



From Our Director

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*Gratitude is a universal sentiment.
It is communicated in every language.*

Perhaps the most universal way to say thank you is in sign language. We learned to sign "thank you" with students from St. Mary's School for the Deaf at Camp Peaceprints in July. (See report on page 8.)



The Sisters of St. Joseph began teaching the deaf in Buffalo in 1854 and the current school on Main Street, the site of Camp Peaceprints, was opened in 1898. As the Sisters celebrate their 160th anniversary this year, the SSJ Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence is one among many vital ministries that continue today.

We have you to thank for that! We are privileged in this issue of Alternatives to recognize all of you who have given of your financial resources throughout the past year to further the ministry of nonviolence through the Sister Karen Center.

In every language, I send to you a HEARTFELT

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Vivian Ruth Waltz

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Peace and Nonviolence Festival Kicks Off Campaign Nonviolence



Rose Garden Peace Walk

In the dappled sunshine and refreshing breeze, the SSJ Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence joined in a Peace and Nonviolence Festival in Delaware Park Rose Garden on Sunday, September 21st. The festival was in solidarity with Campaign Nonviolence, an international effort to promote peace begun by the interdenominational organization Pace e Bene (“Peace and All Good”).

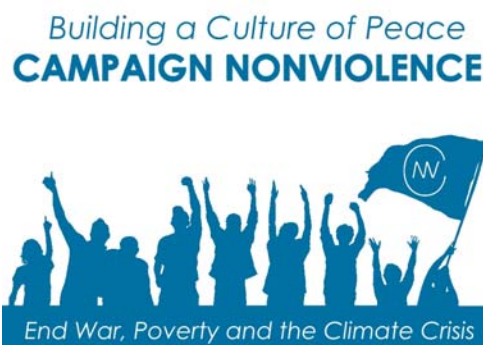
The intercultural, interfaith celebration was sponsored by the Sister Karen Center and over 50 other peace-loving groups including PaxChristi WNY, Catholic Diocese of WNY, WNY Peace Center, Interfaith Peace Network, Women Against Violence Everywhere, Stop The Violence Coalition, VOICE- Buffalo, and Buffalo Peacemakers.

Live music, stories, discussion, dance, art and children’s activities highlighted the festival, which closed with a peace walk around Hoyt Lake and the rose garden. The event was a unique opportunity for the community to unite in love for peace, and to explore ways of pursuing nonviolence in our society.

Campaign Nonviolence was introduced to the Buffalo community by Father John Dear of Pace e Bene in his program for the Sister Karen Center’s annual event last April. During the week of the Buffalo festival, thousands of people across the country took a public stand against violence – especially in the form of war, racism, poverty, and environmental destruction – in more than 160 events, building a movement for nonviolence and the common good. In light of the success of Buffalo’s Peace and Nonviolence Festival, we plan to make the celebration an annual event!



Sister Bette DiCesare, Vivian Waltz and Sister Bea Manzella at the Sister Karen Center booth



Girls wearing PEACE and LOVE shirts they made at the festival.

SAVE THE DATE! Sunday, April 19, 2015

Sister Simone Campbell, SSS

of “Nuns on the Bus” tours

Details TBA: sisterkarencenter.org



Nonviolence Makes A Difference

An Interview with BaBa Eng
Restorative Justice Developer for
Back to Basics Outreach Ministries and
Peacemakers Advisory Board Member
By Vivian Waltz



G. BaBa Eng

What would be your short definition of nonviolence?

Nonviolence is not just the absence of conflict, nonviolence is based on a philosophy, an ideology, a way of viewing and living life where a person's focus is on meaningful, peaceful, harmonious relationships with others.

Is nonviolence needed in our lifetime more than at other times in history?

Well I don't know about more than any time in history. We've had a violent history as human beings: the Crusades, the advent of the Islamic wars in the Middle East and wars in Africa. History is fraught with violence and enmity and misunderstanding among human beings. And now we find ourselves in a situation where people have moved to a position of only thinking about the individual. There is an ideology of individuality and independence and separateness from the "other" where you see the "other" as opposite and separate and disconnected from you. That's just not true. The "other" is just a reflection of yourself. We have to come to the point that we recognize the value and essential interdependence between all human beings.



As a member of the Advisory Committee of the Peacemakers Gang Intervention and Outreach Program can you tell us about the nonviolence training the Peacemakers are receiving?

Fortunately Peacemakers have been exposed to the philosophy of the Alternatives to Violence Project through the Sister Karen Center for Nonviolence as well as restorative justice practices through training by myself and Pastor James Giles of Back to Basics Outreach Ministries. The AVP concept of Transforming

Power is significant to the Peacemakers work. Transforming Power looks at the world in a way that says that our Creator placed in every individual an essential energy which is divinely connected that we can tap into and use to transform any situation from negative to positive as God intended. If we are open to Transforming Power then a potentially violent situation can be transformed into cooperation, negotiation, reconciliation and ultimately restorative justice.

What is restorative justice?

To restore something is to bring it back to the condition that previously existed as God created it. Restorative justice is an approach to conflict that focuses on repairing harm and creating a space for open communication, relationship building, healing, and understanding. Restorative justice provides a way for those impacted by conflict to be a part of finding solutions that meet their needs and promote community safety and well-being.

(continued on page 11)

CAMP PEACEPRINTS 2014

"Peace Messaging"

By Victoria Ross



St. Mary's students sign "love"

Peace Messaging at St. Mary's School for the Deaf, 2253 Main Street in Buffalo, was the heart of Camp Peaceprints 2014! In our seventh year, we focused on communication, and got a real lesson in how the impulse to connect is a powerful force.

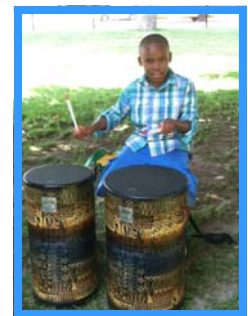
Sixty-five children and youth communicated the desire for peace to each other and to other groups – both across the world (to the Afghan Peace Volunteers during their Global Day of Listening Skype session) and across the span of being differently abled, with children who are hearing impaired who attend St. Mary's.

When we were in the playground and the like-aged (8-13 year old) St. Mary's class came by, both groups of children immediately tried to communicate with each other. Over the course of inviting the children to join us – to teach us some signing, attend to our speakers (with their teacher interpreting), do an art project – the urge to communicate was very apparent. The difficulty in doing so only increased the intensity and importance of the communication.

The first time St. Mary's students joined us for a session, Karima Amin was storytelling – children without hearing impairment were watching the teacher sign, while the children with hearing impairment couldn't take their eyes off Karima! All were moved, and all communicated.

We also explored Peace Messaging through sessions with:

- City Comptroller and signer Mark Schroeder;
- Women-Against-Violence-Everywhere Chair and Veteran for Peace Marilyn Gibson;
- Yoga instructor Uli Carlino-Macdonald;
- Yagwoneest Jill Clause, Tuskarora, through Indigenous Sustainable Peace Ways;
- Spoken Word Artist, Rapper and Poet Quadir Lateef of The Street Council;
- Musician and Rapper My-Rap-Name-is-Alex-and-My-Real-Name-is-Alex (Mead); and
- Drummer and Teacher Carolyn Zimmerman, "The Drum Lady" and Drum For Health.



MJ plays the bongos



Kaylen and Mayor Brown

Our field trips included:

- A visit with Mayor Byron Brown, where he fielded the campers' intelligent and serious questions;
- City Hall exploration including a guided tour of Buffalo from the Observation deck by volunteer Paul Kochmanski (psychologist and WNY Peace Center member), and hospitality from the staff;

(continued on next page)

CAMP PEACEPRINTS 2014 (continued)

- Lunch in the courtyard of one of the oldest churches in Buffalo, St. Anthony of Padua;
- Ice cream, games and lounging at the Marina and Canalside;
- Viewing the Buffalo and Erie County Naval & Military Park, with a Vietnam Veteran sharing his experiences in the Navy and losing his brother in the war;
- Three trips to go swimming at Canisius College Koessler Athletic Center, where the children learned from each other and conquered their fears;
- All kinds of information and feelings about the various animals we saw at the Buffalo Zoo; and
- Trips to Delaware Park as well as the playgrounds and open fields of St. Mary's – on the last day we had our own "Fly Kites Not Drones" event with a dozen kites in the air at once!



Campers at the Marina



Brandon at Canisius

We couldn't hold Camp Peaceprints without the generous support of:

- The Network of Religious Communities via the Riefler Ministry Enablement Fund;
- The Presbytery of WNY and their Peacemaking Grant (We were also privileged to have a wonderful visit with Dr. Elena Delgado at Camp);
- Joan A. Droit Scholarships through the Peace Education Fund;
- Supporter Edward Killeen who made our zoo trip possible;
- St. Mary's School for the Deaf, always kind, hospitable, and eager to collaborate;
- St. Columba-Brigid RCC, for their thoughtful provision of their van;
- Our volunteers:
 - ◇ Heroes and Veterans for Peace Russell Brown and Frank Gage, and Cece Huff who transported children;
 - ◇ Jan Burns, our Art Teacher and ever-peaceful presence;
 - ◇ Ellen Moomaw, Kate Mang, and Latanya Jacob who kept things running smoothly;
 - ◇ Young Neighbors in Action teams from the Roman Catholic Church's Center for Ministry Development, who brought their commitment and caring to share freely;
 - ◇ Young women from Teach and Restore Youth (TRY) who served as youth assistants; and
 - ◇ Supportive members of collaborating organizations: the Interfaith Peace Network, the SSJ Sr. Karen Center for Nonviolence, and the WNY Peace Center.



Visit to the Buffalo Zoo

All together, Camp Peaceprints is a vigorous exercise in Peace Messaging. We work to be the change we want to see, and to send the message that we can all leave peaceprints everywhere, as we reach out and create community. Camp Peaceprints provides the inspiration to love and care for each other more, and the tools to communicate that intention. The tears at the end of Camp and the relationships built say we made good progress toward that goal.



Keith: "Fly Kites, Not Drones"

Alternatives to Violence Project News



The mission of the Alternatives to Violence Project is to empower people to lead nonviolent lives through affirmation, respect for all, community building, cooperation, and trust. Founded in and developed from the real life experiences of prisoners and others, and building on a spiritual base, AVP encourages every person's innate power to positively transform themselves and the world.

Community Workshop with Christ the King Seminarians

In August, a Basic Alternatives to Violence Project workshop was held at St. Columba-Brigid Church in Buffalo for members of the community and also as part of the Central City Practicum of Christ the King Seminary in East Aurora.

For theological field education, the seminarians live in the City's parishes for 11 days. They have nearly two dozen experiences, including worship at various churches and Christian service. The two-day AVP workshop was part of the students' experiential learning.

Christ the King's Director of Theological Field Education Kathy Castillo shares, *"Seminary students noted the skill and energy of the leaders. They appreciated the balance of serious and fun which kept them energized. AVP gave them a common base of experience in discussing conflict and made them hungry for more."*

Our thanks go to volunteer facilitators Kathy Essek, Fenna Mandolang and Kirsten Reitan.

AVP Prison Workshops have Doubled by Tino Bellanca

Supported by a wonderful group of inside facilitators, the number of workshops conducted in Wende Correctional Facility has doubled from four to eight during these last two years. Based on the long and faultless work of our predecessors, Audrey Mang and Paul Reitan, Bill Marx and I have been able to build on the fruits of their labor. The work has been extremely rewarding! The gratitude shown to us by the inmate participants is immeasurable. The progress we witness in nurturing a peace-loving community within the walls is evidence that Alternatives to Violence Project works.

It is the vision of these same AVP inmates and facilitators that the Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence continues to author similar work with the younger people in our community. The goal we strive for is *prison prevention* through demonstrating similar experiential peaceful alternatives to our youth. The Sister Karen Center has made great strides in its work in schools, its Summer Camp and with nonprofit organizations geared toward these goals.

To continue to build upon the good work AVP has in effecting peaceful alternatives in our community, we need to add to our volunteers and facilitators. We invite all our readers to experience an Alternatives to Violence Project workshop. Some of you may see yourselves working as a facilitator in the community. Some of you may even see a future presence in our prison ministry. In any case, personally witness the effects the AVP experience could have on you. It can be a life changing experience...it was for us!

A Basic Alternatives to Violence Project workshop will be offered on Dec. 12-13. Write vivian@sisterkarencenter.org or call 362.9688 for more information.

Hearing Impaired Workshops for Inmates at the Wende Correctional Facility

by Bill Marx and Tino Bellanca

During July and September of this year, Basic and Advanced AVP workshops for the hearing impaired were held at Wende. These were led by an Inside Facilitator, who is impaired, strongly supported by an Outside Facilitator, Dawn Zuppelli, proficient in signing, and in AVP. Dawn has been the Outside Coordinator at Attica CF for the last two years.

As we approach a scheduled Facilitators' Training Work Shop (T4F) in November, we will have both hearing and hearing impaired participants. Our outside and inside facilitators will consist of at least two knowledgeable signers, along with Dawn, who again has agreed to attend as our resource person.

We found that this work at Wende has been a first in workshops offered by AVP signers to the deaf community. In the history of the Alternatives to Violence Project, we discovered no previous attempts to so communicate its values. Beginning forty years ago at the Greenhaven Correctional Facility downstate, AVP workshops have had mixed participants (both hearing and hearing impaired), but these at Wende have been unique in their having been prepared and offered by a lead facilitator in the community itself.

The administration at Wende's Department of Corrections has been very supportive of the efforts of our team of inside AVP facilitators. As we prepare for this T4F workshop, we hope to extend this effort to other facilities in the state, and to encourage other AVP organizations to expand upon the work.

The work of the Sisters of St. Joseph with the hearing impaired in the Buffalo community continues!



~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Interview with BaBa Eng *(continued from page 7)*

Peace circles are the vehicle for restorative justice. All the affected parties are gathered together in a circle where you discover what happened, what everyone thinks and how everyone feels. Then you find out what the needs are of each party and what it is going to take to restore wholeness in this situation. The end result is that everybody wins. *[Sister Karen Center Director Vivian Waltz has been trained as a peace circle keeper.]*

Have the Peacemakers made a difference in the City of Buffalo in the year since the program was implemented?

Absolutely the Peacemakers have made a difference. Being there in a potentially violent situation is like a safety net for the community. The Peacemakers are attuned to the realities in the schools, in the neighborhoods and on the street. Using nonviolent strategies and restorative justice practices allows transforming power to be at work, bringing change and resolution to conflicts everyday in the City of Buffalo.

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Our Mission Statement



To carry on Sister Karen's vision of a world without violence, the **SSJ Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence** is committed to eliminate violence in ourselves, in our society, and in our world. We work to create a nonviolent community in our thinking, our acting, and our relationships.

***** Save the Center's resources for the work of nonviolence! *****
Request our newsletter electronically in an email to vivian@sisterkarencenter.org.