



# Grandmothers for Peace International

Barbara Wiedner, Founder, 1928 - 2001

Lorraine Krofchok, Director

Founded 1982

Fall 2009

“YES WE CAN, YES WE DID”

## WHAT NOW?

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO CONTINUE?

*Flo Weber, Woodland Hills, California, (Area Contact)*

I cringe to think about what possibly lies ahead for our grandkids and their generation. The fate of the present and potential military reservists could easily be lifetime commitments. The only hope I see is the mention of a growing anti-war resistance that is beginning to show itself.

It looks like it's time for us - Grandmothers for Peace - to dig out our GFP tee-shirts, badges, etc., and to let our presence be known in our supermarkets, 99-cent stores, parks, etc., and to start renewing our GFP membership. It's surprising how many ask and seem eager to engage in conversation!!!

*Jeanne Norris, Franklin County, New York*

*Off Our Rockers!* (Jeanne refers to the title of our on-line Chapter Directory) ... perfect. It is a disheartening time, I think. Peace activists, who were actively protesting the invasion of Iraq, think our occupation of Afghanistan is justified and are refusing to join protests.

However, there are a few brave souls here who think ANY WAR is unjustified and join our protests, which hopefully will be weekly again, even if there is only one or two of us. There is a 78 year-old woman, with painful feet, who has gotten out onto the corner BY HERSELF. She's a wonderful inspiration to the rest of us.

We joined **New Yorkers for the Common Good**, a Peace, Justice, and Environment Project organization. Check out [www.PJEP.org](http://www.PJEP.org) to find out who's a member in your state. We are listed on [www.ny4cg.org](http://www.ny4cg.org) as Grandmothers For Peace Franklin County.

Local issues we are addressing include: Single-payer Health Care, no H1N1 (swine flu) mandated inoculations and alternative energy sources available locally, including green fuel made from cow manure.

Closing with my favorite quote this month: “*Our problem is civil obedience.*” - Howard Zinn.

*Lynn Heritage, North Carolina, Contact*

This year our local Grandmothers For Peace group is focusing on projects that support our community. As grandmothers, we felt it crucial to help provide food for the people in our community who go hungry day after day after day. Working with the local Food Bank and other food pantries seemed the most natural and logical path to this endeavor.

A few of the specific things we do: Along with **Pomegranate Books**,

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This is what disarmament looks like at the former Project ELF Naval Base in Clam Lake, Wisconsin. Isn't it gorgeous? .



This \$400 million system, which operated for 20 years as a “First Strike” facility communicating with submerged nuclear submarines, closed September 30, 2004. The Northland GFP Chapter (Superior, Wisconsin) spent 20 years' worth of Mother's Days protesting its existence and demonstrating for its closure. (Photo: Bonnie Urfer, Summer 2009.)



Superior, Wisconsin, GFP: Jan, Dorothy, Katie, and Karen celebrate the closing of Project ELF, September 30, 2004.

**4,331 US Military Deaths in Iraq War; Cost of War: \$674,992,391,745**  
**788 US Military Deaths in Afghanistan War; Cost of War: \$224,775,887,269**

we cosponsor a program called "Food For Thought" which provides free books in exchange for non-perishable food items (or monetary donations). Our members bring food or funds to each monthly meeting. We're trying to establish our **Red Wagon Program** in which we hope to find local businesses that are willing to keep one of our Red Wagons on site to remind and encourage customers and employees to help feed our hungry neighbors. Currently, we keep a Red Wagon at Pomegranate Books and it doesn't take long to get it filled. Our vision is to get many more wagons out there and fill them up as quickly and often as we can.

The following quote by **David W. Brooks**, a member of the **Presidential Commission on World Hunger**, is very much in line with our philosophy. "If we are going to stop wars on this earth, if we are going to have to make war on hunger our number one priority." And what better place to begin than in our very own backyards?

Our next project is our **3rd Annual Peace Day Celebration** on September 21. We invite the community to gather with us at a park in Wilmington to celebrate this special day with music, peace readings, meditation and prayers for peace.

#### ***Patty Carmody, Santa Clarita, CA, Chapter***

Ever since Santa Clarita Grandmothers for Peace held its first monthly vigil at the busiest intersection by the town mall, we have always displayed a sign indicating the number of US Military men and women who have been killed in Iraq.

In recent months, we have added another sign showing the number of US casualties in Afghanistan. Passers-by honk or wave the peace sign at us. But nothing relieves the immense sadness that we all feel, remembering all the horrors of our current conflicts.

#### ***MJ Marumoto, San Jose, California***

I have "slowed down" for 2 reasons: 1) The extended optimistic push we have been in since Obama was nominated has drained my energy, at least for the time being. 2) The president has made some decisions on the war issue that are disappointing to me, and he is not inclined to reverse them.

#### **Arizona GFP Northwest Valley Chapter**

##### ***Carolyn Modeen, Sun City***

I continue to stand with a Peace sign at the busy intersection of 99<sup>th</sup> & Bell as I have for six years, twice a month, in honor of our troops and the peoples of Iraq and Afghanistan.

##### ***Marilynn Moore, Sun City Grand***

I show up as often as I can at 99<sup>th</sup> and Bell to carry a sign urging PEACE because I am so

frustrated by the horrors of the wars that we as a nation continue to be involved in.

Stop and think about all the children, adults, animals and flowers we have killed and continue to kill in the name of Democracy and of Christianity.

Carrying the Peace sign is just one of the things I do. I also phone and/or write to elected officials to express my feelings. I donate when possible to peace organizations. I do what I feel I can.

I admit it took me years to come to the decision to do more than just complain to husband, children and friends. Standing on a corner carrying a sign is my way of putting myself out there before the world to express my concerns.

#### ***Rayilyn Brown, Surprise***

Outrage at the waging of a clearly unnecessary and immoral war by the worst president in American history, George W. Bush, is what finally got me off my butt in the spring of 2006 and into the street at 99<sup>th</sup> and Bell Roads.

Having taught about war as a high-school history teacher throughout my career, I concluded that war is wrong and counterproductive. As a teacher I was "neutral" politically and encouraged all sides in debate. Retirement in 1991 freed me to become an old peacenik.

However, in 1996 I was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, an incurable progressive illness which eventually turns you to stone and steals your life. But I was on the corner of Bell and 99<sup>th</sup> for two years until a bad fall in 2008 ended my protesting career.

Now I sit at home and stew as we are still at war. I do appreciate what GFP is still doing and would join you if I could.

#### ***Connie English, Glendale***

Recently, Brian Williams featured a segment on the continuing war in the remote areas of Afghanistan and the resistant Taliban forces that are embedded so strongly in that area.

They had actual footage shot during a fierce battle that brought this horrendous story right into my comfortable living room.

The battle was a futile attempt to "clean out" the Taliban from a remote barren high desert area in the mountains. The soldiers were plagued by heat, dust, miserable living conditions and lack of any support or amenities. They slept on the dirt under the shelter of the Humvee and tanks, and they all looked exhausted.

To me this news story epitomized the utter futility of our entire occupation of this area and the senseless war we are fighting. We are fighting a religious war and no amount of occupation, victory or negotiation will end it.

I was protesting the Viet Nam war in the 60s and felt the same futility I feel now. Did we not learn anything? I am weary of aggression

and destruction and death. End it now - bring our men and women home.

The only voice I have is to sign petitions, stand on the street corner with Grandmothers for Peace and write letters to Washington, but small voices may hopefully change the world.

#### ***William Crum, Peoria***

I walk with Grandmothers for Peace for several reasons. They seem to be one of the few groups who want to end the war. They love the troops and want them home in one piece.

The second reason is the fact that I am a disabled vet who had his war in the 70s and the reason for the war was as stupid as the one now. Ours was "if we are not in South-east Asia, communism will spread to our country." Iraq is because "we need to fight them over there before they come here." I wonder how many members of Congress even served our country.

Last but not least, why is it that we can spend a fortune for war but not a dime for health care without worrying about where we will get the money?

#### ***Joan Kroll, Sun City West***

At the base of my involvement in the peace movement is my strong belief that wars, in general, do not solve problems. When I view our country's current wars, I become angry, angry at the huge cost in lives, money and the way our country is viewed in the world.

It is commonly thought that protestors played a large part in ending the war in Viet Nam. Maybe because I was not involved in that anti-war movement, I feel compelled to be involved this time. I need to be part of the end of this madness called war.

I am inspired by the leaders of the anti-war movement. Locally that means our group's contact person, **Ordell** and by **Liz** from Code Pink. Their commitment and energy help to motivate me. And I'm inspired by our group regulars who show up at an early hour to stand in beastly heat - **Bob and Bob, James, Marty, Carolyn, Mary, William & Boom Boom**. Nationally I'm inspired and motivated by our "**Head Grandmother**" **Lorraine**, who updates the sign on her lawn daily with the dreadful body count.

I like the sharing time with my fellow demonstrators. We meet for breakfast or lunch after our demonstrations. Our shared time allows us to recharge our batteries.

A final thought. I suspect I am naive and I have huge dreams. In my imagination, I can make a difference.

#### ***Bob Brandel, Sun City***

Why be a peace demonstrator twice a month for two years plus, rain or shine? I guess I never

er thought not to, like breathing, eating, sleeping. I never pondered the rationale I would present to answer that question.

First, I want to be true to myself and my belief that I should never let my anger or lack of respect demonstrated, or simply harbored, lead me to any action that would diminish another.

Second, while I'm touting peace in as friendly a way as I can, I want to bless and pray for each person who passes my way. I enjoy the waves, smiles and "two thumbs up."

Lastly, I feel privileged to show support for this most important collective endeavor of our group, be it six, sixteen or sixty, bending the curve of love for all God's people and our brothers and sisters.

### James Stewart, Sun City

Well, since you asked, I always think of the scene in *Rebel Without a Cause* when James Dean is about to do the chicken race to the cliff and his girl friend asks him in her desperation to stop him, "Why are you doing this?" He shrugs and says, "Gotta do something."

Does it do any good to have a demonstration from time to time? I don't know, but a fellow on the web recently told me that the Vietnam war was lost by Walter Cronkite and all those peaceniks. I have heard people before say that the war was lost because of all those protesters giving aid and comfort to the enemy and I am terribly flattered that anyone thinks that it is I and my dangerous little sign that has defeated the US Army in Vietnam, Iraq, and elsewhere. I just blush with pride to think that I, a garden variety street corner protester can defeat the mighty American war machine.

So maybe it does some good to keep at it, and anyway, you have to do something.



### November SOA Vigil

The annual vigil to close down the SOA/WHINSEC will take place from November 20-22, 2009, in Columbus, Georgia, home to the School of the Americas.

Thousands of people from all over the Americas will converge at the gates of Fort Benning to keep the pressure on Congress and the Obama administration.

**Contact:** (202) 234-3440; [www.soaw.org](http://www.soaw.org)

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

*Dear Grandmothers for Peace:*

A month or so ago I sent the message\* below to our e-mail list. I sensed frustration and burn-out, not just from GFP, but activists in general. We had a long, painful eight years and our hopes were high. But when reality set in, we realized things would not happen "now." I believe things have changed, slowly, but they are changing. We are anxious. But, I have heard much of the rest of the world is pulling for us, glad, if not ecstatic for the change that happened in November.

I know it is difficult to think about the "world picture" if your job is in jeopardy, or you have lost part of your retirement income. The steps are slow. Yet, read about the hope, yes, mixed with frustration as our GFP all over continue our mission.

The wars go on. As I write this health care is still being argued, debated, lied about, distorted and frustrating many. I watch the so called "town hall meetings" and wonder, where were those outraged people when the US was lied into a war costing billions? Did they worry THEN about the future of their children and grandchildren? Did they care about the carnage, except for that sticker "Support the Troops?" I saw little outrage, except from the dedicated activists that continue today.

It is tragic that Congress has the kind of health care we all would want and as they "debate" someone is dying because of their selfishness and fear of the loss of campaign money. Ask your Congressperson a simple question over and over: **"Why can't I have the same health coverage you have?"**

*\*Had enough? Frustrated, sad, depressed, angry about the wars, world crises, pandemics, global warming, hate crimes, political bickering, economic crisis, health care on the edge of the cliff, education cuts, racism, prejudice, pollution, waste of resources?*

*Take a deep breath and consider what you CAN do to make a difference. We may not fix anything for a long time, but we can help to make a difference. Do something in your community that will help. Grandmothers for "Peace" is not just one definition of peace, i.e. "without war in the world." It is about peace in your heart, as well as in your community, state, country and planet.*

*Small accomplishments help your heart and soul. If each one of us does something - no matter how small we think it is - collectively it will be enormous! You can do anything that you think is important. Yes, our logo points to the huge problem of nuclear weapons. That is our root and attitudes have to change. Responsibility has to enter thinking.*

*Worried about the environment? Recycle. (Yes, use that cloth GFP bag at the grocery store, see our insert! Or use any bag you have.) Start someplace! Keep contacting Congress and President Obama on the issues. The war mentality is still with us - the military/industrial/congressional complex.*

*AND, please do not forget The Starfish Flinger! It is a favorite of mine, please take it to heart and believe. Keep it with you.*

**Thousands of starfish washed ashore.**

**A little girl began throwing them in the water so they wouldn't die.**

**"Don't bother, dear," her mother said, "it won't make a difference."**

**The girl stopped for a moment and looked at the starfish in her hand.**

**"IT WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO THIS ONE."**

*Peace to all of us, Lorraine*

### Students Making a Difference

Congratulations to **Katie Martinez, Boguslav Mandzyuk, Larmon Luo, Susan Burtner, Sarah Burtner** and their coordinator, **Rene Mendoza** of Franklin High School, Elk Grove, California.

They were part of a group of 70 students and teachers from 11 U.S. high schools and 10 schools in Russia to attend the April Conference at the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies (CNS) at the Monterey Institute of International Studies. The CNS seeks to combat the spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) by training the next generation of nonproliferation specialists and disseminating timely information and analysis.

There is a waiting list for schools to participate; those chosen spent their academic year preparing for this 12<sup>th</sup> Conference: "Nuclear Disarmament: Challenges, Opportunities, and Next Steps."

The Franklin students' presentation included an interview with Grandmothers for Peace Director, Lorraine Krofchok.

### Superior, Wisconsin Northland Chapter



Northland GFP members, L-R: Jean Kilgour, Polly Edmunds, Donna Howard, Karen Barschdorf, and Dorothy Wolden attended the July 5, 2009, Nukewatch event informing the public about the contaminated barrels that are in Lake Superior. GFP co-sponsored this annual event.

### United Kingdom

#### Jean Stead

There is one hopeful gleam amongst the gloom of the recession here, at least among the nuclear disarmers. Members of Grandmothers for Peace are almost spoilt for choice among the campaigns, conferences and meetings planned in the next few months, being organised in what is seen as a final push to demolish the plans to replace the Trident nuclear warhead submarines. The plans have been laid, and the New Labour government wants to go ahead with the replacement of the old Trident at a cost of billions.

And here lies the hope. New Labour is doing badly in the polls and is likely to lose the general election to be held in Britain by next spring, and is also running out of money, having had to rescue the banks from the financial crash.

Kate Hudson, head of Britain's main anti-nuclear movement, the **Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament**, welcomes the fact that the government has now agreed to delay the initial decision to begin the next phase of Trident renewal, which will push it back until after the crucial disarmament talks at the **Anti Proliferation Treaty Review** conference next May. "This is a major breakthrough" she says, "and we can seize this chance to scrap British nukes once and for all and to back an international Convention to abolish all nuclear weapons." A new campaign is being launched, including high level newspaper advertising, to which Grandmothers for Peace has given a donation.

The World Court Project, founded nearly 20 years ago with **Robert Green**, an ex-Royal Navy commander with nuclear-armed submarines who became their opponent after retiring, has now launched a series of anti-Trident campaigns, led by **George Farebrother**, the Project's tireless organiser. They succeeded in getting the case of nuclear weapons before the World Court, and this year one of the judges, **Christopher Weeramantry** said that it was a strange contradiction that nation states pledged to the maintenance of civilised values at the same time preserved and cherished the right to use nuclear weapons despite the fact "they reek heavily of barbarism at its worst."

The **World Court Project** is organising a march along the south coast of England in April next year to relay a Flame of Hope for the global abolition of nuclear weapons. The flame will then go on to New York to join a flame brought from Hiroshima as part of the first World March to circle the earth calling for the end of war and the elimination of violence.

And the WCP is also organising a conference in September on the law of armed conflict. Grandmothers for Peace will be there, as well as at the Flame of Hope march, and will be joining in fresh attempts to bring about the outlawing of all nuclear weapons through a World Court decision and through public will.

Before he retired as Chair of the WCP, ex Commander Green said he thought Britain became a nuclear power because of its feelings of inferiority following loss of Empire - a "stick-on hairy chest" for her leaders. It set a bad example in the greatest danger - that of proliferation - simply to provide the political status symbol it was supposed to produce, he said.

And it also costs billions, at a time when Britain needs them most for health, housing and education, as well as for defence equipment in its mistaken campaign in Afghani-

stan. And that could be the final blow to the new Trident.

### Phoenix, Arizona/Northwest Valley Chapter Ordell Nelson

"If my grandson gets killed in Afghanistan, it'll kill me!" A retired military man made this comment as we walked together. Since most Americans don't know anybody at war, they don't care. Our vigils are imperative; we keep war in the public eye even during our record breaking Arizona heat. Our numbers have dwindled as temperatures have risen, but we've never allowed our chain to be broken; we're at 99<sup>th</sup> & Bell, Sun City, every first and third Saturday.

We're saddened by Obama's ongoing occupation of Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. At our July 4<sup>th</sup> vigil, we displayed our patriotism by providing flags to each demonstrator. We also tempted new attendees by having a door prize (peace necklace by **Joan Kroll**) and free GFP buttons (donated by **Paul McBroom**).

**Jeff Farias**, a local progressive radio personality, does public service announcements about our vigils during every one of his weekday shows. We're thankful for the publicity!

We were pleased the 7-20-09 *Daily News Sun's* lead article was about our work for peace (<http://www.yourwestvalley.com/news/new-7202-peace-protest.html>). Even though our interviews included the sad realities for Iraqis, Afghans, and Pakistanis, none was included in the article. When the reporter asked how we can stand to be outside in the heat, mention was made of the 7,000,000 Iraqis without water and electricity; and that was excluded as well.

The media intentionally hides the sad realities of war from public view. Billions of dollars are wasted on the insanity of war. Health care for all would easily be financed with these billions.

**HEALTH CARE NOT WARFARE!**

### Florida Keys, Florida



Florida Keys GFP organized the March 21, 2009, gathering for the Sixth Anniversary of the Iraq War. Veterans for Peace and other peace friends also participated.

## President Obama to Preside over U.N. Security Council Meeting

*“So today I am announcing a new international effort to secure all vulnerable nuclear material around the world within four years. We will set new standards, expand our cooperation with Russia, pursue new partnerships to lock down these sensitive materials.”*

— President Barack Obama, April 5, 2009, Prague, Czech Republic

A big step toward realizing that goal will occur September 24, 2009, when **President Obama** chairs a United Nations Security Council meeting of world leaders to discuss nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

As **Jonathan Granoff**, president of the **Global Security Institute**, told the news agency IPS: “This is the time for the Security Council to plan together a route to international security in a nuclear weapons-free world. We cannot threaten each other with annihilation on Monday and work together sufficiently to meet our shared threats on Tuesday, not knowing whether we will be friends or foes on Wednesday.”

### Five Proposals for Advancing President Obama’s Nuclear Disarmament Agenda

BY DAVID KRIEGER, JULY 17, 2009

*“I state clearly and with conviction America’s commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons.”* — Barack Obama

1. **A No First Use commitment** will de-emphasize the role of nuclear weapons in US security policy. This should be reflected in the new US Nuclear Posture Review, which is currently in progress. More than any other step the US could take, this will demonstrate to the world the US commitment to Article VI of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.
2. **De-alert nuclear arsenals**, which remain on high alert status as a relic of the worst threats of the Cold War era. Negotiate in the current arms talks with Russia to take all nuclear weapons off high alert status. Understanding human fallibility, put the gift of increased time between the possibility of misperception or miscalculation and nuclear war.
3. **Expand the concept of nuclear security** for the Global Summit on Nuclear Security. We applaud President Obama for taking the initiative to convene this summit in March 2010. It provides an opportunity for states to go to the heart of nuclear security issues. All states are endangered by any state’s nuclear arsenal. It is not sufficient to focus only on nuclear terrorism. It is necessary to focus also on existing nuclear arsenals and potential proliferation. The bottom line is that nuclear security will require nuclear weapons abolition. We propose that each participating state come to the table with its own Roadmap to Abolition and open a dialogue on achieving a Nuclear Weapons Convention for the phased, verifiable, irreversible and transparent elimination of nuclear weapons.
4. **Support a Middle East Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone (MENWFZ)** to prevent a regional nuclear arms race. The pursuit of a MENWFZ was promised when the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty was indefinitely extended in 1995. Now, nearly 15 years later, there has been no progress. At the same time, nearly every country in the region seeks nuclear power programs, moving them closer to weapons programs. If double standards are not ended, Israel not challenged on its nuclear arsenal, and a MENWFZ not achieved, the region may see substantial nuclear proliferation, dramatically diminishing the prospects for achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.
5. **Repeat the themes of the President Obama’s Prague speech** in the United States. Bring home to all Americans, and particularly our national security establishment, that a world free of nuclear weapons is not a fantasy and that the US is committed to pursuing this goal with a sense of urgency. Continue to make the case to Americans that nuclear weapons do not and cannot provide for our security and we will be far safer and more secure in a world free of nuclear weapons.

**David Krieger** is President of the **Nuclear Age Peace Foundation** ([www.wagingpeace.org](http://www.wagingpeace.org)) and a councilor on the **World Future Council**.

## Nobel Peace Laureates Call for a Nuclear Weapons-Free World

The world is well aware that nuclear weapons are a humanitarian disaster of monstrous proportion. They are indiscriminate, immoral, and illegal. They are military tools whose staggering consequences have already been seen in the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the long-term impacts of those attacks.

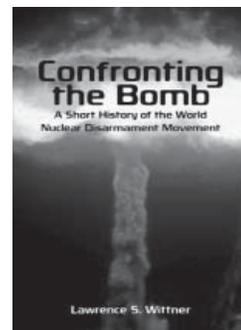
Eliminating nuclear weapons is indeed a possibility — more than that, it is a fundamental necessity in forging a more secure planet for us all.

As Nobel Peace Laureates, we call on the citizens of the world to press their leaders to grasp the peril of inaction and summon the political will to advance toward nuclear disarmament and abolition. To fulfill a world without nuclear weapons, and inspire a greater peace among our kind, humanity must stand together to make this vision a reality.

*(Read the entire text at [www.wagingpeace.org](http://www.wagingpeace.org); The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation.)*

### Citizen Activism & The Bomb

Although there is still an ongoing danger of nuclear war, *Confronting the Bomb: A Short History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement*, written by **Lawrence S. Wittner**, is the story of how **citizen activism** plays a key role in curbing the nuclear arms race and preventing nuclear war.



It is based on massive research in peace organization files and once-secret government records, as well as hundreds of interviews. It covers the entire period of significant opposition to the bomb, from the final stages of the Second World War up to the present.

Dr. Wittner is professor of history at the State University of New York/Albany, is active in the peace movement, and serves as a member of the Peace Action national board.

To order *Confronting the Bomb*: <http://www.sup.org> ; or Phone 800-621-2736.

**GRANDMOTHERS FOR PEACE DIRECTORY**

[www.grandmothersforpeace.org/directory](http://www.grandmothersforpeace.org/directory)

OR, phone: (916) 730-6476

## Veterans for Peace Iraq Water Project

BY ART DORLAND AND BARRY RIESCH

The Veterans For Peace Iraq Water Project has placed its 40<sup>th</sup> water treatment unit in Iraq. This one is at the Al-Askari Shrine in Samarra and will provide drinking water to pilgrims visiting one of Iraq's holiest sites. The small device, using ultraviolet light and installed by Iraqi friends, can produce up to eight gallons of clean water per minute.

The beautiful mosque at Samarra, surmounted by a gleaming golden dome, is revered by Shias throughout the world as the burial place of Hasan Al-Askari, 111<sup>th</sup> Imam and father of the long awaited Mahdi, whose reappearance on earth will proclaim the establishment of universal and everlasting justice. The criminal bombing of this shrine in February, 2006, whether by al Qaeda or some other group, achieved its intended goal: uncontrollable spasms of violence between religious groups that destroyed hopes for a stable government and placed the American Army of occupation in the center of a civil war.

Three years later the shrine is rising again and receiving visitors. We are very happy for the opportunity to be part of this. We pray that atrocities like that monstrous bombing will fade into the past and that Iraq itself will be resurrected, independent, in possession of its own soil and resources, and free of occupation. We insist that our country do its part to make this happen. Let the pilgrims at al Askari have good water and let all Iraqis have their country back.

Apart from the shrine, IWP has provided clean water to many other Iraqi institutions since our last report, including a refugee camp, a mosque, and even a prison. We thank Minnesota VFP and many others for all of your support.

To make a donation to VFP Iraq Water Project: VFP National Office, 216 S. Meramec Ave., St. Louis, MO 63105; or <http://www.iraqwaterproject.org>

(Article reprinted with permission from Minnesota VFP Newsletter, Chapter 27.)

### NO GFP POLITICAL ENDORSEMENTS PERMITTED

Although Grandmothers for Peace, as an organization or chapter, can not endorse any political candidate or group due to our non-profit status,

WE DO THANK EVERYONE WHO SUPPORTS PEACE.

## 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Church Rock Uranium Tailings Spill

BY SR. ROSE MARIE CECCHINI, MM

Most people in the U.S. have never heard of the July 1979 Church Rock, New Mexico, uranium tailings spill, even though resulting radioactive contamination was greater than the near meltdown at Three Mile Island four months earlier.

On July 16, 1979, the earthen dam at United Nuclear Corp.'s uranium mill tailings facility collapsed releasing 1,100 tons of radioactive tailings and 94 million gallons of toxic wastewater down the Puerco River. It was the largest release of radioactive waste, by volume, in U.S. history.

This past July 16, 2009, over two hundred people gathered to commemorate the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Church Rock uranium tailings spill by keeping the memory alive and honoring the Native communities still suffering health and environmental impact from the nuclear accident.

The day began at 7:00 am with prayer at the home of **Teddy Nez** in Church Rock, at Red Water Pond Road, a community of 48 families sandwiched between two mountains of uranium tailings, yet to be remediated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The event, sponsored by the **Multicultural Alliance for a Safe Environment** - a coalition of environmental groups - brought together young and old alike to retrace the route of the tailings and see first-hand the contaminated land left behind.

We walked from Red Water Pond Road along the highway to the UNC spill site, now a Superfund site requiring continual monitoring and remediation. There we heard accounts from **Larry King and Tony Hood**, both former uranium miners, who were working July 16, 1979, when the UNC dam burst releasing radioactive tailings and waste water into the Puerco. They described huge cracks visible in the dam wall, left unrepaired by UNC managers in a frantic rush to maximize production and profits from uranium processing.

From there we continued the five-mile walk to Larry King's family ranch, where Hydro Resources, Inc. has applied for a license to start in-situ leach uranium mining on this ranch land to extract uranium from the underground aquifer. In spite of the Navajo Nation's 2005 Diné Natural Resources Protection Act, HRI continues to ignore the Navajo ban in their determined plan to start mining in Church Rock and Crownpoint.

At King ranch, **Navajo President Joe Shirley Jr.** addressed the group:

*"The memory of the Church Rock disaster helped galvanize the Navajo people and their elected leaders in passing the Diné Natural Resources Protection Act of 2005, imposing a moratorium on all uranium mining and processing in Navajo Indian County until all adverse economic, environmental and human health effects from past uranium mining and processing have been eliminated or substantially reduced to the satisfaction of the Navajo Nation Council. We will be tireless in our efforts. These are not unrealistic dreams. The American people need to be educated and reminded about the disproportionate sacrifices made by Navajos so that the United States of American could win the Cold War. Navajos are not asking for reparations. All we are seeking is justice."*

(Editor: In a note, GFP member, Sr. Rose Marie Cecchini expressed that this was "a powerfully inspiring event for me to experience with many hope-filled, committed people.")

### Barbara Wiedner & Dorothy Vandercook Memorial Scholarship Foundation 2009 Peace Scholarship Winners

\$500

**Conner Cress**

Acworth, Georgia

**Erika Vivgan**

Farmington Hills, Michigan

\$250

**Carolina Beltran**

Nevada City, California

**Elizabeth Carlton**

Nevada City, California

\$250

**Alex Darwish**

Sacramento, California

**Conrad Eagen**

San Jose, California

**Ernestine Fu**

Northridge, California

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# PEACE DECLARATION

August 6, 2009

That weapon of human extinction, the atomic bomb, was dropped on the people of Hiroshima sixty-four years ago. Yet the *hibakusha*'s suffering, a hell no words can convey, continues. Radiation absorbed 64 years earlier continues to eat at their bodies, and memories of 64 years ago flash back as if they had happened yesterday.

Fortunately, the grave implications of the *hibakusha* experience are granted legal support. A good example of this support is the courageous court decision humbly accepting the fact that the effects of radiation on the human body have yet to be fully elucidated. The Japanese national government should make its assistance measures fully appropriate to the situations of the aging *hibakusha*, including those exposed in "black rain areas" and those living overseas. Then, tearing down the walls between its ministries and agencies, it should lead the world as standard-bearer for the movement to abolish nuclear weapons by 2020 to actualize the fervent desire of *hibakusha* that "No one else should ever suffer as we did."

In April this year, US President Obama speaking in Prague said, "...as the only nuclear power to have used a nuclear weapon, the United States has a moral responsibility to act." And "...take concrete steps towards a world without nuclear weapons." Nuclear weapons abolition is the will not only of the *hibakusha* but also of the vast majority of people and nations on this planet. The fact that President Obama is listening to those voices has solidified our conviction that "the only role for nuclear weapons is to be abolished."

In response, we support President Obama and have a moral responsibility to act to abolish nuclear weapons. To emphasize this point, we refer to ourselves, the great global majority, as the "Obamajority," and we call on the rest of the world to join forces with us to eliminate all nuclear weapons by 2020. The essence of this idea is embodied in the Japanese Constitution, which is ever more highly esteemed around the world.

Now, with more than 3,000 member cities worldwide, Mayors for Peace has given concrete substance to our "2020 Vision" through the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Protocol, and we are doing everything in our power to promote its adoption at the NPT Review Conference next year. Once the Protocol is adopted, our scenario calls for an immediate halt to all efforts to acquire or deploy nuclear weapons by all countries, including the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which has so recently conducted defiant nuclear tests; visits by leaders of nuclear-weapon states and suspect states to the A-bombed cities; early convening of a UN Special Session devoted to Disarmament; an immediate start to negotiations with the goal of concluding a nuclear weapons convention by 2015; and finally, to eliminate all nuclear weapons by 2020. We will adopt a more detailed plan at the Mayors for Peace General Conference that begins tomorrow in Nagasaki.

The year 2020 is important because we wish to enter a world without nuclear weapons with as many *hibakusha* as possible. Furthermore, if our generation fails to eliminate nuclear weapons, we will have failed to fulfill our minimum responsibility to those that follow.

Global Zero, the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament and others of influence throughout the world have initiated positive programs that seek the abolition of nuclear weapons. We sincerely hope that they will all join the circle of those pressing for 2020.

As seen in the anti-personnel landmine ban, liberation from poverty through the Grameen Bank, the prevention of global warming and other such movements, global democracy that respects the majority will of the world and solves problems through the power of the people has truly begun to grow. To nurture this growth and go on to solve other major problems, we must create a mechanism by which the voices of the people can be delivered directly into the UN. One idea would be to create a "Lower House" of the United Nations made up of 100 cities that have suffered major tragedies due to war and other disasters, plus another 100 cities with large populations, totaling 200 cities. The current UN General Assembly would then become the "Upper House."

On the occasion of the Peace Memorial Ceremony commemorating the 64th anniversary of the atomic bombing, we offer our solemn, heartfelt condolence to the souls of the A-bomb victims, and, together with the city of Nagasaki and the majority of Earth's people and nations, we pledge to strive with all our strength for a world free from nuclear weapons.

We have the power. We have the responsibility. And we are the Obamajority. Together, we can abolish nuclear weapons. Yes, we can.

Tadatashi Akiba  
Mayor  
The City of Hiroshima

(*GFP Editor*: Every year on August 6, the city of Hiroshima holds a Peace Memorial Ceremony to pray for the peaceful repose of the victims, for the abolition of nuclear weapons, and for lasting world peace. During that ceremony, the Mayor issues a *Peace Declaration* directed toward the world at large. As long as the need persists, Hiroshima's mayor will continue to issue these declarations calling for the elimination of nuclear weapons from the face of the earth. This is part of Hiroshima's effort to build a world of genuine and lasting world peace where no population will ever again experience the cruel devastation suffered by Hiroshima and Nagasaki.)

# Grandmothers for Peace International



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9/2008

**Numbers You Need**

**4,331 US Military Deaths in Iraq\***  
**Cost of Iraq War: \$674,992,391,745\***  
**788 US Military Deaths in Afghanistan**  
**Cost of Afghanistan War:**  
**\$224,775,887,269\***

**President Barack Obama**  
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1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500  
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(\*icasualties.org; costofwar.com; (8-19-09)



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Are you considering buying a "store" canvas bag for your grocery shopping? Why not use your Grandmothers for Peace tote, or purchase one from us? If you shop twice a week you would save two plastic bags from going into the landfill by using our tote for part of your purchase. Doesn't sound like much does it? Well, in a month you would save eight bags, and in a year that would be 96 bags. Multiply that by perhaps a thousand of us doing that and it is **96,000 less bags in a landfill**. See how important we are collectively in this — and the entire process! Together we can make a difference — and I am not just talking totes!

An article in the Sacramento News and Review, August 9, 2007, stated, "It takes around 430,000 gallons of oil to produce 100 million standard plastic grocery bags (or about 232 bags per gallon), according to Jared Blumenfeld of the San Francisco Department of the Environment. But stats from the American Forest and Paper Association in 1999 suggest that an equal amount of paper bags kill 14,000 trees (about 714 bags per tree)." And, I say, we need to preserve our natural resources!

Order one of our *open top totes* now and **REGULAR SHIPPING IS FREE**. They also make great gifts for any occasion. We can spread our message and help the environment too. You can pack one of the totes with your bread, cheese, fruit, etc.

One bag a trip — 96,000 bags/year if we all try to make a difference.



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**Open-Top Tote — Navy** ..... **\$12.00**

(10 oz. Cotton Canvas, 14" x 10 1/2" x 5")

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# Grandmothers for Peace

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