



New Spring NHPA Youth Program

By Alex Fried

In the fall of 2012 we launched a new project called the NH Youth for Peace and Justice (NHYPJ). NHYPJ is an extension of the Annual Youth Peace Conference which we started 5 years ago in March, 2009, when I was a Senior at Oyster River High School. The goal of NHYPJ is to build off of the youth networks we have created through the statewide conference, and to try to grow those networks to be more active throughout the year, to be more inclusive of existing student clubs and organizations throughout the state, and to help facilitate the creation of new clubs as well.

We often hear that youth today are apathetic. I refuse to believe that. I don't think the barrier to youth activism is apathy – I think the barrier is the culture of apathy that surrounds youth. There are plenty of youth out there who are aware of the world, and who care enough to want to do something about it. But high schools can be a difficult place to speak your mind. It's easy to be made fun of or bullied, and sometimes the simple act of showing that you care can be easily ridiculed.

The way to get around this is to create a place where youth feel comfortable speaking out, and that's exactly

what the NHYPJ project is seeking to provide. NHYPJ provides a place for students to learn and grow, to share ideas and experiences, to work through problems and issues and to eventually feel comfortable acting on their beliefs. We seek to foster and facilitate youth development and leadership, while giving them the tools and the resources to find their passions and to direct their own projects. By giving them the power to make their own decisions, we help build their skill sets to the point where they feel comfortable moving forward with their own projects in the future.

Most of our network is through social media. We have a private Facebook group with over 30 student representatives from schools throughout the State, and we are currently trying to reach out to other schools in the State. We are also building a network of educators who are interested in social justice. These educators will help us maintain permanent contacts at high schools throughout the state and will help connect future students up with our youth network. The educators have also been using the network to share lesson plans, dis-

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Building a Culture of Peace Film Series

By Gray Fitzgerald

The *Building a Culture of Peace Film Series* is a free community gathering initiated by LR Berger which offers social justice films and conversation every 2nd Monday at Temple Beth Jacob in Concord. LR's initial vision was to create a space to educate ourselves about the history of nonviolent movements as well as nonviolence practices, raising up an alternative to the cultural narrative and media bombardment which every day reinforces the story about the history and inevitability of violence. March 11 began the fourth year of showings and afterwards sharing about how these films impact us. About 40 to 60 (this month it grew to 70) participants attend, and one of the great gifts of the community is the sharing by youth in our circle. The film for the anniversary evening was *Encounter Point*. It's the story of Israelis and Palestinians who unwittingly and to their huge dismay have been traumatized by the violence in that part of the world.

The people on this little sliver of land where these stories take place are steeped in several thousand years of rich history, cultures, traditions, and religions. Unfortunately they are also immersed in pain and brokenness, not only from recent decades, but from suffering flowing down through the centuries. Pain floods through the region, leaving in its wake violence, anger, distrust bitterness, prejudice, racism, injustice, retribution, and hatred. Most people in the area, and even many throughout the world, seem to be inexorably drawn into the swirling vortex of injury, revenge, fear, and violence reverberating from this pinhead of earth.

Encounter Point tells the stories of a handful of people who have more than ample reason to charge full steam into augmenting that cycle of revenge and violence. They are individuals and families who have had sons, daughters, or other loved ones killed in the conflict. Some of them have been wounded and imprisoned. Their psychic and emotional wounds are deep. Resisting the currents of culture, they choose not to contribute to the cycle of violence and pain. Miraculously, they consciously make decisions to resist and stand against perpetuating the killing. Instead of reacting to their woundedness by rushing to destroy and inflict pain on the enemy, they realize they don't want others to endure the suffering they are experiencing. Remarkably and superhumanly, they make an unusual choice; they seek out others not only on their side of the conflict but on the "enemy" side to be reconciled and joined with them. In their meetings they share their pain and respond to the hurt and humanity of those on the other side. They don't stop the torrent of revenge and violence, but they stand together and in doing so, stand against the violence. They model a countercultural way of responding to the killing. Together they create a different vision of how to live nonviolently. The pain from the loss of their loved ones does not dissolve, but it seems the participants do start to heal. They gradually become more whole.

Their organization is called *Parents' Circle Family Forum-Bereaved Families Supporting Peace, Tolerance, and Reconciliation*. They are in different stages in their journey. Some are models of openness, love, understanding, nonviolence, assertiveness, and courage. Others, newer to this crazy, paradoxical, nonviolent way,

need to take very tentative, hesitant steps in exploring this unusual path. One is gradually recognizing the way his former life has contributed to the problem, and is exploring how to live differently. Together, some strongly and others more tentatively, insert themselves into the maelstrom of violence and pain offering a third way between fight and flight. They journey together modeling peace. They also make initial steps in addressing and confronting the injustice fueling the violence.

As the organization develops, their views, identity and purpose become clearer. As they grow in their relationships, commitment, and identity, something new is being created. A new culture is emerging; they are building a culture of peace. Arguably, the Israeli and Palestinian cultural identities into which they were born are receding, and the new culture they are forging together-- is a culture of peace.

Gray Fitzgerald is a member of NH Peace Action and lives in Concord with his wife Helen



PEN & Manchester UU Church members at the "Open Shuhada Street" vigil in Manchester on February 22nd.



Move the Money - Pull the Pork Campaign

By Will Hopkins

When I started at NH Peace Action almost 4 years ago, Arnie Alpert from the American Friends Service Committee had been hired on by the board to organize a campaign around Judd Gregg and the ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. So as my first foray into activism, I was supposed to “supervise” a project being conducted by a man who I think everyone in New Hampshire’s organizing community would agree is the state’s most experienced and respected organizer. While I was not able to provide much in the way of constructive “supervision” to Arnie, I was able to watch a real professional organize a campaign with a concrete and well-defined goal.

Over my first few years of organizing, I have picked up one lesson above all others: that the effectiveness of our work is only measurable by achievement of well defined goals- that the best work being done for peace knows why it is being done! So in planning this year, I asked the question, what project can we take on, where we will be able to see the results, and use them to leverage decision makers to make the right choices.

Back in 1982, NH Peace Action was born in its first incarnation, the New Hampshire Freeze campaign, which sought to pass town meeting resolutions showing that the will of the people of most New Hampshire towns was that the US stop building more nuclear weapons. This campaign allowed people to ask questions of Presidential candidates, leveraging that many of the towns that the candidates visited had passed resolutions. This forced decision makers like Ronald Regan to recognize that the cold war had to end and that a peaceful solution had to be found- that the people they were elected to represent wanted an end to the madness.

Today we have a new kind of madness, the United States spends almost as much on our pentagon as the rest of the world combined, and the pentagon budget has more than doubled over the past decade- and it has not gone down in response to the “end” of the war in Iraq. Projects like the \$1.5 billion dollar F-35 joint strike fighter AKA: The Flying Piano, which the pentagon has grounded indefinitely due to safety issues, could have allowed us to completely avoid the sequester if we had not embarked on it. While over 2,000 functional Abrams tanks are sitting in graveyards, and the pentagon has not requested more, lobbyists for the pentagon contractors have ensured that those contracts continue. Pentagon spending is among the least efficient ways to create jobs through federal spending. Between 2006 and 2011 there was a 10% increase in federal dollars to the nation’s top five pentagon contractors, but they actually cut employment by 3% over the same year, with the highest increases in how that money was distributed going into executive compensation. As a job creator, almost any type of spending, and even tax cuts have been empirically proven to create more jobs than Pentagon spending, investing in education makes more than two jobs for every one created by the Pentagon.

As Pentagon contracting is the largest manufacturing industry in the US, it is hard for any candidate to be taken seriously for of-

fice without Pentagon contracting dollars being invested into their campaigns- and those whose hearts start in the right place are soon reached by corporate lobbyists. Even Peace Action endorsed Congresswoman Ann McLane Kuster recently said, “We cannot afford to cut investments in critical defense systems produced by companies like BAE that protect our troops and create good jobs.” Although BAE was Kuster’s opponent Charlie Bass’ top funder- apparently the pressures of DC have taken the Congresswoman’s sentiments far away from where they were when I last met with her. I hope to have a long chat with her about that soon.

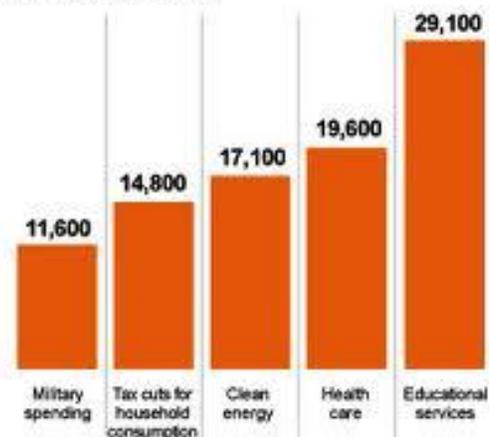
The madness in DC requires a campaign just like the Sane/Freeze campaign, one which seeks to show that the will of the people is to cut Pentagon Pork, and not the safety net that so many depend on in these hard times. To this end, New Hampshire Peace Action will be helping communities place town meeting and city council resolutions expressing that the people of New Hampshire want to cut Pentagon spending first. These resolutions will require grass roots leaders around the state to step up to the plate, and gather signatures, and help facilitate educational programming so that when that pack of corporate owned, power-hungry, miscreants who call themselves Presidential Candidates come back to our state in about a year, we can begin our questions to them, “This community has passed resolutions calling for a minimum of 25% Pentagon cuts to help our communities recover from this recession...”

This effort will not only give us leverage over our own elected and the presidential hopefuls, but will help us continue to build power around the state. Please consider getting in touch, and helping us out!

Will Hopkins is Director of NH Peace Action & NH Peace Action Education Fund

Military Spending Buys Fewer Jobs

Estimated number of jobs created in the U.S. by spending \$1 billion on the military and four other sectors of the economy



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cussion guides, educational resources and more.

During the March conference, a core of youth were engaged and will go back to their schools and outreach to new schools. Since the March conference they have continued to meet every other week, and we are planning a summer leadership training, hopefully to coincide with the annual Membership meeting on July 13 in Sanbornton.

The possibilities are exciting and endless, and there's no way for us to know what the future holds. That's up to the youth to decide.

For more information on the project, please check out our websites and Social Media Sites. Information and registration for the youth conference can be found at:

www.nhpeaceaction.org/nhypj

www.nhpeaceaction.org/educators

www.facebook.com/nhypj

www.twitter.com/nhypj

Alex Freid works for NH Peace Action as the Director of the NH Youth for Peace and Justice project. He is a Senior at UNH and will be graduating with a dual major in Political Science and Philosophy.

The 5th Annual Building a Culture of Peace Conference and Nonviolence was held on March 23 at Rivier University in Nashua. More than 150 attendees turned out to hear Father John Dear's inspiring Keynote Address *Blessed are the Peacemakers: Making Peace and Practicing Nonviolence in a World of War and Violence* and to attend the 26 workshops that encompassed all things peaceful from vegetarianism, war tax resistance, meditative song and citizen diplomacy to preventing gun violence and drone warfare.

The NHPA Youth Group held an overnight on the 22nd with leadership training sessions and Keynote Speaker Vermin Supreme.

The Board and Staff of NH Peace Action Education Fund would like to thank the
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NH Reboots Death Penalty Abolition Initiative for 2014

By John-Michael Dumais, Campaign Director, NH Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty

NH is aiming to become the seventh state in recent years to abolish its statutory death penalty, and the 19th state overall. Though previous NH legislative bodies have either passed or nearly passed death penalty repeal, NH governors have derailed these efforts through opposition or veto. Now, with Governor Hassan having vowed to support death penalty repeal, we have a great opportunity in the upcoming 2014 legislative session to end this heinous practice once and for all.

With the makeup of the current legislature in NH, winning in 2014 will not be a shoe-in. But we are feeling optimistic on the heels of Maryland, whose House of Delegates just voted 82-56 to abolish the death penalty, with Governor O'Malley promising to sign the bill into law. We are also fortunate in NH to have allies such as NH Peace Action, NH-ACLU, American Friends Service Committee, NH Council of Churches, and many other dedicated groups and individuals on our side in this effort. We will also benefit from groups such as the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, Equal Justice USA, Amnesty International, and others who have been enthusiastically supportive in other states recently undertaking this cause. These groups have already volunteered time and resources to our efforts here in NH.

Over the coming months we will be moving our campaign into full swing. This is likely to involve everything from membership development to fundraising, from polling to lobbying, and from petitions to demonstrations. We will operate a grassroots effort to inform, engage, and empower our fellow citizens to influence legislators who are still sitting on the fence on this issue, and to do so in a way that promotes and sustains nonviolent dialogue and peaceful relationship-building. I look forward to working with members of NHPA who are ignited by this cause.

A key theme that runs through our march of social progress over the past 150 or so years is the reduction of violence in all of its forms, from economic and social to racial and sexual. The existence of the death penalty is one of the keystones in our collective history of violence because it is state-sanctioned murder that has been rationalized as just. As such it is remnant of a mindset that values punishment and killing over redemption and restoration, and that turns a blind eye to the many causes of violence in our culture and world. Successfully overturning the death penalty option in NH will therefore send a strong signal that we are turning away from our violent past and towards establishing a more compassionate and peaceful civilization. Our actions will help our country to tip further towards the full abolition of

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North Korea and US Special Ops Forces

Friday, 19 April 2013 10:56 By [Kevin Martin, SpeakOut](#) | Op-Ed
Normally I prefer it when Congress is not in session in Washington, reasoning our legislators can do us no harm, or less harm anyway, when they are back home in their districts meeting with constituents and/or pandering to and raising money from corporate special interests.

However this week, two congressional hearings shed light on some very interesting, previously unknown (or at least not widely known) facts related to our "national security."

The first, earlier this week, came at a Senate Armed Services subcommittee hearing on emerging threats. As reported by Walter Pincus for the Washington Post, the head of U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM in military shorthand), Admiral William McRaven, stated, "On any day of the year you will find special operations forces [in] somewhere between 70 and 90 countries around the world."

Now this number surprised me very much. Had I been asked to guess, I might have said we have special ops forces in maybe half that number of countries. On the other hand, given that the U.S. has somewhere between 800 and over 1,000 foreign military bases around the world (there is no consensus on how to even count them), as well as an overall unprecedented global military footprint, maybe I shouldn't have been surprised at the 70 to 90 number. It may in fact be low.

Pincus's article hinted at not only the increased role of Special Ops (which, along with drone strikes, are preferred means of projecting U.S. military might as the military seeks to reduce boots on the ground in some regions of the world), but also its growing budget ("Special Operations wins in 2014 budget"). Of course the budget, along with the number of countries, not to mention what the special ops forces are doing, all fall into the "we could tell you, but then we'd have to kill you" category.

Which is ludicrous, since we taxpayers foot the bill for all of this special opping. Shouldn't we know what the tab is, and be able to judge if it's worth it? Is this making us safer, or earning us more enemies around the world? Is this a good priority for our tax dollars, or would we feel more secure investing instead in our improving our schools, re-building our aging infrastructure, creating jobs and affordable housing and investing in green energy sources?

The Obama White House, which is failing miserably in its pledge to be the most transparent administration ever, should heed the adage that sunlight is the best disinfectant, and release the budget, list of countries we're on the ground in, and various missions of the Special Operations Command.

The second illuminating hearing, of the House Armed Services Committee, was held Thursday. As was widely reported, U.S. Rep. Doug Lamborn (R-CO) revealed a Defense Intelligence (oxymoron alert!) Agency report that, counter to widely held belief, North Korea has the capability to hit the United States with a nuclear-armed missile, though the weapon's reliability would be low. The Obama Administration and other government spokespeople were quick to either disavow the DIA finding or point out this is not a consensus position of the U.S. intelligence community.

On this one, I'm inclined to the skeptical view. Miniaturizing a nuclear warhead, fitting it atop a missile that has to fly across the North Pole or the world's largest ocean, come close to its target and explode at the right time, well this is called "rocket science." North Korea's ain't anywhere close to ours.

Do you know what's not rocket science? Understanding North Korea's government isn't crazy, paranoid or irrational. Their recent nuclear and missile tests, as well as other provocative actions and threats, while regrettable, are the moves of an isolated, impoverished country targeted as part of the "Axis of Evil" by our previous president. It keenly observed what happened to the other two, sanctioned-to-death, invaded, regime-changed and occupied Iraq, and sanctioned-to-death and threatened with "all options on the table" Iran. Both lacked nuclear weapons of their own to deter U.S. (and Israeli, in the case of Iran) aggression, so North Korea learned the obvious lesson about nuclear weapons – "we better get us some." Moreover, North Korea has long faced the overwhelming economic, political and especially military power of the U.S. and South Korea.

While recently the U.S. has correctly backed off plans to escalate military pressure on the North, in the last few weeks it conducted massive war games with South Korea, with the stated objective of preparing for regime change or collapse in the North. U.S. B-2s and B-52s ran simulated nuclear attacks on North Korea, and F-22 fighter jets were moved to the South. If you were in the North Korean government, wouldn't you be pretty jumpy right about now?

Putting out the fire with gasoline is not what we need. Let's hope Secretary of State John Kerry's trip to the region succeeds in calming the situation on the Korean Peninsula. Calm, reasoned diplomacy is what we need, not military escalation and threats. Let's also look longer term, to put in place steps leading to a peace treaty with North Korea (we have only a supposedly temporary armistice signed 60 years ago at the end of the Korean War) and denuclearization of the region, and the world.

Nuclear deterrence clearly isn't working; if it were, wouldn't the U.S.'s massive nuclear arsenal of over 5,000 warheads, most of which are tens or hundreds of times more powerful than the Hiroshima bomb which killed over 130,000 people, be dissuading North Korea from threatening to attack us, whether the threat is credible or not? Nuclear disarmament would make the region and the world much safer, and cost a lot less to boot.

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Kevin Martin is the Executive Director of [Peace Action](#), the country's largest peace and disarmament organization with approximately 90,000 members and 70,000 online supporters nationwide. "Copyright Truthout.org Reprinted with permission"

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Will Hopkins, Director
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Back to the Arsenal Mall: Questions After the Marathon Bombings - by Roy Morrison

My wife and I are shopping again at the Arsenal Mall. And then waving in thanks to a Watertown Cop driving past. The new normal after lock down and neighborhood terror days. If you lived near here, you have indelible personal experiences about the meaning of ultra violence, running gun fights, sheltering in place, and man-hunts.

Having skin in the game, makes me want to raise three questions. First, what did the FBI know, and when did they know it? That's the most politically explosive question, and should be answered in the trial of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev.

Second, and more importantly, how could a kid like Dzhokhar, if what is alleged is true, become a terrorist psycho-killer? He's a graduate of Cambridge Latin, an elite public high school, a straight A student, an athlete, thin and tall, walking with an easy manner, social, hat on backwards. He resembles a typical college kid, looking quite like my own twenty year old son. And yet, he's Suspect Number Two, carrying bombs to kill innocents.

My wife, a psychiatric clinician with over twenty years experience and thousands of cases, had never seen someone with such a split between normal and murderous--if Tsarnaev really went from soccer practice to bombing and then back to school chatting with friends, and back to bomb throwing, the behavior is unexplained and needs further answers. In her trade, this is referred to as the "missing factors of influence", and these need to be exposed in a trial for this American citizen.

Dzhokhar gives every sign of being a normal kid, not an isolated paranoid, not a rageaholic about to explode, and yet he made choices, maybe out of a mixture of conviction and loyalty to an older brother, to engage in heinous "political" acts. That's a big problem.

Third, what has be done about this? Beyond further endless growth of a national security state and erosion of civil liberties, it's time to seriously and systematically teach our kids about non-violence as personal and political tool.

From kindergarten to high school, a nonviolence program would teach kids, in age appropriate ways, about active nonviolent responses to conflict. Maybe this is wishful thinking, but after 12 years of non-violence discussions, a Dzhokhar Tsarnaev might have convinced his brother to take nonviolent actions, risked arrest to make a non-violent political point, and have ample opportunity to explain and discuss it with us.

And, of course, if trained in non-violence, in the spirit of Dr. King, such civil disobedience would be the culmination of a campaign of public education, and discussion of their grievances.

It's much better to teach our kids to stand up for their beliefs, or lay down in the road if necessary, and risk jail, than to act as the embodiment of a "first person shooter" video game or an ultra-violent revenge movie phantasy like Django Unchained.

The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) has developed excellent materials on non-violence education, and has long experience in nonviolently standing up to bullies from the Nazis to the Slavers. That's a good place to start.

Roy Morrison lives in Newton MA. He's an energy consultant and writer.



NH Peace Action Executive Board retreat on January 26.
Photo courtesy of Michelle Cunha

Death Penalty continued from page 4

the death penalty and to join the global majority that has already done so. To find out more about NH's efforts to abolish the death penalty, and to sign up for our newsletter, please visit www.nodeathpenaltynh.org.

NH Peace Action Board of Directors

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"Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those that hunger and are not fed..."

- President Dwight D. Eisenhower

Events and Announcements

July 13, 2013 NH Peace Action Annual Meeting and Picnic will feature **Mike Prokosch**, the national coordinator of the New Priorities Network. newprioritiesnetwork.org. The event will be held at the Lynn Chong/Rob Pearlman residence in Sanbornton. Details and registration forms will be mailed shortly.

Monday, May 13 will be the final film for 2013 in the film series Building a Culture of Peace. **America and the Holocaust** will be shown at Temple Beth Jacob in Concord at 7 pm. Please see the NH Peace Action website or contact LR Berger at 603-496-1056 for more information.

June 8, 2013 *Speaking Peace in a World of Conflict* - An Introduction to the Basics of Nonviolent Communication. Peggy Smith, a certified trainer in Nonviolent Communication (NVC) by the Center for Nonviolent Communication, will present. She has been sharing NVC for nearly a decade. Cost: \$140. Please contact: David Sky, 98 Appleton Street, Concord, NH 03301 dsky227@comcast.net, 603-848-3771.

NOVEMBER 9, 2013 NHPA Annual Event and Fall Fundraiser will feature **Dr. Helen Caldicott**, an Australian physician, author, and anti-nuclear advocate who has founded several associations (including Physicians for Social Responsibility) dedicated to opposing the use of nuclear power, depleted uranium munitions, nuclear weapons, nuclear weapons proliferation, war and military action in general. She hosts a weekly radio program, *If You Love This Planet*. In 2009 she was designated a Women's History Month Honoree by the National Women's History Project. Tentative venue is the Concord Auditorium.

Please see the website www.nhpeaceaction.org or call 603-228-0559 for more information and updates.

It is always a good time to join
NH Peace Action!
(Clip this coupon and return to us today)

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