

“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

Lorraine Krofchok, Director

Founded 1982

Spring 2019

“May Grandmothers For Peace Be The Light In The Darkness”

Dear Grandmothers for Peace,

This has been the most difficult newsletter to put together since I became director in 2001. We as an organization marched in the streets, stood on street corners, flooded Congress with calls, letters and personal visits all with various issues, each time trying to make a better, safer world for the future. With the current administration and the crew supporting him so much has been destroyed or “executive order” out of existence — for now. Yet, there can be hope for a grand rising of consciousness and intense participation in the voting process.

Our headline quote comes from a Grandmother for Peace in Santa Cruz, California. She called to order several buttons, as she has before, and gives out at various events. She quietly spreads peace. As we spoke, she said those words. She does not use a computer and doesn't take pictures at the actions. But each time I talk to her I admire her dedication. We all work in our own way.

A few weeks ago, I send out, in part, the following message.

“I will slowly move forward with an abbreviated newsletter and am very interested to read your thoughts. A few sentences will do and no need to even sign your name, just what state you live in. Let's see geographically what is going on and important to you. I realize what the frustration, anxiety and despair a daily diet of chaos can bring. Even I, as a news junkie, have cut back my viewing.”

Distressingly, I now look at our constitution. How could the authors, and additional amendments ever envision a cabinet full of yes men, a congress beholden to party, not country and no mechanism to remove incompetency (except by the beholden). It is time, beyond time for an overhaul. Lessons learned? I hope so.

Please read some of the comments from different states, to inspire and to know we continue. We maintain our roots, but our branches have spread ...

And, on a final note. I don't expect to live long enough to see the massive destruction climate change could bring, the indicators are obviously there already. However, I (we) would like to plant the seed of the tree that I will never sit under to enjoy the shade. Let the future bloom!

*Peace to all of us,
Lorraine*

“To announce that there must be no criticism of the President, or that we are to stand by the President, right or wrong, is not only unpatriotic and servile, but is morally treasonable to the American public.”

Theodore Roosevelt



Sharing Our Thoughts and Observations

Hurricane, WV

Here is a letter I faxed to my senators today about mounting tensions with Iran. I doubt if either of them will read what I sent, but it made me feel better to do something, however futile my efforts may be. I fear unless something is done to stop him, Trump could start a war.

"Dear Senators Capito/Manchin:

President Trump is raising the specter of war with Iran by sending troops, planes, and ships to the area and by increasing tensions through his reckless actions and rhetoric. Both Russia and China support Iran against what they say is U.S. aggression, but our old allies, whom the President has criticized, may no longer have our backs, so we could start a war that we can't win. Our commander-in-chief is ignorant of history, diplomacy, and war, so this road leads to disaster.

The Senate has the Constitutional power to declare war and approve treaties. If there were ever a time for the Senate to stand up to the President and assert its power, it is now. Preventing war with Iran is in your hands. This is not a drill. Please save us from this terrible fate.

Thank you."

Wilmington, North Carolina

This will be our sixth annual participation in the Wilmington Earth Day celebration. We set up a table and provide the materials for kids to make peace signs. They are free to take them home or leave them with us to use at our annual Peace Day celebration.

Once they finish their project, we give them a little vial of bubbles and tell them that these are Peace Bubbles and ask them to go spread peace throughout the park with their bubbles. They love doing that and it is a pure joy to see all the "peace" bubbles floating throughout a park that was once designated "For Whites Only."

Thank you for always being the voice that encourages us to go out there and do our very best.

Santa Clarita, CA

There is so much I would like to say, but now that I am in my 80s, I find my level of participation is very low. Even writing letters "to the editor" (which I used to do constantly) seems to take so much effort on my part.

I try to participate by meeting together with "like minded" friends, but then I think how much does that change what is happening in the world. I hate to sound so down and pessimistic, which is not really my usual personality. I am praying that some of the young women Democrats recently elected will "step up" to do their part. I live in Santa Clarita, California, and we did elect our FIRST Democratic Representative Katie Hill which was quite exciting and satisfying.

I love reading your newsletter because it always brings me hope and upbeat feelings. Even an "abbreviated" one will be most welcome!

Hayward, CA

Thank you for keeping us motivated. I have found that I can try to keep abreast of what's happening in this country and in the world, but I have to act locally.

I am a lay leader in my very progressive, LGBTQ-supportive church, and I serve on the board of the South Hayward Parish, a faith-based non-profit whose main services are weekly free groceries for those who need them, support services for the homeless, and being active on social justice issues in this area.

Keith and I are also the guardians of a now eight-year-old boy, so we are spending our retirement years raising another child. Keith is volunteering as a soccer coach, and he just finished a semester teaching a college-level course in "Social Ethics" at San Quentin State Prison.

We have to stay active and do what we can if we don't want to succumb to despair.

Thank you for all you do.

"The further a society drifts from the truth, the more it will hate those who speak it."

— George Orwell

Southern California

Please, please, don't despair. We must keep on keeping on. At least for now. I told My husband that this period in American history will go down as a "bad" period. But we have had other bad periods. And we're still here. One of the main problems with human beings, in my mind, is that we think we are superior to all other living beings. We're not. We're animals, too. Our evolved forebrain (cerebrum), responsible for language and planning which we do much better than other mammals and non-mammalian species, DOES NOT control our lower brain and all the instinctual functions that come from there, like drives and emotions. So, we think we are more superior than we actually are and then we make terrible mistakes in judgment because of it.

The viciousness of world leaders is nothing new. Their stupidity and cruelty is also old stuff. And maybe if we had more tolerance for our animal selves, we would be better off.

Stay well (as best we can). Know that I continue to teach peace to all my little students. It's a small contribution to our effort, but it's the best one I can make.

New Jersey

It is exhausting turning on the news each day and see the same discussions with no solutions. I personally am trying to do my part in cleaning up the environment.

I teach my children and grandchildren the importance of recycling, reusing and less is more for our planet!

In Memory

Our deepest sympathy to our board member **Jan Provost** on the loss of her granddaughter **Celine**, just 24 years old. Jan is the sister of the late Barbara Wiedner, founder of GFP.

Heartfelt sadness and condolences to **Joan Kroll** on the death of her husband **Bob**. Bob had a devastating accident and we all were shocked at his passing. Joan and her GFP group have held peace vigils for years in Sun City West, Arizona.

Doomsday clock stays at two minutes to midnight as crisis now ‘new abnormal’



IT IS 2 MINUTES TO MIDNIGHT

The reasons given by the Bulletin’s panel of experts included the collapse of arms control treaties, and the emphasis in Washington and Moscow on modernising nuclear arsenals rather than dismantling them, and the lack of political will to reverse climate change.

“We are like passengers on the Titanic, ignoring the iceberg ahead, enjoying the fine food and music,” said Jerry Brown, the former governor of California. Since leaving office this month, Brown has become the Bulletin’s executive chairman, citing the imminent threats to humanity. “It’s late and it’s getting later. We have to wake people up. And that’s what I intend to do!”

In the nuclear realm, the United States abandoned the Iran nuclear deal and announced it would withdraw from the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF), grave steps towards a complete dismantlement of the global arms control process. . . . Meanwhile, the world’s nuclear nations proceeded with programs of “nuclear modernization” that are all but indistinguishable from a worldwide arms race, and the military doctrines of Russia and the United States have increasingly eroded the long-held taboo against the use of nuclear weapons.

. . . Global warming has contributed to the occurrence of catastrophes, including the massive wildfires seen this year in California, Greece, and Sweden, and the deadly heat waves suffered by Asia, Australia, Europe, and North America. The US National Climate Assessment has forecast increasingly severe impacts on the economy, human health, agriculture, and natural ecosystems. . . .

. . . Amid these unfortunate nuclear and climate developments, there was a rise during the last year in the intentional corruption of the information ecosystem on which modern civilization depends. In many forums, including particularly social media, nationalist leaders and their surrogates lied shamelessly, insisting that their lies were truth, and truth “fake news.” These intentional attempts

to distort reality exaggerate social divisions, undermine trust in science, and diminish confidence in elections and democratic institutions. Because these distortions attack the rational discourse required for solving the complex problems facing humanity, cyber-enabled information warfare aggravates other major global dangers—including those posed by nuclear weapons and climate change—as it undermines civilization generally.

This new abnormal is simply too volatile and dangerous to accept as a continuing state of world affairs.

What ordinary people can do to meet these challenges

First, get smart about the problems. Nuclear weapons and climate change may seem to be outside our daily experience and beyond our control, but we all have a stake in avoiding untimely death. We want to live our lives free from destruction by nuclear weapons and from growing scarcity of natural resources brought about by a warming planet.

Second, share what you’ve learned with others—in your family, workplace, church, school, or social media feeds. The more we talk to each other about what matters most—surviving and flourishing—the more confidence we’ll have about expressing our interests.

Third, tell your government representatives that you don’t want even more of your tax money spent on nuclear weapons or on subsidizing carbon dioxide-producing fossil fuel technologies. Write letters, tell them at hall meetings, email their offices, and let them know that your security depends on getting rid of nuclear weapons and on finding ways to keep our planet habitable for humanity.

Editor’s Note: For a PDF copy of 2019 Doomsday Clock Statement:
<https://thebulletin.org/doomsday-clock/>

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“We’re not going to have the America that we want until we elect leaders who are going to tell the truth - not most days, but every day.” — Ann Richards

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