

Journal 19

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Editor's Note: In This Issue

One of the aims of this Journal is to spread information about the growing strength and variety of nonviolent movements all over the world. In his article **Wayne Vanek** revisits the work of Gene Sharp, a major figure in the development of nonviolent methodologies. He is still not very well known in this country. There is an abbreviated transcript of an NPR interview about a successful nonviolent demonstration by a group of Palestinian women. There is also a story about the work of a courageous and innovative 66 year-old women in the streets of Guayaquil, Ecuador.

This Journal encourages first person accounts of experience with peace-making or other writings of a personal nature. The remaining articles in this issue fall in that category. I have written a memorial to **Henry Hulseberg** who frequently came to the Friday night vigils. Sandy Jefferson has another anecdote from the vigil. We have a poem by **Christine Ione** about her son, as well as a poem by **Wayne Vanek** about his relationship with his son. Christine ponders what it means to let go. Wayne reflects about what one generation passes on to the next. Over the past year some members from First United Church have been meeting with Muslims from the Islamic Foundation in Villa Park. I have written an account of that.

It's been a grim summer watching the partisan divide in Congress put the financial status of our nation in jeopardy. The debased nature of so much of our political discourse is disheartening to say the least. We worry about these things in our *InnerPeace/WorldPeace* meetings. There is also, however, a growing sense among those of us who are learning about and seeking to practice nonviolence that it is, as yet, a largely untapped resource. We are being advised these days to buy gold for financial security. We might also want to try love for political and spiritual security. Let's not confine love to romance, or just family and friends. Let's let it loose on the world.

—Bud Hayes

IN MEMORIAM *Henry Hulseberg*

For a number of years Henry Hulseberg has frequently been a gentle presence at the Friday night vigils on the steps of First United Church in Oak Park. Whenever he was there he would lead us in the Lord's Prayer at the end. His partner, Sandy Jefferson, would lead us in singing. Henry died on April 12, 2011 of heart complications. He was born on August 18, 1947. A memorial service was held at First United Church on June 4. People from various eras in Henry's life gave moving testimony to the significance he has had in their lives. All of us who came to know him at the vigil are grateful for the contribution he made to our witness.

—Bud Hayes

“He took a couple
of steps towards
our group and said,
“I’ll tell you the good
that it does.”

—Sandy Jefferson

“What Good Does It Do?”

One evening a year ago this August a number of us were standing on the front steps of First United Church in Oak Park during the weekly Friday night Prayer Vigil for Peace. There were quite a few of us that night because the church was having a cookout, and some people from there had wandered over to join us.

A man approached us and said, with some anger, “What good does it do?” We said that it makes a visual statement. He persisted, saying, “But how do you know for sure that it really does any good?” We told him that sometimes people walking by give us the peace sign or people in cars honk their support. He still wasn’t satisfied. “How do you know for sure that it does any good?”

Dudley Fillmore, the church custodian at the time, was standing nearby as he often did on Friday evenings, not exactly with us, but close enough to hear and see what we were about. He took a couple of steps towards our group and said, “I’ll tell you the good that it does. Yes, the wars continue, but by standing out here we are saying that we have faith in God. There was a song we’d sing when I was a kid that went, ‘He’s got the whole world in his hands!’ By standing here summer, winter, spring and fall, we are saying we will trust in God.”

The man said, “Okay,” and walked away.

After that we all sang that song and Dudley joined us. So this is our message: Whether you stand for peace because you believe in God, or because you simply believe that there are better alternatives to war, we urge you to stand, sing, pray and work for peace.

May peace fill our hearts.

—Sandy Jefferson

To a Son at 17

—Christine Ione

Like a thunderbolt
you explode
in a sunburst of colors
yellow orange red

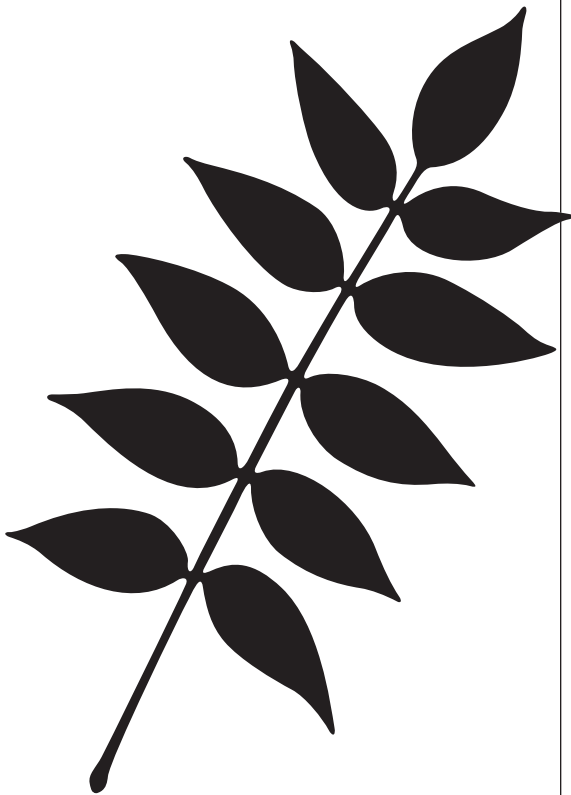
No longer the picture
in my memory
of a child
small, sweet and contained
within my expectation

Life in you bursts forth
with passionate abandon
excited, anticipating
I watch your awesome wheel
of self-discovery unfurl

Grieving, I fitfully release my hold
on your life
Day by day
my heart stretches
to grow big enough to let you go
to grow big enough to take you in



“...if they struggle together, they’re more likely to build relationships that will last.”



Love Works: Don't Forget The Women

The new documentary film *Budrus* tells the story of a Palestinian village that was right in the path of a planned section of the Israeli security wall. Over the course of many months in 2003 and 2004, Palestinians of all political stripes were joined by Israeli demonstrators in non-violent protest. Israelis finally did re-route the wall closer to the border and away from the town, saving a grove of olive trees, a source of the town's livelihood. National Public Radio's Mary Louise Kelly talks with the film's writer and director, Julia Bacha, about the movie and its message of nonviolent protest.

Mary Louise Kelly, host: Tell us first about this Palestinian man, Ayed Morrar, who emerges as the somewhat unlikely hero of the film.

Ms. Bacha: Ayed Morrar realized when he saw that his village was about to be destroyed, he could not wait for the Palestinian Authority to do anything; that he depended on people in the village to do something. And what he had the vision to do was to extend an invitation to Israeli activists. And that's at the core of his vision... that the struggle needs to be of Palestinians and Israelis together because they share a future. And if they struggle together, they're more likely to build relationships that will last.

Kelly: And the core of his philosophy is fighting back, but not with arms, using civil disobedience.

Ms. Bacha: Ayed Morrar saw that there was nothing else that the village could do, except to try to - with their bare bodies - stop the bulldozers from uprooting the olive trees. The amazing part of this story is that the first person to actually be able to break through the Israeli border police lines and stand in front of a bulldozer was his daughter who was 15 at the time and who convinced her father that the women needed to join.

Kelly: Well, and she's interesting because she looks at these protests and asks why is it only men marching? Here's her talking:

(Soundbite) Ms. Iltezam Morrar: "We saw the men trying to push the soldiers and it was then that none of them could do that. But I think the girls could do it."

Kelly: She also seemed to grasp, fairly early on, that if it's bad PR to have your bulldozers mowing down olive trees, it's going to be even worse PR to see them mowing down women.

Ms. Bacha: I think that she was right about that. I think, historically, there is more likely to be violence between young Palestinian men and young Israeli border police officers. When the women came in, waving their flags, singing, chanting and clapping, they confused the Israeli border police officers to the point that they had to send in a female commander, who's also portrayed in the film.

Kelly: The film's sympathies do seem to lie pretty squarely with the Palestinian protesters. But you include interviews with the Israeli security forces who have been sent to Budrus. There's one very telling interview that you did with an Israeli military spokesman who is very blunt about how he sees the situation unfolding.

(Soundbite) Unidentified Man: "This wall is extremely unfortunate for the lives of the Palestinian people. However, it is not as unfortunate as a death of an Israeli civilian."

Ms. Bacha: Often we talk about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a choice between either Israeli security or Palestinian freedom. But I think that there is a way for both to be realized, and this village, I think, symbolizes that potential.

Kelly: Thank you so much. That's the writer and director, Julia Bacha, talking about her film "Budrus." Protests continued in Budrus for 10 months. The wall was eventually re-routed.

Thank you to National Public Radio. Read and hear the full interview at NPR.org. Broadcast 10/14/2010.

—Wayne Vanek

Christain/Muslim Dialogue: A Beginning

During the past year some members of *First United Church of Oak Park* Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ, along with some from InnerPeace/WorldPeace have been involved in a series of meetings with Muslim men and women from the *Islamic Foundation of Villa Park*. Villa Park is in the western suburbs of Chicago about twenty minutes from Oak Park. Quite a bit of planning and footwork has gone into setting up this series. It is a major accomplishment.

The series began last September with a three week seminar on Sunday morning at First United consisting of an introduction to Islam and Islamic culture. On the first Sunday of December about thirty of us from Oak Park drove out to the Islamic Foundation after church. We were invited to observe Muslims at prayer, men and women separately, we were given a tour of the facility. A light luncheon was served. In the discussion that followed we talked about meeting on a monthly basis from that point on, taking turns in various forms of hosting. That's pretty much what we have done through the winter and spring months. We have taken a break during the summer but expect to continue in the fall.

In early January we attended a supper meeting at the Islamic Foundation and heard a young man recite by memory from the Qur'an, not an unusual Islamic practice. The main event of the evening was a lecture and discussion on Muslim family life. In a reciprocal supper meeting at First United a month later there was a presentation under the heading, "Who Are We? A Partial Description." This had to do with what, to anyone outside our faith traditions, must seem like a bewildering variety of Christian faith groups, east and west. The next two months there were dinner meetings at the home of one of the First United couples and then at the home of one of the Muslim families with both informal socializing and a plenary discussion at the end.

On the first Sunday in June some who had been part of these events met to evaluate how things had gone so far and to plan for future events. A woman from the Islamic Foundation who had helped plan the events spoke briefly in morning worship. A Muslim student from Elmhurst College read from the Qua'ran. To help orient our Muslim friends, there was a brief explanation of each part of the morning worship.

It's a start in what we are hoping will be a long term relationship of mutual education and support. Save for a one day Christian/Muslim workshop, which I attended several years ago, I have had no contact with persons of the Islamic faith. The events described, all of which I attended, were a new experience for me. At both the workshop and in this more recent series, I have been impressed by the warmth and openness of Muslim persons and pleased with the ease with which I was able to enter into conversation with so many of them.

I believe deeply in the importance and value of Christian/Muslim dialogue. I am appalled at the extent of Islamophobia in both American and European cultures. I think that the only thing that will dispel such fears is ongoing face-to-face contact between Christians and Muslims and persons of all faiths for that matter. It is the strangeness of "the other" that must be overcome. Civilization begins with hospitality. It is threatened when we are no longer able or willing to welcome one another. I believe our modest little Christian/Muslim experiment is a step in the right direction.

May Peace Fill Our Hearts

—Bud Hayes

Our Mission Statement

InnerPeace /WorldPeace advocates for nonviolence by means of spiritual disciplines, group meetings, education and activism. We believe there is a necessary connection between inner transformation and finding effective alternatives to violence in the world. We welcome dialogue with others.

“By far the most terrible thing I learned,” she says, “is that assaulting, harming or killing others is a way to say, ‘I am here.’”

“When you meet a person who shows you love...you start to trust...that love motivates you to change and...to see new options...”

Love Works: Join My Gang

In the city of Guayaquil, Ecuador, Latin pop music blares through the doorway of a graffiti-sprayed shop. Teenagers, mostly boys, gather at the edge of the street. Despite the music and activity, the streets feel empty. No weapons are visible, though just a few months ago, guns and knives would have been hidden under car seats or in pockets. Instead of just talking, the boys would have been fighting or selling drugs. With a population nearing three million, Guayaquil is home to more than 200 gangs and 60,000 gang youth.

But in recent months, this neighbourhood has become a Barrio de Paz (“peace town”) under the guidance of Ser Paz, an organization committed to fostering peace in Guayaquil’s violent neighbourhoods. Instead of a gun or knife, Angelo, a teenager wearing a backward baseball cap and gold earrings, holds a clipboard, thick with paperwork from the new print shop he manages where rival gang members work side by side.

Angelo ran away from home and joined the “Latin Kings” after his parents died. “There was nobody to support us.” Today, support comes from Nelsa Curbelo, a 66-year-old woman who has spent almost two years fearlessly walking the neighbourhoods of Guayaquil alone, listening to and talking with gang members.

It is the qualities of presence and acceptance that distinguish Curbelo from others who work with gangs. Instead of dismissing gang culture, she validates the positive elements it inspires: teamwork, commitment, a sense of belonging and quick communication. She refuses to label gang members “delinquents,” and suggests the instinct to come together in “teams” is a positive response by area youth to “a very unfair and unequal society.”

Curbelo saw this dynamic early on. “By far the most terrible thing I learned,” she says, “is that assaulting, harming or killing others is a way to say, ‘I am here.’” This insight gave her direction. “What is needed are ways for young people to ‘feel present without committing a crime.’”

Ser Paz helps young people get business loans to start projects that have included a pizzeria, a recording studio and the print shop where Angelo works, which produces T-shirts and a hip-hop magazine. Teenagers have the chance to learn from these businesses while they’re earning their livings.

But there are a few requirements: All participants agree to renounce crime, and each business must include members from rival gangs. In this way, gang members learn to work together toward common goals. It’s an effective strategy. At one point, crime in this neighbourhood included 100 murders a month; now that number is down to 10. Last year, rival gang members showed their commitment, respect and gratitude, by piling their weapons—rifles, AK 47s, pistols and knives—in the street, and driving over them with a steamroller.

One can’t deny the revolution taking place in Guayaquil. “Nothing is more revolutionary than love,” Curbelo declares. “Love is the greatest power in the universe. Love is more powerful than violence, more powerful than the atomic bomb. Love has the power to transform lives, to change cities and the whole world.”

George, a gang leader imprisoned for murder, was released with Curbelo’s help—on the condition he give up crime forever. Now in his thirties, he runs the print shop with Angelo. “When you meet a person who shows you love,” he says slowly, “you start to trust that person. That love motivates you to change and you start to see new positive options for your life. It’s something that touches your heart.”

“I’ve known Nelsa for seven years,” he says, smiling slightly, his head tilting a bit with vulnerability, “and I’m ready to give my life for her.” Surely the deepest honour in any gang.

Gene Sharp and Nonviolent Uprisings

Since the uprising in Egypt and Tunisia, we have been hearing about Gene Sharp in newspaper articles (New York Times 2-16-11) and interviews on Public Radio. Who is Gene Sharp? According to the NYT article, Ahmed Maher, a leading strategist of Egypt's April 6th Youth Movement, learned about Gene Sharp while Mr. Maher was researching the Serbian Youth Movement, OTPAR, which helped bring down the repressive Serbian government in the '90s. OTPAR had been strongly influenced by Mr. Sharp's ideas, especially those found in his booklet *Dictatorship to Democracy*. It is a ninety-three page guide to toppling autocrats and is available for download in twenty four languages.

The article goes on to say that when Dalia Ziada, an Egyptian blogger and activist, attended a Cairo workshop by the International Center on Nonviolent Conflict, she received Mr. Sharp's *98 Methods of Nonviolent Action*. She said that some of the activists translated excerpts of it into Arabic and that his message of "attacking the weaknesses of dictators" stuck with them. Also Mr. Sharp's insistence, that advancing freedom takes careful strategy and meticulous planning, resonated among the youth leaders in Egypt. Peter Ackerman, a onetime student of Mr. Sharp who ran that Cairo workshop, has since authored a book on nonviolence *A Force More Powerful*.

Who is this Gene Sharp? Back in the '90s his ideas inspired dissidents around the world including in Burma (Myanmar), Bosnia, Serbia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine, and Georgia.

All this talk about Gene Sharp made me recall an article in the *InnerPeace/WorldPeace Journal* which I had written in June, 2006. That article gives some background about Mr. Sharp and his traveling and teaching in Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania. His "civilian-based defense" was adapted as government policy by these countries. All three countries gained their independence in 1991.

So Gene Sharp has been around for a long time, working to bring freedom around the world. At age eighty-three, Mr. Sharp continues his work in his little house in East Boston, which also doubles as headquarters of the Albert Einstein Institution, which he founded in 1983. I highly recommend that you read the New York Times article (2-16-11) and the IPWP Journal article to find out more about this extraordinary man, who has done so much for so many people.

My reflections are focused on the fact that most of the "Arab Spring" is happening through nonviolent struggle. It would be a shame to let the violence in Libya distract from these facts. Even in Syria where there is violent government suppression, the citizens are trying to carry on the struggle for freedom nonviolently.

I end this reflection as I ended the June, 2006 article. "Robert Helvey, a colleague of Mr. Sharp, says that Sharp should get the Nobel Peace Prize because millions of people have achieved their liberation through strategic nonviolence."

—Wayne Vanek

"I highly recommend
that you read...
more about this
extraordinary man..."

—Wayne Vanek



Looking Back and Looking Forward

“...the Saturday morning group... has become a laboratory for learning and practicing nonviolence...”

—Bud Hayes

As the nineteenth issue of the *InnerPeace/WorldPeace Journal* comes out, our nation is observing the tenth anniversary of 9/11. I am reminded that the activities and groups associated with *InnerPeace/WorldPeace* sprang from that event. In the last months of 2001 and the early months of 2002 many of us thinking along the same lines found each other. The first vigil was held on the Friday after we invaded Afghanistan. It has been going on ever since. The first Saturday group met in April of '02. It has been meeting ever since.

I have attended most of the Saturday morning groups over the years and have kept an informal record of attendance. By my count a total of 121 persons have attended the Saturday group at least once, some many times. Some of the high energy and excitement of the early years has subsided but for most who have come to the vigil or the Saturday group a strong sense of connection remains.

The focus of discussion has shifted from concern about our militaristic response to the so-called threat of terrorism to larger economic and ideological forces which threaten civil liberties, the social safety net, the rights of labor, regulatory functions, environmental concerns, equitable taxation, health care and fair voting practices. While the Saturday morning group continues to be a forum for the expression of concern about these issues, it has also become a laboratory for learning and practicing nonviolence using a variety of methods. The vigil and the Saturday group, as well as other spin-off groups of one sort or another, have been a precious resource for me, and I believe I am not alone in feeling this.

I am deeply grateful for *InnerPeace/WorldPeace* and all that it has come to mean. I am mindful on this tenth anniversary of 9/11 that the nation continues to grieve, those affected directly by 9/11 continue to suffer. There is much to be grateful for. Enormous challenges remain. It seems that each generation must learn all over again how to connect, how to be a community, how to love, how to recognize and work for those things which really matter. I believe that *InnerPeace/WorldPeace* is part of that great project.

—Bud Hayes





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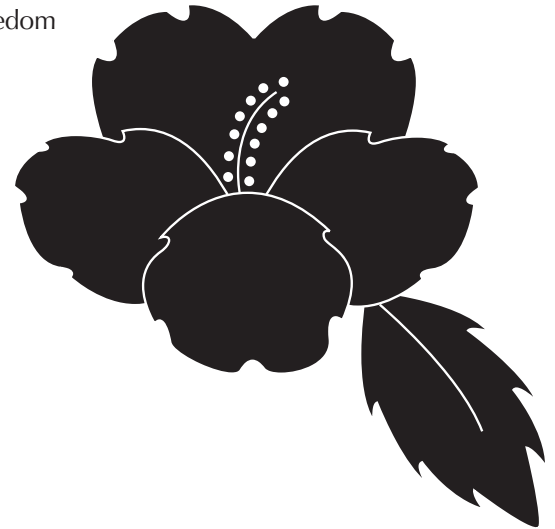
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**Be the change
you want to see
in the world** — *Gandhi*

A HAIKU

Ancestors to progeny
Ground pressed burdens and
Gifts bringing freedom

—Wayne Vanek



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