Peace Pilgrim Elected to the New Jersey Hall of Fame

We are thrilled to announce that Peace Pilgrim was selected for induction into the New Jersey Hall of Fame (NJHOF), the highest honor that the state of New Jersey can bestow on one of its citizens. Thank you to everyone from near and far who cast your vote for this much-deserved tribute!

Peace Pilgrim is among 15 honorees in NJHOF’s “Class of 2016.” Since the Hall of Fame was founded eight years ago, more than 100 noteworthy New Jersey citizens have been inducted, including Bruce Springsteen, Buzz Aldrin, Yogi Berra, Toni Morrison and Michael Douglas.

Once inducted, Peace Pilgrim will be featured in the permanent collection of the Hall of Fame’s Mobile Museum that welcomes thousands of visitors in communities across the Garden State. The museum features images, artifacts, film and interactive tools to highlight the lives of New Jersey’s leaders and legends. It also provides curriculum guides for educators.

Peace’s sister, 102-year-old Helene Young, who still lives just miles from their childhood home, is overjoyed, calling the honor “long overdue.”

“I am so happy to hear that the New Jersey recognition has come about,” she said. “Certainly she should be in the Hall of Fame in the state where she was born and raised, and her ancestors lived.”

We couldn’t agree more, and we are looking forward to celebrating her induction on May 7, 2017.

Dear Friends of Peace Pilgrim,

Snow falls from a flat gray sky. Gusts of wind create opaque white curtains that hide a ghostly landscape. Under the feeder a large black crow pushes its beak into the snow in search of buried seeds. In this moment, it is hard to believe that just yesterday the sun was shining as the thermometer approached 60 degrees Fahrenheit or that Spring is less than a month away. We are reminded of the ever-changing nature of life in this soft and beautiful world.

When Peace Pilgrim stepped out in January of 1953, the Korean war was raging, McCarthyism cast a harsh shadow of suspicion across the nation, and the threat of atomic war was a stark reality in the hearts of people around the world. Into this dark climate of negativity and fear, Peace Pilgrim brought her message of hope, light, and peace. She walked joyfully without possessions or support, and with an indomitable spirit of inner peace that radiated the positive message she willingly shared with everyone she encountered.

Our own lives and times often cycle in and out of periods of darkness and light. May we all continue to be inspired by the life and message of Peace Pilgrim and take to heart her encouraging words, “Let us never say hopelessly this is the darkness before a storm; rather let us say with faith this is the darkness before the dawn of a golden age of peace, which we cannot now even imagine. For this, let us hope and work and pray.”

In Peace and Friendship,

The Friends of Peace Pilgrim board of directors - Cheryl Canfield, Richard Polese, Jeff Blom, Mayte Picco-Kline, Barbara Reynolds, Maurice Hoover, and Bruce Nichols
Our view: Honor brings Peace Pilgrim’s message to age that needs it

Editorial from the Jan. 23, 2017 edition of The Press of Atlantic City, online at pressofac.com (reprinted with permission)

More than a half-century ago, a woman who grew up in Egg Harbor City experienced a spiritual calling. Her work for the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom wasn’t enough, so after the World Wars and as the Korean War raged in 1953, she gave away all of her possessions and vowed to walk until mankind learned the way of peace.

As Peace Pilgrim, she ate what was offered or fasted, and slept in a bed if offered or on the roadside if not. Newspapers started to notice, as she became the first woman to walk the entire Appalachian Trail in one season, then walked across the United States.

For the next 28 years, she carried her message on foot throughout America -- “Overcome evil with good, and falsehood with truth, and hatred with love.” She crossed the nation at least eight times, and probably more than 20 times, quitting counting the miles after 13 years and 25,000 miles walked.

Besides having abandoned her given name, she reminded people her calling wasn’t about her. “One little person giving all her time for peace makes news. Many people giving little bits of their time for peace make history.”

Her writings on her journey were translated into 29 languages and continue to be distributed worldwide (and available for free) by the international Friends of Peace Pilgrim. Two documentaries were made about her life.

In one, the Dalai Lama said of her, “Her commitment to propagate peace through actions, the peace walk, without seeking money or fame, is wonderful. We need such determined people everywhere, irrespective of culture, race, religion. … Peace Pilgrim is a real peacemaker.”

The late poet and author Maya Angelou said, “Every age provides us with a pilgrim. Peace Pilgrim knew this. … To have faith, and then to step out on that faith … it’s amazing, it’s wonderful, it’s inspiring, it’s enheartening.”

Yet two decades after her death in 1981, Peace Pilgrim was like a prophet without honor in her hometown.

Then as the 100th anniversary of her birth neared in 2008, friends and family began bringing her message to new generations in Egg Harbor City and South Jersey. An annual celebration was begun in the city, and in 2005 Peace Pilgrim Park was dedicated there. In 2010, Peace Pilgrim was voted into the Atlantic County Hall of Fame.

That set the stage for Peace Pilgrim to be nominated to the New Jersey Hall of Fame in 2014. But she was listed on the ballot only by her abandoned name, Mildred Lisette Norman, not as Peace Pilgrim, and wasn’t selected. She was back on the ballot for 2017, this time as Peace Pilgrim. She was elected to the state Hall of Fame by popular vote, the hall announced last week, and will be inducted May 7 at Asbury Park Convention Hall.

Peace Pilgrim was selected over an impressive list of other candidates in the public-service category, including Aaron Burr, Milton Friedman, Richard Stockton, Antonin Scalia, Molly Pitcher, and another South Jersey favorite, Paul Volcker of Cape May -- who as Federal Reserve chairman conquered the high inflation of the 1970s.

This South Jersey spiritual leader’s nondenominational, nonpartisan example of patient dedication to peace and overcoming hate with love seems especially valuable today.

“In this world you are given as you give
And you are forgiven as you forgive –
While you go your way
Through each lovely day
You create your future
as you live.”

Peace Pilgrim

The Friends of Peace Pilgrim directors take a break from their annual board meeting held at the home of Peace Pilgrim’s sister, Helene Young. In the rear from left are Cheryl Canfield, Bruce Nichols, Helene, Maurice Hoover, Jeff Blom and Richard Polese. In front are Mayte Picco-Kline, left, and Barbara Reynolds. The dedicated volunteers remain deeply committed to spreading the message, the legacy and the loving spirit of Peace Pilgrim.
Friends of Peace Pilgrim Newsletter: Number 62 - Winter 2017

In Peace and Friendship... Loving spirit infuses Women’s March

“The hope of the world is Love!”  Peace Pilgrim

This was the prevailing message that three Friends of Peace Pilgrim board members carried with them when they participated in the historic Women’s March held in dozens of locations around the globe on Jan. 21, 2017.

While they did not officially march on behalf of the Friends of Peace Pilgrim, Peace was a guiding spirit for each of them. “I felt her with me every step of the way,” smiled Richard Polese, who wore a Peace Pilgrim-inspired tunic and offered Peace Pilgrim books during the march in Santa Fe, NM.

“Peace Pilgrim encouraged people to ‘live according to the highest light we have,’ and to ‘step forth’ for peace,” he noted. “It was beautifully inspiring to witness and be a part of a sea of affirmative energy.”

Bruce Nichols, who participated in the New York City march and had a friend wear one of Peace’s actual tunics, agreed. “Although there was some anger and some people who were against something, I believe the vast majority walked in positive spirit - for justice, peace, and love.”

He said Peace Pilgrim asked us all to notice ‘the spark of good in everyone, no matter how deeply buried.’ This needs to be applied not only to our friends and those on the side of peace, but also to those who disagree with us and disparage us. This is what will bring us closer to the highest good for ourselves, our community, our country and our world.”

“I imagine if Peace Pilgrim was there, she would have been talking to everyone she met, joyfully starting conversations about peace with people on both sides of the issues,” added Barbara Reynolds, who joined her daughter, son-in-law and new granddaughter for the march in Washington, D.C.

“Her example is a daily reminder to me that the way to peace truly is to ‘Overcome evil with good, and falsehood with truth, and hatred with love,’ ” she said.

Two generations of Barbara Reynolds’ family join her during the Washington, D.C., march.

Maya and its close companion of Quetch’i are ancient languages. In fact, they are so old that loan-words (e.g. ‘police’) are used to describe present-day realities since no corresponding words exist in the older languages.

Indigenous speakers of Maya and Quetch’i typically live in remote rural villages or peripheral city neighborhoods. They strongly support their cultural pride and protecting their heritage manifest in the many ruins of the glorious Mayan civilization in Belize. While maintaining their time-honored beliefs and practices, the indigenous peoples do participate in local and national life. They go through the public schools and are loyal citizens who are active in civic involvement including voting.

Peace Pilgrim took a giant step forward in this tiny nation where the Institute of Culture and Language strives to make her known and loved. We look to her as the ideal “virtual founidress” of our movement. Her publications in English and Spanish are required reading for those who seek membership. We bring Peace Pilgrim’s message to schools, church groups, the national prison, local libraries and the media by distributing materials provided to us from Friends of Peace Pilgrim.

Peace Pilgrim in Belize
by Elsa Potter, Ed. D.

Our friends at the Institute of Culture and Language in Belize have been supporters of Peace Pilgrim for many years. Their organization has a Peace Pilgrim pole on its grounds and has distributed materials in English and Spanish. Recently Elsa shared an exciting message with us.

Throughout Belize, Peace Pilgrim and her inspiring message were introduced to a new and numerous population. Thousands of indigenous Belizean people thrilled to the fact that their mother tongue was heard over a national telecast when two staff members of the International Institute of Culture and Language talked about Peace Pilgrim on the early-morning show Rise and Shine, broadcast by Plus TV in Belize’s capital city, Belmopan.

Plus TV’s presentations are usually in Spanish as well as in English, the national language of Belize. The indigenous tongues usually are overlooked. That changed when Aurelio Cal and Junior Enriques Cal, speaking respectively in Quetch’i and Maya, each gave a synopsis of Peace Pilgrim’s life and work. Feedback from viewers of the Peace Pilgrim segment was positive and glowing.
Following in the spirit of Peace Pilgrim

In the decades since Peace Pilgrim devoted her life to walking for peace, others around the globe have taken to the highways and byways to raise awareness around social and humane causes. Here are updates on two of them.

Mahsa Torabi -- Running for Peace in Iran

Mahsa Torabi is a Free to Run Ambassador in Iran who is using long-distance running and cycling to spread the word of peace. For the International Day of Peace on Sept. 21, 2016, she organized a 12-kilometer run from the Holy Defense museum (known as the war museum) to the Peace Museum in Tehran.

“It was important for us to run from war to peace. Our messages for all people all over the world are: Peace, Humanity, Happiness,” noted Mahsa, who was able to get approval and support from the manager and employees of the war museum to hold the Peace Day run and then a second race on Oct. 1, 2016.

“Every running race brings happiness to people, every running race brings humanity to people, because we all want to help each other. Every race gathers so many people together, it shows us Friendship has no border,” she said.

Mahsa is organizing more endurance races for peace.

Mahsa was introduced to Peace Pilgrim through a translation of our book into Persian and counts Peace Pilgrim as an inspiration for her peacemaking activities. She has supplied us with a digital book in Persian that we hope to have on our website soon. You can follow her on Facebook under Mahsa Torabi.

Paula Francis -- the Happiness Walker

On November 21 2016, our Peace Pilgrim-inspired Happiness Walker friend Paula Francis dipped her toe into the Pacific Ocean in Santa Monica, CA, marking a milestone (and the approximate half-way point) in a journey that began in August of 2012 among the Green Mountains of Vermont.

In the four years between, she has walked through all of New England, into Eastern Canada, and down the East Coast of the USA to Florida. During 2015 and 2016 she crossed the continent from Florida to California.

So far, her circumambulation of the United States has included 4,442.5 miles walked through 19 states over 437 days. She has been accompanied by 68 other walkers at various times. One hundred twenty-eight hosts have welcomed her into their homes, often on short or no notice. Paula has conducted thousands of interviews along the way, asking those she meets, “What really matters in your life.”

Paula offers this about how the walk works: “We start at a country store, a cafe, a gas station or a rest area. We wear bright-colored t-shirts that mostly say ‘Serious About Happiness.’ We have backpacks and water bottles and appear approachable. We mingle, seek eye-contact and are likely asked what we are up to. We mention that we’re walking around the country; this usually gets people’s attention and leads to a conversation, then another. Sometimes everyone present joins the conversation. There is something about talking about happiness that is engaging and infectious. Talking about happiness makes people happy.

“We describe our project, explain the purpose, invite an interview and get permission to record. Then we ask: What really matters in life? We are also asking people what THEY can do in their lives and communities to increase happiness and access to what matters? The answers themselves may not be surprising, but the consistency, the wisdom and the potential power of the message might be. What do you think would happen if public policies supported what people commonly say matters most to us? It’s happening across the globe. Let’s do it here!”

Along the way Paula was hosted by two of our board members – Bruce Nichols in Connecticut in the early days of her walk and Richard Polese in Santa Fe when she passed through New Mexico in September.

Paula will start walking north from California toward Seattle in early 2017. After Seattle she will turn east, eventually returning to her starting point in Vermont. Visit www.happinesswalk.com for more information and to find out where Paula is currently walking.

Mahsa Torabi and friends in Iran participate in long-distance races to promote peace.
Annual celebration builds joy, friendships, hope

From food to fingerpaints, drumming to downward dog, the 9th Annual Peace Pilgrim celebration was a joy-filled gathering.

It was held on Sept. 19-20, 2016 at Peace Pilgrim Park in her birthtown of Egg Harbor City, NJ. On Saturday, friends old and new enjoyed early morning yoga, a two-mile intergenerational peace walk, a picnic potluck, and a music-filled afternoon that ended with our popular drum circle. Guest speaker Thomas Francis, a devoted follower of Peace Pilgrim who personally has walked more than 1,000 miles, shared his Peace-inspired Change the World guide (available at www.GoGreaterGood.com). Sunday began with an Interfaith Peace Service, followed by the installation of a Peace Pilgrim Pole in the park.


A quilt made of celebration t-shirts, each designed by local students, was handcrafted especially for the 9th annual gathering. Below, Peace Pilgrim’s sister Helene Young leads a two-mile intergenerational walk. Although, at age 101, she opted to take a ride offered by driver Nanette LoBiondo, Helene got out to give her traditional talk at the childhood home she shared with Peace Pilgrim, their brother, Al, their parents and three aunts.

“…life is like a mirror. Smile at it and it smiles back at you. I just put a big smile on my face and everyone smiles back.” Peace Pilgrim
Some Notes from Our Friends

From Cathryn in San Diego
Please send me another 100 Steps Toward Inner Peace. I love sharing these with new and old friends. While traveling overseas I’ve shared so many. People are quite thankful and open to receiving them and it brings an extra smile when they realize it’s a gift - a gift of peace. So, booklet by booklet, ripples of love and peace are generated and one day will find that love and peace win.

From Dolores in Ames, IA
I have good news for you. I am no longer disabled and have recovered from my diagnosis. I loved Peace Pilgrim when she was alive. She visited our church in Ames in my youth. She helped so many of us and her message of peace helped our whole family. She was loved by the Methodist women and many college students.

From Holly in Virginia, who was about to be released from prison
I am writing to inquire about your organization. I have been a longtime “fan” of the work Peace Pilgrim did in her lifetime. I am thankful that you carry on her voice and her words of Peace. I learned of Peace Pilgrim early in my life, and have always been inspired to be more like her - to stand up and walk for Peace. Please let me know how I can subscribe to your newsletter and any other publications you have. I would like to buy the DVDs you have published, as well as any books you may have. I would also like to make a donation. I will be going to my home soon - the physical one, and I look to you for guidance. Thank you for the time to read my letter and the direction you offer by carrying on her “voice.” I look forward to hearing from you.

From Skip in Prescott, AZ, in response to newsletter 60
Thanks so much for the latest newsletter. Wow, what an inspiration Helene is! I’m 73 and I hope I can do what she does at 100 when I am 80. The whole newsletter was a trip down memory lane, as I was there at John and Ann’s place for a short time in the mid 90s. I stayed out back in the trailer in Hemet. Please send me the Peace Pilgrim Documentaries DVD. Thank you so much. I wish you all the best.

From Seamus on our Facebook page
I met Peace Pilgrim many years ago. She came to Ojai to speak at the then Happy Valley School. I will never forget her.

\[\text{“Every good thing you do, every good thing you say, every good thought you think, vibrates on and on and never ceases. The evil remains only until it is overcome by good, but the good remains forever.” Peace Pilgrim}\]

From Tony in Vermont
Peace Pilgrim has changed my life and I’m telling all my friends about her beautiful message. I just gave my copy of the book away. I need another copy for myself and some more to give away to interested persons. Enclosed is a donation. Peace

From a monk
Dear Noble souls,
Respectful greetings from a monk who is inspired by Peace Pilgrim, and who humbly spreads her words amongst friends. There was perhaps no saint in the US as great as Peace Pilgrim. I keep on spreading her message and it touches every heart. My respects to you and to all others who are continuing her legacy. Thank you a million times for the copy of the book, and two copies of Steps. I am grateful to you for so kindly sending the book to me. It is a treasure, and transforms lives. My humble prayer is, May God grant all of you strength to continue this service. With prayers and salutations,
Swami Sunirmalananda

From Richard in Washington State
A short time ago I requested your Peace Pilgrim book, and it arrived. Thank you very much. I am a 61-year old man who has been studying religion and spirituality most of my life, and try to walk a spiritual path. I have read dozens of books on the subject, written by gurus, priests and pastors. Truly I can say that despite all this study, the first twenty pages of your Peace Pilgrim book taught me more than I have gathered thus far. I am deeply appreciative of the book and your good works. Just now I sent a donation via the Paypal link on your website. Thank you from the very depths of my heart.
Your friend, Richard

From Joyce in New York
Thank you for the booklets, book and newsletters on Peace Pilgrim. Years ago with two sons to raise, my husband walked out on us. I eventually got several jobs. Reading about her, trusting and listening to her tapes those lonely times years ago, taught me to let go and trust. To stop thinking what should be, but accept each day that all will be well. Her wisdom reached me as nothing else. Still on modest means, a senior on SS, but accept my modest donation. Thank you.

From Diana in North Carolina
I recently watched on YouTube a Dr. Wayne Dyer video in which he mentions Peace Pilgrim. That began my personal journey. I watched all the (Peace Pilgrim) documentaries and listened and heard, and it changed my way of thinking. I called recently and thank you in advance for sending info to my friend. My father was in the Navy during World War II. He met my mother while on leave from his ship. It was “war” that brought them together, but it was “peace” that gave our family life. They had six children. We have been so blessed. Wishing you peace always! ❤❤❤
Dear Friends of Peace Pilgrim: Here is a list of our publications. In the spirit of Peace Pilgrim we send them freely to all who ask. Since many inquire about making donations, we are including our approximate costs for printing and mailing our offerings within the USA. Donations to our work are welcome but not necessary to receive our offerings. Friends of Peace Pilgrim is an all volunteer 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Donations are tax-deductible. All money goes directly to our work, helping us to continue producing and distributing materials to all who ask regardless of their financial situation.

PUBLICATIONS

PEACE PILGRIM: Her Life and Work in Her Own Words (Standard Edition), 224 pages. Compiled by five of her friends after her transition in 1981. (Printing and postage $5.00)

PEACE PILGRIM (Compact Edition), 224 pages. This book is the same as the Standard Edition except smaller. (Printing and postage $4)


STEPS TOWARD INNER PEACE, 32 pages. Peace Pilgrim relates her own steps toward inner peace and gives ideas for working for world peace. (Steps Toward Inner Peace is also available in print in Spanish, Chinese, Arabic and Hebrew. Please call or write for information.) (Printing and postage $1)

LARGER PRINT EDITION OF STEPS, 64 pages – 5”x7”. This attractive edition of STEPS is especially appropriate for those who require larger, easier to read text. (Printing and postage $3)

PEACE PILGRIM’S WISDOM: A Very Simple Guide by Cheryl Canfield, 224 pages. (Currently unavailable)

PEACE PILGRIM, An Extraordinary Life by Ann Rush, 16 pages. Peace Pilgrim’s life is traced from her ordinary beginnings through a transformation to a life of unusual commitment. (Printing and postage $2)

THE PEACE PILGRIM COLORING BOOK. English and Spanish in one book. by Barbara Werner and Gary Guthrie. 48 pages – Peace Pilgrim’s story with line drawings on facing pages that can be colored. (Printing and postage $5)

DVD VIDEO

PEACE PILGRIM INTERVIEWS DVD – Includes a short TV program from PM Magazine, a 25-minute interview for WIFR TV in Rockford, Illinois, a 30-minute interview at Pensacola Junior College, and our 24-minute Highlights video. This DVD is subtitled in English, Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Portuguese, and French. It also includes a wealth of DVD-ROM extras in PDF format and in several languages. (Printing and postage $6)

PEACE PILGRIM LECTURES DVD – This disk contains over three hours of video including talks given to students at California Sate University, a question and answer session with students at the University of Georgia, the Pensacola Junior College Interview, and the PM Magazine profile. (Printing and postage $6)

PEACE PILGRIM DOCUMENTARIES DVD – All of our documentaries are now bundled onto one DVD disk. Included are: both English and Spanish versions of PEACE PILGRIM: An American Sage Who Walked Her Talk (one hour). A professional quality documentary film, about Peace Pilgrim’s life with much new historical footage and interviews, introductions to the “Sage” documentary in English and Spanish, and THE SPIRIT OF PEACE. (71 minutes) an earlier documentary featuring interviews with those who knew Peace Pilgrim and those who were inspired by her message. (Printing and postage $6)

ONLINE OFFERINGS

Visit www.peacepilgrim.org to read or download the Peace Pilgrim book in seven languages and the Steps booklet in 29 languages. Also available online are audio files of Peace Pilgrim’s talks, the book in audio format, video offerings and additional print and digital resources.

We’re pleased to announce that we now have digital versions of our book in Persian thanks to Mahsa Torabi, and Chinese, Tamil, and Dutch thanks to the work of Mayte Picco-Kline and Bob Kline. Look for them on our website soon.

OUR NEWSLETTER – To be added or removed from our newsletter mailing list, please visit our website or contact us at the address below. All of our past newsletters as well as the Peace Pilgrim’s Progress newsletters sent by Peace Pilgrim during the years of her pilgrimage, and the newsletter Travesía en Paz (Peaceful Journey) in Spanish and English are available on our website: www.peacepilgrim.org

Send Requests to:
Friends of Peace Pilgrim, P.O. Box 2207, Shelton, CT 06484
or call (203) 926-1581, or email: friends@peacepilgrim.org
The slight, grey-haired woman dressed in blue gabardine slacks, shirt and blue tennis shoes is a pilgrim for peace.

On her blue tunic in bold white letters is her name and her mission: “Peace Pilgrim - Walking 25,000 Miles for World Peace.”

She claims no past, no name or age, only a future. She will continue to walk until there is peace in the world. Walking over 16,000 miles in the last seven years, Peace Pilgrim has been dedicated to world peace for the last 22 years.

“I am on faith as well as on foot. I’m just following my calling. My walking is a prayer and my opportunity to contact people. I walk until shelter is offered; I go hungry until food is offered.”

Peace Pilgrim explained that inner peace includes a constant awareness of God and removes all fear. “I had first a complete willingness to give my life to service, and the next 15 years were spent engaged in a battle between my conscience and ego.

“Seven years ago I achieved this feeling of inner peace and began my wanderings, never to cease until mankind has learned the way of peace.

“I’m only a little person,” said the energetic pilgrim, “but there are a lot of little things to be done. If enough little people join together, they can accomplish great things.”