the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus and became their lead trapeze artist by the age of nine. By the time she was 11 Whitney had mastered the art of juggling flaming bowling pins, tightrope walking, equilibristics (a combination of juggling and gymnastics!), and chapeaugraphy. In 2001, during a routine animal act involving two elephants, a small horse, and an assortment of birds, Whitney's affinity for nonviolent conflict resolution was born. As Oliver, the star elephant, completed his performance Manseu, a purple BIRD OF PARADISE, was startled by the accidental ejection of Wilbert, the human cannonball ...

Up-coming Events



Join us early this fall for a special Michigan Peace Team event in the Metro Detroit Area! Highlights will include delicious hors d'oeuvres created by a local chef, cocktails, an art and photography exhibit and auction with art from the region and by team members--and more! Recent team members will share picture presentations and stories about their time in Palestine/Israel. Come meet MPT friends and family, fellow peace activists, and community members. This very special event will take place at a lovely private home in Romeo-- watch your email and make sure you're on the list to get the details and an invitation!



MPT Peace Team Opportunities:

- Fall Harvest Team
- Winter Team
- Spring Team
- Summer Team

For more information contact:

Nicole Rohrkemper
517 484-3178

Help Us Continue the Dream

The generous GIFTS from friends of MPT support the vision, mission, and work of MPT. Without your gifts the teams in Chiapas, Palestine, Canada, and here at home would not be possible. In these harsh economic times money and resources are scarce. If you are able to help MPT we would be MOST grateful.

ONE TIME GIFT:

Name _____

I am proud to be part of the MPT community. Here is my donation of \$ _____ (OR)

MPT SUSTAINER'S CIRCLE:

You can make a tax deductible contribution to MPT on a monthly basis through your credit card. Even \$10 a month or more would help us continue the mission. Just let us know how much you would like to donate each month, and send us your information below. We will deduct the specified amount from your credit card each month and you will receive a monthly notice. It's a wonderful way to keep MPT going, with little hassle for you.

Yes! I wish to join the MPT Sustainer's Circle and make an ongoing contribution of \$ _____ each month to be charged to my credit card.

_____ Visa (or)

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Card Number _____

Expiration Date _____

Name as it appears on the card _____

Signature _____

If you prefer to sign up electronically go to michiganpeaceteam.org and click Network For Good and select one time or regular.

MICHIGAN PEACE TEAM

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Loretta Johnson
Long Term
Team Anchor

MPT is on the Web!
michiganpeaceteam.org

...pursuing peace through active nonviolence in places of conflict through active nonviolence in

We are grateful beyond words for your continued support on behalf of Michigan Peace Team. Your commitment, your involvement, your gifts of time, energy, talents, and money, and your friendship are at the heart of MPT.

We look forward to continued collaboration in the days, weeks, and months to come

Your MPT Staff,

- Peter Dougherty
- Mary Hanna
- Darryl Haynes
- Martha Larsen
- Whitney-Ann Mulhauser, Intern
- Nicole Rohrkemper
- Buddy Scarborough, Intern
- Pat Valaer, Database
- Elizabeth Walters, IHM



**PLEASE LET US KNOW YOUR PREFERENCE
DETACH, AND MAIL TO MICHIGAN PEACE TEAM**

For the future:

€ I would prefer to receive the MPT Newsletter in electronic form, via my email.
My current email address is _____

€ I want to receive the Michigan Peace Team Newsletter via postal services– like this one



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