

Michigan Peace Team

Michigan Peace Team
808 W. Barnes
Lansing, MI 48910
517 484-3178

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Women of Conscience, Women of Courage, Women Who Challenge: Another World Is Possible

In this newsletter readers meet some great women including the Michigan Peace Team 2012 Signature Event guest speakers and awardees. Featured are:

- women who embrace the power of nonviolence in social change work;
- women who work to abolish war and activate peace;
- women who communicate their love, hope, wisdom through teaching, preaching, organizing, meditating, and protesting;
- women who are mothers, grandmothers, sisters, friends, and wonderful companions on the journey to peace on earth; and,
- women who touch the heart and inspire us to action.

Some of the women featured in this newsletter share their great visions in their writing and speaking; others communicate through music and the arts; others give their freedom and even their lives in the pathway to peace. All represent communities of women nonviolently working for peace, justice, sustainability.

For this newsletter we think it's best to refrain from focusing on Michigan Peace Team women. Instead in the spirit of one of the MPT goals, we lift up women connected with other peace and nonviolence communities.

It is also important to note that Michigan Peace Team does not have religious affiliation. MPT seeks a just world grounded in nonviolence and respect for the interconnectedness of all life. In this spirit the Michigan Peace Team community delights in walking with people whose commitment to nonviolence arises out of diverse beliefs and traditions. Women featured in this newsletter are exemplars!

**We hope that you enjoy the newsletter and
plan to join us at MPT's 2012 Signature Event on April 29th!**



A Circle of Sisters: Women Peacemakers and Those Who Inspire Them

By Kim Redigan

Sojourner Truth. Dorothy Day. Fannie Lou Hamer. Viola Liuzzo. And the countless number whose names we do not know. These are our sisters who have labored to build a better world. The peacemakers, the prophets, the dreamers, the do-ers. Many have paid a steep price for speaking out with their lives. For daring to dream that another world is possible. For loving a world that seems intent on self-destruction.

In this issue, Michigan Peace Team celebrates women who work for peace. We believe that this work is always done in community and that no one's work is more important than anyone else's. We believe that writer-activist Audre Lorde got it right when she wrote that "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house." The old tools of hierarchal structures and hero worship need to be retired and replaced with the new tools (or so old that they look like new) of consensus and cooperation. The old linear model of activism must be bent into the shape of a circle. We need to do the challenging work of replacing ego-based activism with spiritual activism that comes from a deeper place – a place that requires a new set of tools.

That said, we draw strength from one another. From those who have gone before us in the past to those who walk beside us today. Without succumbing to hero worship, we recognize that we have strong ancestors and allies in this work who inspire us and call us to our more courageous selves. I think most of these women would agree with Dorothy Day that they do not want to be considered saints, a designation that places them in a rarefied atmosphere far removed from the messiness of the work before us. This too easily lets the rest of us off the hook by placing us in the disempowering position of admirers rather than partners in the work.

In that spirit, I asked several of our friends, all women of peace, to say a few words about the sisters who have informed their work and inspired them for the long haul. This is what they had to say:

Although I never met her in person, Barbara Deming's life story, her fine writing, and the commentary she inspired among other peace activists have been a tremendous source of guidance for me in pursuing what Barbara termed "the further invention of nonviolence." She developed her views

about pacifism and nonviolence as a participant in movements to oppose segregation, end the U.S. war in Vietnam, disarm the U.S. nuclear arsenals and uphold the rights of lesbians and gays. An anthology of Barbara's writings, entitled "We Are All Part of One Another," contains essays that have taught me indispensable lessons about fusing assertive anger over the ravages of war with empathy and compassion for all who are involved in the violence, including the warmakers.

Kathy Kelly, Noble Peace Prize Nominee, Co-founder of Voices in the Wilderness and Voices for Creative Nonviolence.

My greatest She/ros are Grand Rapids Dominican sisters

Ardeth Platte, Carol Gilbert and the recently deceased Jackie Hudson. Their tireless opposition to nuclear weapons and their willingness to spend years in our miserable U.S. prisons have been my inspiration since I first had the blessing of meeting them in 1983.

Sigrid Dale, activist, St. Leo's Bishop Gumbleton Pax Christi, Peace Action, Gray Panthers

Marianne Williamson, an electric speaker and writer, motivates us to create a peaceful, nonviolent world for our children. At a recent appearance at Occupy LA, while encouraging the group to remain nonviolent, she said "Women hold the space for compassion and love." She empowers us to be strong, courageous, knowledgeable, vocal and smart as

we come together to tip the world toward nonviolent solutions such as creating a Department of Peace.

Colleen Mills, Citizens for Peace President

So many women have inspired me throughout my life! I am grateful for the lives and examples of Dorothy Eldridge, who as director of NJ SANE (now Peace Action), mentored and encouraged me when I was a college intern there; Juanita Nelson and Marion Bromley, who were war tax resisters and founders of the Peacemakers group before I was born; and all the women who have gone to prison in the struggle for a peaceful and nuclear-free future.

Felice Cohen-Joppa, activist and editor of The Nuclear Resister

Continued on page 3



A Circle of Sisters continued

The story of Peace Pilgrim moves me profoundly, and, as a woman, I am sad that I did not know her story or embrace it sooner. She has definitely become one of my She-roes. Having the innate ability to perceive personal freedom at such an early age makes her a very powerful example to anyone who is awake or awakening to the true nature of being human. That she embraced Peace as a way of life, I'm certain has benefited us all. Carolyn Myss has been one of my she-roes. She wrote *Why People Don't Heal and How they Can* and many other books at this point. Her ability to articulate the Mind-Body-Spirit connection with real stories and utilize her own personal gift of intuition turned my perception of self-healing inside out! She was the first "New Ager" to help us see "how" our disease is very individual and that the healing in turn has to be unique and specific to the individual. Marianne Williamson is one of my She-roes. Beginning with *A Woman's Worth*, her books have helped me see my way through many difficult life passages. As prolific as she is as a writer, her gift is speaking live. Her tremendous power and ability to surrender to the moment while speaking makes for spine-tingling and spontaneous healing. Others would have to include my mother, Michelle Obama and Tracy Chapman.

Ruby Woods, artist, healer, massage therapist, peace walker

From ages 19 to 38 as an Erie Benedictine and ever since, I

have been deeply inspired by Joan Chittister's clarity of vision and commitment to articulating Truth to Power; her witness in the Catholic Church as a feminist leader who is not afraid to challenge the status quo, while honoring the prophetic tradition of its Cloud of Witnesses; her power to speak, teach and preach with unwavering conviction; and her gift of Irish wit which often accompanies the wisdom stories she tells. She is a spiritual guide to me and to all women who are searching for a way to live in this most complex, often misogynous world. Thank you, Joan, for bringing the light of Christ to us all.

I have also been influenced by Helen Casey, former State Council chair and honored matriarch of Pax Christi Michigan, who worked tirelessly to bring the Peace of Christ to her family, to every church and every civic organization, and to every person she engaged with. Not only did she fully live the Peace of Christ, but she had the courage to stand up and be arrested for her beliefs as was Jesus - so that her grandchildren would not have to go to war. She inspired me with her vision, her action for peace with justice, her unrelenting spirit of nonviolence, her unconditional love of others, and her life-giving humor while struggling to help create a better world for us all. Helen was one of my dearest friends, and I deeply miss her presence. May she rest in the Peace of Christ.

Joan Tirak, Coordinator of Pax Christi Michigan.

Power and Perseverance of Women

By Annette Thomas

When we think of influential women, we often focus on those who are highlighted in the media - extraordinary women who have accomplished the unimaginable in the face of conflict and adversity - women who chose to risk their own lives to better the lives of those who otherwise would have no chance of a decent future. These women have been showcased throughout the ages - strong women who have secured a spot in the history books.

Many important women of peace, though, have flown under the radar. Mothers, grandmothers, daughters, sisters and friends who have shown us the ways of peace, but will never see their name in print, have dedicated their lives to ensure a just and peaceful existence for those who have been thrown into circumstances under which they have no control. These women deserve to be lifted up and recognized for their outstanding efforts towards the well-being of others, many of whom they will never come in direct contact with but whose future depends on their actions.

One of many influential women of our time who stands out in my mind as being an exemplary peace-maker and woman of courage is Emily Sutherland, who takes girls off the streets of Rio de Janeiro and provides them with shelter and an education. There are many women throughout the world and throughout history who have been quietly and ardently ensuring that humankind survive the ravishes of war, disaster and forces of evil by banding and working together to establish a strong sisterhood that cannot and will not, under any circumstances, ever be broken. Such is the power and perseverance of a woman.



The Power of Hands

By Kim Redigan

Women,

Do not underestimate the power of your hands.

These hands that have rocked cradles are now being asked to rock the world.

Our hands, dear sisters, have more power than we know.

Hands that have hauled babies and hoisted picket signs.

Hands that have known the pain of hard work and the pinch of handcuffs.

Rough hands, blistered hands, tired hands.

Calloused hands that have labored in fields and lifted in factories.

Hands that have painted poems and pounded dough.

Hands that have wiped away tears and waved off despair.

Hands raised in prayer to ward off the gods of war.

Today, my sisters, these are the angry hands of a mother saying . . .

Khallas! Enough! No Mas!



You men with the soft white hands will not touch our children.

You men who clutch your money and your war plans and your business deals with one hand while reaching for our children with the other, do not know the power of a mother's angry hands.

You with the smooth clean hands who build bombs and wave bibles should fear the strength of a mother's angry hands.

A mother's resisting hands.

A mother's holy hands.

Hands that will beat your missiles into plowshares.

Hands that will tear down your war machine.

Hands that will pull our children back from the abyss.

Hands that will refuse to back down.

Hands given over to love.

Dear sisters, we have power in these hands of ours that is greater than we know.

Let us reach for the hands of our sisters around the world.

Let us join hands with the women of Afghanistan,, Mexico, Palestine and Israel.

Let us unite our hands with our sisters in Africa, Asia, the Americas and Europe and create a circle of love and peace and justice and hope.

A circle wide enough to embrace this generation of children and the generations to come.

Together let us raise our angry and loving hands and say to the merchants of death:

Khallas! Enough! No Mas!

MPT 2012 Signature Event Awards and Awardees

Organizational Award

Marygrove College Master in Social Justice Program

The Marygrove College Masters in Social Justice Program flows from the mission of Marygrove College. It gives students the opportunity to become scholar-activists in the field of social justice. It also seeks to build competencies and skills to transform social, political, and economic structures toward a more just and peaceful society. In addition, this program seeks to create an internal culture of justice among the candidates. From holding public office to building a community center for AIDS patients to advocating on behalf of female veterans, Marygrove Social Justice grads are making a difference in Detroit and beyond. The program has also opened its doors and generously shared its resources with organizations that promote social justice and human rights. Marygrove has become a center for peace, social justice and sustainability efforts and events.

Scholar Activist Award

Dr. Gloria House

Gloria House, Ph.D. is Professor of Humanities and African American Studies at the University of Michigan, Dearborn, and former Director of the African and African American Studies Program. Dr. House is also Associate Professor Emerita in the Interdisciplinary Studies Department of Wayne State University, where she was a member of the faculty for 27 years. Dr. House is an accomplished and widely published poet. Since the 1960's, when she worked as a student in the Southern civil rights movement (field secretary in the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in Lowndes County, Ala.), Dr. House has been actively engaged in African American community development and Third World solidarity causes.

Professor House's publications include two poetry collections from Broadside Press, *Blood River* (1983) and *Rainrituals* (1989), a third book of poems published by Third World Press, *Shrines*, (2004), a book of commentary on the political uses of environment in the United States, *Tower and Dungeon: A Study of Place and Power in American Culture*, and a co-edited anthology of major poets of the Black Consciousness era, *A Different Image: The Legacy of Broadside Press* (Broadside Press, 2005). Her most recent publications include an essay, "We'll Never Turn Back," in *Hands on the Freedom Plow: Personal Accounts of Women in SNCC*, University of Illinois Press, 2010, and a history of the African American resort settlement, *Home Sweet Sanctuary: Idlewild Families Celebrate a Century*, 2011.

Activist Award

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom – Michigan Branch

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom was founded in 1915 during World War I, with Jane Addams as its first president. WILPF works to achieve through peaceful means world disarmament, full rights for women, racial and economic justice, an end to all forms of violence, and to establish those political, social, and psychological conditions which can assure peace, freedom, and justice for all. WILPF works to create an environment of political, economic, social and psychological freedom for all members of the human community, so that true peace can be enjoyed by all. Michigan WILPF has taken a lead in educating and working for peace, justice, and human rights. Last year, WILPF organized a well-attended consultation on women, peace, and security at Marygrove College in preparation for the U.S. State Department's implementation of United Nations Resolution 1325. Whether holding programs on issues of women and peace or marching in the streets on behalf of democracy, WILPF is out front in advocating for a more just and peaceful world.

Rachel Corrie Award

Palestinian Freedom Riders

The Freedom Riders of the American Civil Rights Movement are light and hope in U.S. history. A young, mixed-race group of courageous protesters came together to challenge segregated transit in the U.S. South.

50 years a later, a group of young Palestinians were inspired by this example and chose to stand up to segregated transit in the West Bank with nonviolent, civil disobedience.

In return for their courageous acts, the Freedom Riders in the West Bank were met by violent arrest. Freedom Riders **Huwaida Arraf**, Fadi Quran, Nadeem Al-Sharbate, Badee' Dwak, Basel Al-Araj and Mazin Qumsiyeh were arrested and held for hours at the Atarot Prison. All the Freedom Riders did to warrant arrest was to take a bus from one place in the Occupied Territory to another, using public transportation. While Israelis are allowed to come and go in the Occupied Territory, and while they settle on occupied land in contradiction to international law, Palestinians' movement in their own land is severely restricted, and even criminalized.

Profile on Ann Wright By Annette Thomas



Ann Wright, a retired Army Colonel and diplomat, grew up in Arkansas, receiving her law degree at the University of Arkansas and earning a master's degree in National Security from the U.S. Naval

War College. Airborne qualified, Ann served thirteen years in the U.S. Army and sixteen in the Army Reserves.

In 1987, she joined the Foreign Service and served as U.S. Deputy Ambassador in Sierra Leone, Micronesia, Afghanistan and Mongolia. She received the State Department's Award for Heroism for helping evacuate 2,500 people from the civil war in Sierra Leone, the largest evacuation since Saigon. Ann was on the first team to reopen the Embassy in Afghanistan and was assigned projects in Somalia, Kyrgyzstan, Grenada, Micronesia and Nicaragua.

On the eve of the Iraq invasion, Ann submitted her resignation, stating that without U.N. Security Council authorization, the occupation of an Arab country would be in direction violation of international law.

Ann Wright is a prominent Peace activist who spoke out on the war in Iraq and the Israeli attack on Gaza. She helped organize the Gaza Freedom March. In May of 2010, Ann was on board the Gaza flotilla that was attacked by Israeli military and was organizer for The Audacity of Hope, a U.S. boat bound for Gaza.

Wright served as judge at a session of the International Commission of Inquiry On Crimes Against Humanity Committed by the Bush Administration. She was also recipient of the first annual Truthout Freedom and Democracy Award.

Profile on Hedy Epstein By Annette Thomas



Hedy Epstein (Wachenheimer) was born on August 15, 1924 in Freiburg, Germany. An only child, she was 8 when Adolf Hitler came to power.

After years of unsuccessful attempts to leave Germany as a family, her parents would finally find a way to have Hedy ferried to safety in England on a children's transport. She would never be reunited with her family, who were deported to Nazi occupied France. Able to send one page letters every week for two years, her parents would communicate with her but were careful not to share details of the atrocious living conditions. In 1942, her parents and other family members were sent to Auschwitz and never heard from again. An aunt and uncle managed to emigrate to the United States and would be her only living relatives.

When the war ended, Hedy returned to Germany to work for the U.S. Government at the Nuremberg Trial, which adjudicated cases of physicians accused of performing experiments on concentration camp inmates. After moving to the United States, she became involved in civil and human rights and social justice. A peace delegate, Hedy traveled to Guatemala, Nicaragua and Cambodia. Visiting the West Bank five times, she participated in several nonviolent demonstrations opposing Israel's brutal occupation of Palestine, likening anti-Israel demonstrations to the anti-war and civil rights movements of the 1960's and 1970's. Hedy began public speaking in 1970, sharing her experiences of the Holocaust, Nuremberg Trial and trips to Palestine. Outspoken on issues of human and civil rights, she has been widely published in both German and English. She has received many awards.

WOMEN OF
WOMEN OF
WOMEN who
another work

Michigan Peace Team's

Sunday, Aprils 29, 2012 • 3 pm - 4 pm Auction

Greenfield Manor Banquet Hall 4770 Greenfield, Dearborn, MI

Awards: MPT Activist Award - Women's International League for Peace and Freedom | MPT Organizational Award

Rachel Corrie Award - Pa

Profile on Noura Erakat

By Annette Thomas



Noura Erakat is a Palestinian attorney, human rights advocate, published poet, photographer and playwright. She holds law and undergraduate degrees from the University of California at Berkeley.

While at Berkeley, Noura helped launch the divestment campaign with the Students for Justice in Palestine. She's studied and worked in Israel/Palestine and interned at Adala, the Center for Arab Minority Rights. Noura also volunteered in the refugee camps of Lebanon and Palestine.

An adjunct professor of International Human Rights Law in the Middle East at Georgetown University, Noura served as Legal Counsel for a Congressional Subcommittee in the House of Representatives. She is the US-based

Legal Advocacy Coordinator at Badil Center for Palestinian Refugee and Residency Rights

Noura has appeared on Al Jazeera International, NBC's "Politically Incorrect," MSNBC, and Fox's "The O'Reilly Factor." She received a New Voices Fellowship to work as the grassroots organizer and legal advocate at the U.S. Campaign to End the Israeli Occupation.

Her publications include: "Litigating the Arab-Israeli Conflict: The Politicization of U.S. Federal Courts" in the Berkeley Law Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Law, "Arabiya Made Invisible: Between the Marginalization of Agency and the Silencing of Dis-

sent" in a Syracuse Press anthology, and "BDS in the USA: 2001-2010," in the Middle East Report. She participated in the National Lawyers' Guild Fact-Finding Mission to Gaza in February 2009 to investigate Israeli war crimes committed during Operation Cast Lead. She is a Co-Editor of Jadaliyya.com.

**Conscience
COURAGE
Challenge**
World is possible

Profile on Siham Awada Jafaar

As a Public Relations and Communications Specialist and Consultant, Siham Awada Jaafar is a well respected and established practitioner in both community and media relations.



Siham is Co-President and Principle Partner at 3D Consulting and Communications.

She is a practicing mediator in civil, probate and domestic relations mediation and is currently an executive Board of Directors Member for the Wayne Mediation Center.

Siham hosts and produces the cable network shows "Community Connection with Siham Awada Jaafar" as well as the cable show "Off the Cuff" with two wonderful co-hosts, Basima Farhat and Jennifer Giering on WDHT cable network servicing the Metro-Detroit Area.

Siham is the Chairwoman of the ACCESS Coalition against Domestic Violence, a founding member of Friends United, an executive secretary for the Congress of Arab American Organizations (CAAO), and an advisory board member of the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee. She is the coordinator of Images and Perceptions, an educational diversity workshop geared towards dispelling stereotypes and misconceptions about Arab Americans.

s 2012 Signature Event

opens ● 4 pm - 7 pm Program, Dinner & Auction

48126 ● Price: \$50 per person; \$500 table of ten; \$35 student

**d - Marygrove College Masters in Social Justice Program | Edward Said Scholar-Activist Award - Dr. Gloria House
Palestinian Freedom Riders**

Making Possible the Way Forward

By Margaret Brennan, IHM

The documents of Vatican II guided Margaret Brennan to widen horizons of the educational ministries of the IHM congregation to embrace the needs of a changing culture and a global world. Touching others with her deep conviction that a faithful prayer life inspires and supports active ministry, she encouraged experimentation with new patterns of prayer and of apostolic ministry. Her zeal led others to Grenada, Honduras, South Africa, Vietnam, and the Natives Americans of the U.S.A. Her Leadership in national and international organizations enabled her to voice the realization of women that they are and can be vital forces in shaping the present and the future.



Peacemaking can take many different forms ... and has a variety of faces. I have, unfortunately, never been a "peacemaker" who can stand *next-to* or even in the vicinity of Ardeth Platte, OP, the Berrigans, Elizabeth Walters, IHM, Dom Elder Camera, Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, and so many others whose lives bear such striking witness and testimony to this most powerful of beatitudes.

But what I *was* able to do was to make possible the way and means for some very significant others (particularly IHM Sisters) to make a difference in the immediate post Vatican years in a number of challenging areas of peacemaking.

Being in Congregational Leadership in the wake of the Council was to experience in a particular way the great tidal-wave of change that washed over the Church and left it (and us) forever changed. The opening lines of the *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* became engraved in all the myriad ways that the Council would call us to change.

The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the women and men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these too are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. (n10)

In this powerful challenge we began consciously to commit ourselves to works of peace and of justice, believing in the words of the Council that *"the human person deserves to be preserved and that human society deserves to be renewed."* While always seeing themselves as educators of this truth in formal education, many IHM women entered into ministries that brought them into solidarity with the poor and afflicted in many other walks of life.

A whole world opened itself before us ... and we claimed it as our own.

Aside from our inborn commitment as a Religious Congregation to education in a formal sense, IHM's took up the challenge to join ranks with those whose way and circumstances of life did not allow for even the basic necessities ... not only physically but mentally and emotionally as well.

St. Thomas Aquinas defined peace as "the tranquility of order." In the wake of Vatican II and in obedience to Pope Paul VI who called all religious to take up the cry of the poor, women religious, diocesan and order priest, and a large number of laity as well, travelled to third world countries and areas in the United States where countless numbers of women, men and children lived in sub-human conditions.

In those early years after the Council, the late sixties and early seventies, IHM Sisters joined the ranks of those who walked with the African American community in the momentous march to Selma ... others took part in the clarion call of Cesar Chavez and the plight of the farmworkers for human rights and just wages.

But not all calls to simplicity of life and commitment to causes of justice bore the fruit of joyous commitment for the community at large. In 1974, the media in the United States had been highlighting the state of famine in Africa, noting that if we as citizens ate less meat, more grain could be available to the starving nations of the world. The swift negative response to the suggestion that we have four meatless days a week in order to make more grain available to the starving nations told another story however! Nevertheless our consciousness had been raised to causes and effects that have world-wide connotations.

Continued page 10

Being Peacemaker

By Joni McCoy

May we who believe in human rights and the dignity of every individual, continue with a deeper commitment to peace instead of war, to sharing power and wealth instead of hoarding, to serving rather than climbing."

I read this framed quote hanging on the wall of a Saginaw friend taken from a letter to the editor written by Ardeth Platte to the *Saginaw News*. Ardeth, my mentor, is remembered in Saginaw as a very effective City Council woman. She served as Mayor Pro Tem before leaving Saginaw where she once brought a rat to the council table to demonstrate the situation in the inner city where she lived with the poor. She is a righteous woman with a Divine enlightenment.

In Saginaw, Ardeth Platte organized the Home for Peace and Justice, a peacemaking community, which still exists today. This community of peacemakers organized against the Wurtsmith SAC base [Strategic Air Command] in Oscoda, Michigan, and Ardeth's civil resistance at this base resulted in jail and prison sentences. After her prison experience, Ardeth moved to Oscoda to continue direct action at the base. When that base closed, she moved to KI Sawyer SAC base in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and with that closing, she left a nuclear weapons-free Michigan and joined the Jonah House community in Baltimore, Maryland. While living at Jonah House, Ardeth joined several Plowshare Actions, resulting in many years in prison for her moral obedience.

Ardeth has given her life for peace, abolition of nuclear weapons, and an end to war forever. She is an apostle of peace like King and Gandhi. She continues to work in opposition to the nuclear weapon systems at the Pentagon, White House, and major sites throughout the United States. She is a woman of conscience, courage, hope and a lover of all.

By Ardeth Platte, OP

Every day in every way I desire to be a peacemaker. It is an endless journey on Earth, hopefully to reach fulfillment upon crossing the thin line to life eternal. My thoughts, words, and deeds need an enormous amount of contemplation and listening, practicing and forgiving, asking forgiveness and reconciling. I've begun to believe deeply in these seventy five years of life that every day is a new beginning for prayer: individually, communally, and in listening to and watching the news. All parts of the global village affect me and I affect it. I thank God for the ministry in the inner city in the sixties. That is where I observed poverty and destitution, racism and classism, effects of war and killing, injustices like redlining, unfair housing practices, exclusionary policies, etc. Young men were coming back in body bags from the Vietnam War and young people were being killed and injured in the war zones of the neighborhood. I was deeply touched by the Movements in these times: Civil Rights, Anti-War, Farmworker struggles, Nonviolence formation of grassroots people.

Scripture, my faith, my spiritual life, real dependency on the Divine became essential and my ministry and mission began to make sense. These were the serious times and the wonderful times in my life. Saginaw, MI became my love and all the people in it. When one finds love of geography, times and people, there is a new desire to become a peacemaker and to devote one's life to a cause bigger than one's self. Nuclear weapons coming to Michigan, experiencing Bishop Dingman's call to a Faith and Resistance Retreat and Action, and working with strong peacemakers in other parts of Michigan who developed a coalition to assure that the Great Lakes Wonderland would reject these weapons of mass destruction was plenty of motivation to make the state nuclear-free.

Yes, I am in this struggle for the long haul, knowing that nuclear holocaust is the ultimate. It is a planned omnicide. It is also the strongest threat in the world



that builds inimical relationships with nations, assures interventions on other continents for domination of resources for our bloated lifestyle, contaminates soil, water and air, and assures that wars will be fought. It is continuing in outer space where war is being planned from space, through space and into space. In completing the "kill chain" there, the planners propose the control, ownership, domination and exploitation of the heavens. I feel that every injustice, every violence is connected in some way with this ongoing taproot for mass murder. Earth, people, animals, all of creation is too sacred for me to sit passively by

and not give my life for the cause of nuclear abolition and an end to war forever. Then with the fair sharing of abundant resources there will be the possibility of food, water, health care, education, enhancement of the infrastructures, care for Earth and basic human needs will be met for all of my sisters and brothers. Peace be within all of us in the world.

Making Possible the Way continued

Answering the cry of the poor in lands torn by war and strife led the congregation to serve the plight of the thousands of orphans as a result of the war in Vietnam. With another IHM Sister, Lorraine Humphrey, we travelled to Vietnam, to see for ourselves. As a result, two IHM Sisters served in orphanages, were present at the fall of Saigon, and accompanied many, many children on the Babylift that brought them to the United States.

About the same time, two other IHM Sisters went to India to work in Mothers Teresa's Refuge for the almost countless abandoned children who lived in the streets of Calcutta. Working in the Home allowed two of Mother Teresa's sisters to go

to Bangladesh to serve those made homeless by death-dealing floods.

These were all rich years in the service of peace and justice to which very generous IHM Sisters responded with joy and alacrity.

Aside from these more "colorful" examples, many IHM's worked steadily at home promoting the causes of peace and justice. ... And in the end, here at the Motherhouse where retired sisters continue their ministry of service in countless ways, an aura of peace and peacemaking reflects the "the tranquility of order" that is its meaning.

The Sisters , Mission, and Support for Michigan Peace Team

Adrian Dominicans

Prepared by Mary Pat Dewey, OP

Mission

In the Mission of Jesus we Adrian Dominican Sisters discover and identify ourselves as women called together to share faith and life with one another and sent into our world to be with others bearers and recipients of his love, co-creators of his justice and peace.

Vision

We Dominican Preachers of Adrian impelled by the Gospel and outraged by the injustices of our day **seek truth, make peace, reverence life.** We confront racism, confront systems where women are denied equality and full personhood, stand in solidarity with people who are poor, practice nonviolent peacemaking, promote lay leadership, live right relationships with Earth Community.

Dominican Sisters have long supported Michigan Peace Team through our Ministry Outreach Program. Go to

<http://www.adriandominicans.org>

Sisters of Mercy

Prepared by Karen Donahue, RSM

Animated by the Gospel and their foundress Catherine McAuley' passion for those who are poor, the Sisters of Mercy commit their lives and resources to act in solidarity with persons who are economically poor, especially women and children, women seeking fullness of life in church and society and with each other as they embrace their multicultural and international reality. This commitment impels them to develop and act from a multicultural and international perspective, speak with a corporate voice, work for systemic change, practice nonviolence, act in harmony and interdependence with all creation, and call one another to continual conversion in our lifestyle and ministries (Direction Statement). The Sisters of Mercy have identified five Critical Concerns which call them to continual conversion. These are non-violence, anti-racism, Earth, women and immigration.

Congregation of St. Joseph

From the CSJ Website

Our mission flows from the purpose for which the congregation exists: We live and work that ALL people may be united with God and with one another. It is rooted in the mission of Christ, the same mission which continually unfolds in His church, *"That all may be one as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; I pray that they may be one in Us."* (John 17:21)

IHM Sisters

From the IHM Website

Mission: Urged by the love of God, we choose to work with others to build a culture of peace and right relationship among ourselves, with the Church and with the whole Earth community.

Vision: The IHM community envisions and is committed to bringing about the dream of God on planet Earth through respect for, nurturing of and promoting liberation and well-being of all persons and all of nature as God's good creation.

Medea Benjamin

By Liz Walters



Small in stature, Medea Benjamin is a giant in peace and social justice movements. She is co-founder of GLOBAL EXCHANGE, an international human rights organization and CODEPINK, a women-initiated grassroots peace and social justice movement working to end U.S. funded wars and occupations, to challenge militarism

globally, and to redirect our resources into health care, education, green jobs and other life-affirming activities.

During the 1990s, Medea focused on the problem of unfair trade as promoted by the World Trade Organization. She helped place the issue of sweatshops on the national and global agenda. She was a key player in the campaign that won a \$20 million settlement from 27 US clothing retailers for the use of sweatshop labor in Saipan. She was a prime mover in promoting fair trade products.

Since the September 11, 2001 tragedy, Medea has been working to end war and occupation, to activate peace, and to promote a U.S. foreign policy that respects human rights. In 2005 Medea was one of 1,000 exemplary women from 140 countries nominated to receive the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of the millions of women who do the essential work of peace worldwide. In 2009 she helped organize the Gaza Freedom March. In 2010 she received the Martin Luther King, Jr. Peace

Prize from the Fellowship of Reconciliation. In February 2012 she was arrested and deported from Bahrain for participating in a nonviolent protest there.

A former economist and nutritionist with the United Nations and World Health Organization, Medea is the author/editor of nine books. Her most recent book is entitled *Drone Warfare: Killing by Remote Control*. Medea's articles appear regularly in Common Dreams, Alternet, and OpEd News.

It was wonderful to be able to meet Medea Benjamin at the Gaza Freedom March (December 25, 2009 to January 6, 2010.) Responding to an invitation by organizers, MPT sent a peace team of six. Medea and CODE PINK were part of the organizing coalition of that important event. Over 1300 of us from 44 countries gathered in Cairo, Egypt to prepare for our entry into Gaza, only to learn that President Mubarak had other plans for us: Our gatherings were severely restricted. We were followed by security agents. Some were detained. All but 100 of us were denied access to Gaza.

Throughout the ordeal, Medea's commitment to consensus decision-making and nonviolent love, as well as her passion for justice helped all participants to remain grounded and centered.



Marisela Ortiz Rivera

By Liz Walters



During 2009 and 2010 Michigan Peace Team was invited to send peace teamers to Juarez, Mexico to work with local people there in response to the escalating violence. During our peace team experience we had the opportunity to meet Marisela Ortiz Rivera, an amazing and courageous woman. She had been a teacher until one of her 17 year old students, Lilia Alejandra, disappeared. Found 10 days later, Lilia a victim of femicide, had been murdered after being brutally tortured and gang raped. (Femicide is the killing of women by men, because they are women.) Since then Marisela has

worked tirelessly to challenge the government's in-action and complicity, and to raise awareness worldwide about femicide. Her work is exceedingly dangerous. In 2009, Marisela's son-in-law, also an activist, was murdered. Since 2011 she and her family have been targeted with publically posted death threats. Recently they applied for asylum in the United States. Here, Marisela continues to coordinate efforts with the femicide victims' families; she works on behalf of the children of the femicide victims; she does rigorous research and gives presentations.

Michigan Peace Team's friendship with Marisela and many others in Juarez continues to the present day. An MPT Accompaniment Group has been formed to support the nonviolent work of the great women and men of Juarez, and to help raise awareness in the United States especially about the flow of U.S. weapons into Juarez and the demand for drugs in the United States.

Michigan Peace Team 2012 Signature Event

Women of Conscience, Women of Courage, Women Who Challenge: Another World Is Possible

Featuring: Hedy Epstein • Noura Erakat • Ann Wright

2012 AWARDS TO: WILPF-Michigan • Marygrove College Masters in Social Justice Program • Dr. Gloria House • Palestinian Freedom Riders

Event Emcee - Siham Awada Jaafar

Host and Producer WDHT TV "Community Connection" and "Off the Cuff"

Sunday, April 29, 2012

3 pm - 4 pm Auction opens, 4 pm - 7 pm Program, Dinner & Auction

Greenfield Manor Banquet Hall

4770 Greenfield, Dearborn, MI 48126

Price: \$50 per person; \$500 table of ten; \$35 student

Proceeds: To support the mission of Michigan Peace Team. Your contribution is tax-deductible.

To donate auction items call: Maureen Aman 586 242-4250

To buy a seat, reserve a table, or get involved in other ways CALL:

Kim Redigan 313 520-7465 or Liz Walters 517 231-7403 or **VISIT** <http://mptsigevent.blogspot.com/>

Ways you can get involved in the Event:

1. Donate an auction item
2. Buy a seat and/or reserve table
3. Invite family and friends to sit at your Table
4. Help MPT sell organizational ads
5. Donate a scholarship



Michigan Peace Team

808 W. Barnes Ave

Lansing, MI 48910

517 484-3178

michiganpeaceteam.org

MPT Vision:

We seek a just world grounded in nonviolence and respect for the sacred interconnectedness of all life.

MPT Mission:

Michigan Peace Team pursues peace through active nonviolence in places of conflict.

MPT Goals:

- Recruiting, training, and placing Peace Teams both domestically and internationally
- Educating the public to the vision and practice of nonviolence, particularly as it relates to nonviolent conflict intervention
- Cooperating, supporting, and participating with local peace and justice groups, particularly as it relates to our Mission
- Providing training in active nonviolence designed for the specific needs of the participants

MPT Core Members

Mary Pat Dewey

Jasiu Malinowski

Kassy Fineout

Paul Pratt

Mary Ann Ford

Sheri Wander

MPT 2012 Newsletter Working Group

Nancy Ayotte

Kim Redigan

Paula Marie Deubel

Annette Thomas

Barbara Nolin

Liz Walters

Artwork: Nancy Ayotte creates all the artwork for MPT newsletters. Her creations are pure gift to MPT and our readers. This gift is yours to freely use in other peace work.

MPT Newsletters, 2008-2011, are available online

<http://michiganpeaceteamnewsletters.blogspot.com>

MPT Staff and Email Addresses

Peter Dougherty

cpeterdougherty.mpt@gmail.com

Mary Hanna

maryhanna.mpt@gmail.com

Martha Larsen

mlarsen.mpt@gmail.com

Nicole Rohrkemper

nicoler.mpt@gmail.com

Liz Walters

elizabethwalters.mpt@gmail.com

Weekly MPT Volunteers

Margaret Beahan

Charlene Jamison

Donette Magoola

Berti Ellis

Mark Zussman