“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” — Margaret Mead

Grandmothers for Peace International

Barbara Wiedner, Founder, 1928 - 2001

Founded 1982

Fall 2010

“Today, every inhabitant of this planet must contemplate the day when this planet may no longer be habitable. Every man, woman and child lives under a nuclear sword of Damocles, hanging by the slenderest of threads, capable of being cut at any moment by accident or miscalculation or by madness. The weapons of war must be abolished before they abolish us.”

— President John F. Kennedy —

Address Before the General Assembly of the United Nations

New York City, September 25, 1961

Nuclear-Weapon Nations

China: About 240 total warheads.

France: Fewer than 300 operational warheads.

Russia: Approximately 2,600 operational strategic warheads, approximately 2,000 operational tactical warheads, and approximately 8,000 stockpiled strategic and tactical warheads.

United Kingdom: Fewer than 160 deployed strategic warheads, total stockpile of up to 225.

United States: 5,113 active and inactive nuclear warheads and approximately 4,500 warheads retired and awaiting dismantlement. The 5,113 active and inactive nuclear warhead stockpile includes 1,968 strategic warheads, approximately 500 operational tactical weapons, and approximately 2,645 inactive warheads.

India: Up to 100 nuclear warheads.

Israel: Between 75 to 200 nuclear warheads.

Pakistan: Between 70 to 90 nuclear warheads.

(www.armscontrol.org)

Numbers You Need

President Barack Obama

The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

E-mail: go to Website:
www.whitehouse.gov/contact
Switchboard: (202) 456-1414
Comment Line: (202) 456-1111
Fax: (202) 456-2461

First Lady Michelle Obama

E-mail: comment@whitehouse.gov

Secretary of State Hillary R. Clinton

Switchboard: (202) 647-4000

Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates

Pentagon Switchboard: (703) 545-6700

Members Of Congress

Senate & House: (202) 224-3121

- US Military Deaths, 2001-2010: Iraq War = 4,416; Afghanistan War = 1,255

- Cost of The Wars, 2001-2010: $1,072,656,635,936.00 (TRILLION)

- Civilian Deaths, 2001-2010: Iraq = 97,348-106,231; Afghanistan = Unknown

(icasualties.org; costofwar.com; iraqbodycount.org 8-29-2010)
July 16, 1945, marked the beginning of the Nuclear Age. On that day, the United States conducted the first explosive test of an atomic device. The test was code-named Trinity and took place at the Alamogordo Test Range in New Mexico’s Jornada del Muerto Desert. The bomb itself was code-named “The Gadget.”

The Trinity test used a plutonium implosion device, the same type of weapon that would be used on the city of Nagasaki just three and a half weeks later. It had the explosive force of 20 kilotons of TNT.

The names associated with the test deserve reflection. “The Gadget,” something so simple and innocuous, was exploded in a desert whose name in Spanish means “Journey of Death.” Plutonium, the explosive force in the bomb, was named for Pluto, the Roman god of the underworld. The isotope of plutonium that was used in the bomb, plutonium-239, is one of the most deadly radioactive materials on the planet. It existed only in minute quantities on Earth before the US began creating it for use in its bombs by the fissioning of uranium-238.

There is no definitive explanation for why the test was named Trinity, but it generally seems most associated with a religious concept of God. The thoughts of J. Robert Oppenheimer, the scientific director of the project to create the bomb and the person named the test, provide insights into the name:

“Why I chose the name is not clear, but I know what thoughts were in my mind. There is a poem of John Donne, written just before his death, which I know and love. From it a quotation: ‘As West and East / In all flatt Maps—and I am one—are one, / So death doth touch the Resurrection.’ That still does not make a Trinity, but in another, better known devotional poem Donne opens, ‘Batter my heart, three person’d God.’”

Oppenheimer’s reaction to witnessing the explosion of the atomic device was to recall these lines from the Bhagavad Gita:

If the radiance of a thousand suns
Were to burst at once into the sky,
That would be like the splendor of the Mighty One...
I am become Death,
The shatterer of Worlds.

Did Oppenheimer think that he had become death that day, or that all of us had? Certainly that first nuclear explosion portended the possibility that worlds would be shattered (by a “Mighty One”?), as they were soon to be in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

This year marks the 65th anniversary of the Trinity test. We are now 65 years into the Nuclear Age. At Hiroshima and Nagasaki we have seen the devastation that nuclear weapons can inflict on cities and their inhabitants. We have witnessed a truly mad arms race between the United States and the former Soviet Union, in which the number of nuclear weapons in the world rose to 70,000. We have learned that one nuclear weapon can destroy a city, a few nuclear weapons can destroy a country, and a nuclear war could destroy civilization and most of the complex life forms on the planet.

Nuclear weapons have endangered the human species, and yet today there are still more than 20,000 nuclear weapons in the world. Nine countries now possess these weapons. Humanity is still playing with the fire of omnicide—the death of all. We are still waiting for the leaders who will take us beyond this overarching threat to our common future. Instead of continuing to wait, we must ourselves become these leaders.

On this 65th anniversary of embarking on the Journey of Death, we must change course and move back from the nuclear precipice. The weapons are illegal, immoral, undemocratic and militarily unnecessary. The surest way to bring them under control is by negotiating a new treaty, a Nuclear Weapons Convention, for the phased, verifiable, irreversible and transparent elimination of nuclear weapons.

The United States led the world into the Nuclear Age. President Obama has pointed out that the country also has a moral responsibility to lead the way out. This can be done, but not with a citizenry that is ignorant, apathetic and in denial. Sixty-five years on the Journey of Death is long enough. It is past time for citizens to awaken and become engaged in this issue as if their future depended upon it, as it does.

The fervent prayer of the hibakusha, the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, is “Never Again!” They speak out so that their past does not become our future. It is a prayer that each of us must join in answering, both with our voices and actions to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons.

David Krieger is President of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, www.wagingpeace.org, an organization that has worked since 1982 to abolish nuclear weapons. Dr. Krieger is the editor of “The Challenge of Abolishing Nuclear Weapons,” and author of “God’s Tears: Reflections on the Atomic Bombs Dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.”

Hiroshima Pilgrimage
by Jerry Bozeman, GFP, and Dr. Lon Jones

We were a few days late for the 65th Anniversary of the Hiroshima bombing of August 6, 1945, but the ambience in Hiroshima was still thick with the celebration. It was, after all, the first time the United States or the United Nations had sent a representative and the local leaders were hopeful that Obama would honor their invitations with a visit this November.

Of course such a visit created a firestorm of controversy as part of our population railed against the possibility of apologizing for our action. Apologizing, however, is not a part of the agenda. The Japanese and most others realize that Japan would not have their peaceful focus were it not for the bombs dropped on their cities. The issue is reducing the chance of future nuclear attacks by eliminating the bombs and the bomb material, an issue that many world leaders have given lip service to over the past 50 years. Japan and many others just want to see it progress beyond political rhetoric.

We shared that hope as we signed on to the declaration available at the museum, noting as we did so that we were the only Americans for the day. Our guide, who talks to people every day who come to Hiroshima to celebrate this idea, was brought close to tears when I answered his question about whether the world was getting safer from my own experience coping with those who unthinkingly would use nuclear weapons on our enemies in the Arab world. Maybe tears are the only answer to such thoughts. We hope for the day when personal and national actions will not be based on fear, and reliance on force will be unnecessary.

Jerry Bozeman, M.Ed., LPC, RPT-S, Plainview, Texas.
Indiana
Christie Smith Stephens

The Indiana Chapter keeps working for peace. This summer we supported monetarily the Oasis of Peace School in Jerusalem which educates Christian, Muslim and Jewish students. Grandmother for Peace Kay Shively and her husband Dr. Fred Shively received the Peacemaker Award from the Peace Fellowship of the Church of God for their life long work for peace and justice. Grandmother Norma Abbey continues to write informative letters to the editor as does Ms. Shively. Grandmother Lois Rockhill writes a regular column about hunger in the newspaper. All of us support her work at Second Harvest Food Bank.

Lois and her husband Erv traveled to China and Korea this spring. They placed messages for peace on behalf of GFP on a peace tree and at the wall of the demilitarized zone.

Grandmother Dondena Caldwell serves as an interpreter for patients at local clinics and hospitals. She is fluent in Spanish and Portuguese. These are a few of our activities for peace.

California
Pat Dressler

I had a little bible session with my grandkids and we got on the topic of God and His people and how we show our love for God by working for peace and reaching out to others. My 10-year-old grandson picked up on that issue right away. He came up with the idea that he would organize a campaign to go door-to-door in his local neighborhood to get donations for those in need. He got his sister and a neighbor kid to put together a decorated shoe box and went on their soliciting campaign and mission to reach out to others. They had a good response to their efforts and this is one Granny who praised them and told them this was a special way to work for peace and show their love for God and those who are suffering from poverty. God Bless Them!

Colorado
Merry Nielsen

I am proud to be a member of Grandmothers for Peace and truly believe that each of us “can” make a difference.

Here in Estes Park, Colorado, I am also a member of Patriots for Peace and every Wednesday we hold a noon vigil with our peace signs. It is amazing how many cars go by and “honk for peace.” I truly believe that most people are for peace. In all the times I have stood at the corner holding my sign “Grandma for Peace” (made for me by my granddaughter), only one time has a passerby (a gentleman about my age) said anything negative to me: He said “you are old enough to know better than that.”

Keep up the good work, and peace is possible; it begins with each of us. Love & Peace, Merry

Nevada
Sandra

Hello, Grandmothers for Peace. Needless to say I am unhappy about the war situation. I write to the President and my Congressmen at least twice a week.

You know I was thinking of an idea. What if we all sent pictures of our grandchildren (faces blocked out) and made a huge collage to be sent to Washington - begging that we might not loose them to endless and senseless wars? Perhaps a web presentation. Which I would not know how to do. I know some of you clever people out there would. I look at the pictures of my seven and pray that they never have to be mutilated and killed. Peace, Sandra

Arizona
Ordell Nelson

The Sun City Posse’s attempt to stop our using “Honk for Peace” signs on March 16th apparently was part of a national effort to silence peace demonstrators. Our “Honk for Peace” signs were extremely popular at our next demonstration, and 18 demonstrators showed up (our biggest attendance for years).

Thanks to the fine reporting done by Jeff Dempsey (Daily News Sun), it became apparent that Marge Paulding (Sun City Posse Commander) did not support her officers’ attempt to silence us. They issued a public apology to our group.

About a month after the March 16th fiasco, another sheriff suggested instead of demonstrating, we should turn on our headlights! He was ignored.

The Sun City fiasco strengthened our resolve to continue our demonstrations. With snowbirds fleeing and our blistering summer heat returning, our numbers went back to 6-8 per demonstration. Thanks to our new regulars: Deanna & Bob Ferrante, Ira & Liana Dressner, and Sally Nuerenberg.

The chain of our demonstrations has been unbroken for over seven years. Our success is thanks to every one of us!

Kudos to Joan & Bob Kroll for bringing our signs to each and every demonstration! They store the signs in their house and load them in their car for each vigil. Imagine doing this job in our heat! The signs completely fill the rear of their car.

They always arrive early for every single gathering. Then they place our signs around the four corners of 99th & Bell. They tie some to bushes, shove others into the ground, and stack most next to their car. A couple signs weigh at least 20 pounds requiring man-handling them into place. To help passersby identify us, they attach our Grandmothers for Peace banner to a chair.

In addition, they have repaired many of our older signs. And (yes, there’s more!) Joan makes many of our signs and amazingly creates peace jewelry for us! After every demonstration, they pack the signs back in their car, take them back home, and then store them away until our next demonstration.

We thank Joan & Bob Kroll for their devotion to Grandmothers for Peace! They’re a big reason for our unbroken chain.

Health problems have caused some of us to miss demonstrations. In spite of that, the rest of our group carries on. We have much to be proud of!
Franklin County, New York
Jean

Here in the north country the 3Ds are prevailing, despite a beautifully warm summer.

DISAPPOINTED: Members who were willing to endure freezing weather or searing heat to protest the war in Iraq do NOT think the war in Afghanistan should be ended. There is a feeling that if “we” leave the Taliban and the war lords will prevail once again and the women there will be subjected to more terror.

DISGUSTED: This supposition may well be true. HOWEVER, if one feels that no war is a just war, there is the possibility that the women of Afghanistan, with the support of the international community, can free themselves of their oppression - as women in many countries, including ours, have had to do.

DEPRESSED: Some of our Grandmothers have moved away from the area and one of our staunchest members has been jailed for ten years. Lynne Stewart’s jail sentence has severely depressed all of us and we’re missing a “spark” we used to have. It’s okay, because we’re now fighting and helping her husband fight, to change the very unjust way she and other political prisoners are treated.

GET OVER IT! My goal is to keep cheering people on and encouraging even the smallest action so we don’t feel bad if there are only two of us at the corner. We will triumph eventually, the universe is on our side.

Editor: Lynne Feltham Stewart is an American activist, and attorney. She represents controversial, and often unpopular defendants. In 2003, Stewart was convicted on charges of conspiracy and providing material support to terrorists, and sentenced to 28 months in prison. She was resentenced on July 15, 2010, to 10 years in prison in light of perjury at her trial and other factors.

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.

Final Scholarship Recipients

Barbara Wiedner and Dorothy Vandercook
Memorial Scholarship Foundation

Due to circumstances beyond our control, GFPI no longer has an affiliation with the BWDV Scholarship Foundation. Leal Portis and her board, over the past eight years, have given out 115 scholarships, and we are grateful for the role GFPI has contributed to this project.

$500
Stephen Soto
Elmhurst, IL
Mara Weidman
Austin, TX
Augustine Kamara
Sierra Leone

$250
Nicholas Kitchel
Los Molina, CA
Heron Russell
Richmond, VT
Marena McGregor
Concord, CA
Moon Su Kang
Glen Ellen, IL

$250
Alexander Buck
Monroe, CT
Amberly Asay
Mapleton, UT
Rachel Wanjiru
Sagana, Kenya

Thank you to Sarah Johnson who has efficiently taken care of mailing out our shirts, caps, etc., over the last several years. Sarah is no longer able to do this and please note that all mail now goes to the same address. You can now use the pre-printed envelope for both membership and orders.

Peace to all of us, Lorraine

Director’s Notes

Dear Grandmothers for Peace:

Don’t do it! Do not throw your hands up in despair and give up. Of course there are many reasons to do so — you know them and I don’t have to list them. We had hope, we wanted things to change. They did. Got worse. I nod my head from side to side each day and wonder how we got to so much hate and chaos in this nation, so much judgment. Remember Rodney King? “Can’t we just all get along?” WE must continue. WE have the ability to make a difference, regardless of how small or large — it all “counts.”

YOU are important as one, and we are important collectively. Think about this and embrace it: Just 1,000 of us — each of us probably has 50 years of experience in caring, nurturing, healing and loving, conflict resolution and yes, pain. That is 50,000 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE! The world needs us. WE will not be manipulated by fear, disheartened by upheaval, shaken by hate and disappointment. We will go forward, doing even the smallest thing each day. Please take these words from me to heart. And, these words from Dorothy Day:

Commitment

People say, what is the sense of our small effort. They cannot see that we must lay one brick at a time, take one step at a time.

A pebble cast into a pond causes ripples that spread in all directions. Each one of our thoughts, words and deeds is like that.

No one has a right to sit down and feel hopeless. There’s too much work to do.

Peace to all of us, Lorraine

The Newsletter Insert

Copy, Clip, & Distribute to your heart’s content!

Thank you to Sarah Johnson who has efficiently taken care of mailing out our shirts, caps, etc., over the last several years. Sarah is no longer able to do this and please note that all mail now goes to the same address. You can now use the pre-printed envelope for both membership and orders.

Thanks again Sarah, you were a big help!
**Dorothy Wolden**

In late 1986, the Northland Chapter of Grandmothers for Peace hosted an event featuring a presentation by Pat Passero, a local woman who as an adult university student had traveled to Russia. Pat was an elementary education student so chapter president Jan Provost figured it would be a good idea to ask people attending the talk to donate a children’s toy, which would then be given to a local charitable organization. Being a peace group, donated toys had to be “non-war” items.

The table full of colorful, creative playthings inspired the grandmas to make the toy drive an annual event. Since then, our peaceful toy drive has become a community tradition. In both cities, Superior, WI, and Duluth, MN, local businesses, churches and agencies allow us to display decorated boxes for people to drop off their donations.

We have collected literally thousands of toys. One year a toy store went out of business and donated their remaining inventory. Recently our local Dollar Stores, who had been strong supporters for years, unfortunately went out of business as well, and donated hundreds of books and toys as they closed out. One of our eldest members always donates two sleds to support outdoor play. The technical college early childhood education program collects toys for the very young. Superior High School’s Future Business Leaders of America Chapter collects items for us at the school and also collects money and goes shopping, making sure we have items appropriate for preteens and teens.

Over the years we have enjoyed wonderful media support, including a public radio interview, a commercial filmed and aired by our local cable company, a television interview, numerous photographs in our local newspapers and a large feature article in the newspaper of the Catholic diocese. The children’s room of the library in Superior always hosts a box and the staff there does most of the contributing to it. A local store let us decorate their shop window one December. In 2003 another local peace group was having weekly demonstrations, and the week our toy drive kicked off their signs encouraged passers-by to buy peaceful toys. One of our members was there dressed as an elf, her daughter was dressed as a reindeer, and they were accompanied by a large fellow with a white beard wearing a red suit whose sign read, “SANTA SAYS NO WAR TOYS.”

Our toys are donated locally to the Center Against Sexual and Domestic Abuse for their holiday gathering of families who have received their assistance over the last year. We also donate to Loaves and Fishes, the Catholic Worker community in Duluth. At times we have donated to Toys for Tots, programs for the homeless and a shelter for women and children escaping domestic abuse. On collection day, our wonderful member volunteers take carloads of toys to these agencies.

It has been our main goal to raise awareness of the message that gifts convey to children. The presence of the boxes around our community is meant to be thought-provoking and to help everyone consider deeply the items they select for children they love as well as the items they may donate to us. It is our fondest hope that we may have had some small influence in creating a more peaceful world, one toy box at a time.

---

**Northland Chapter Peaceful Toy Drive: 23 Years Strong!**

**November 19-21, 2010**

- Converge on Fort Benning, GA
- Celebrate the Resistance - Commemorate the Martyrs - Shut Down the School of the Americas

Thirty years have passed since Maryknoll missionaries Mauria Clark, Jean Donovan, Ita Ford, and Dorothy Kazel were brutally killed by graduates of the SOA in El Salvador. They are four among thousands of victims and survivors of the ongoing SOA / WHINSEC violence.

In 2009, SOA graduates overthrew the democratically elected government of Honduras and unleashed brutal repression against the pro-democracy resistance. This year saw the release of a human rights report that links SOA graduates to extrajudicial killings in Colombia.

The SOA / WHINSEC has remained open throughout too many years of terror and violence in Latin America, and no formal investigation of the school has ever taken place.

**Enough is enough! Shut it down!**

*Ed: Written by Liz Albanese. Info: SOA Watch, PO Box 4566, Washington, DC 20017; Phone: (202) 234 3440; Web: soaw.org; Fax: (202) 636-4505.*
On June 26, 2010, thousands of Americans and the World joined “Hands Across the Sand” in the largest gathering in history against offshore oil drilling and yes to clean energy. GFP were there.

ARTIFACTS AND ASHES

Among the artifacts were crisply charred bodies.

In one of the charred bodies a daughter recognized the gold tooth of her mother.

As the girl reached out to touch the burnt body her mother crumbled to ashes.

The ashes sifted through her hands and floated to the ground.

The wind carried the ashes to the four corners of an unsettled world.


On June 26, 2010, thousands of Americans and the World joined “Hands Across the Sand” in the largest gathering in history against offshore oil drilling and yes to clean energy. GFP were there.

Lorraine Krofchock with Tad Daley, author of Apocalypse Never: Forging the Path to a Nuclear Weapon-Free World. Tad spoke at the GFP co-sponsored event about why we must abolish nuclear weapons, how we can, and what the world will look like after we do.

www.handsacrossthesand.org

Portland, Maine: Lizzy Poole, GFP vacationing from the Florida Keys, took this picture.
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**Shipping:** $4.50 for 1st item = $
$2.00 for each additional item x = $
Subtotal = $

New! Grocery/Everything Tote

(12 oz. Cotton Twill, 15.5” H x 13” W x 7” D)

Bigger & Wider - Perfect for groceries and anything else you want to carry. Cut down on plastic - Help the environment.

**FREE SHIPPING on this item only.**

Make check payable to Grandmothers for Peace International** for the TOTAL: $
Help the Environment and GFP

Offer continued - for our environment. If you send in a donation renewal of $30.00 (or more), you will receive one of our new “everything” tote bag. This will help reduce the use of plastic bags.

___ Enclosed is my donation of $30 or more:

___ Yes, please send me a tote.

___ No thank you, but here is my donation

___ Please make membership check payable to Grandmothers for Peace Int’l

☐ $25 Regular/yearly
☐ $25 Mens Auxiliary/yearly
☐ $15 Senior Citizen/yearly
☐ $50 Patron/yearly
☐ $30 Family/yearly
☐ $100 Sponsor/yearly

☐ $ ______ For International Donations, please contact Grandmothers for Peace by e-mail, or postal mail.

Mail to:
Grandmothers for Peace International
P.O. Box 1292
Elk Grove, CA 95759 USA

8/2010
Have you ever wondered why we as a nation cannot afford to repair our infrastructure, improve our schools, provide real health care, build rapid transit, help the poor, back renewable energy research, etc ... ?

CONSIDER THIS

The estimated cost of the Afghanistan War is $100,000,000,000.00 / per year

OR:

$8,333,333,333.33 / per month
$273,972,602.74 / per day
$11,415,525.11 / per hour
$190,258.75 / per minute
$3,170.98 / per second

$100 Billion dollars - out of your wallet.


Grandmothers for Peace - Fall 2010 Newsletter