2020 Theme: Shaping Peace Together

Each year the International Day of Peace is observed around the world on September 21st. The UN General Assembly has declared this as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, through observing 24 hours of non-violence and cease-fire.

This year, it has been clearer than ever that we are not each other’s enemies. Rather, our common enemy is a tireless virus that threatens our health, security and very way of life. COVID-19 has thrown our world into turmoil and forcibly reminded us that what happens in one part of the planet impacts people everywhere.

In March, UN Secretary-General António Guterres called on all warring parties to lay down their weapons and focus on the battle against this unprecedented global pandemic. While the message is intended for armed parties, solidarity and cooperation across borders, sectors and generations are also needed to win this new fight against the worst public health crisis of our time.

For the United Nations, 2020 was already meant to be a year of listening and learning. To mark its 75th anniversary, the UN has invited millions of people worldwide to join UN75, the largest and furthest-reaching global conversation on building the peaceful and prosperous future that we want.

As we struggle to defeat COVID-19, your voice is more important than ever. In these difficult times of physical distancing, this International Day of Peace will be dedicated to fostering dialogue and collecting ideas. The world will be invited to unite and share thoughts on how to weather this storm, heal our planet and change it for the better. Even though we may not be able to stand next to each other, we can still dream together.

The 2020 theme for the International Day of Peace is “Shaping Peace Together.” Celebrate the day by spreading compassion, kindness and hope in the face of the pandemic. Stand together with the UN against attempts to use the virus to promote discrimination or hatred. Join us so that we can shape peace together.

Background: The International Day of Peace was established in 1981 by the United Nations General Assembly. Two decades later, in 2001, the General Assembly unanimously voted to designate the Day as a period of nonviolence and cease-fire. The United Nations invites all nations and people to honor a cessation of hostilities during the Day, and to otherwise commemorate the Day through education and public awareness on issues related to peace.

—from un.org/en/observances/international-day-peace.

This year is particularly significant: It is the 20th Anniversary of the UN Resolution on the Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace: un-documents.net/a53r243b.htm. Please visit internationaldayofpeace.org/get-involved for ideas on how to celebrate this day!

NISG Calls for Boycott of Sham NRC Webinar Process

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is silencing the voices of those most impacted by two proposed illegal radioactive waste dumps, in New Mexico (Holtec International) and in Texas (Waste Control Specialists).

I am sitting in my parents' kitchen on the Navajo Nation, writing to you on an internet connection that is spotty at best (especially on a cloudy day like today). I am here, within our Four Sacred Mountains, where Diné people are still dealing with the radioactive contamination from past uranium extraction and processing. The proposed radioactive waste dumps will impact our communities here and nationwide by putting everyone at risk of transport of highly toxic and deadly waste from nuclear power plants.

The NRC has begun a process that our organization strongly opposes. The NRC will not hold in-person public meetings regarding Holtec’s extremely dangerous project and related transport. Instead, they will hold four webinar/teleconference-style meetings to present and take public input on the 488-page Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Send your submissions for monthly newsletter to monthlycalendar@abqpeaceandjustice.org by the 20th of the month prior to your event. Send submissions for web calendar to web@abqpeaceandjustice.org. Contact the Executive Director via jim.abqpeaceandjustice.org.
Regularly Scheduled Events

Many regular meetings and events at the Peace & Justice Center have taken new forms, and some have returned as they were. Not all of the usual items are accounted for, but here are updates about a few that were communicated to us. Please let us know of any additions, corrections or clarifications by email: monthlycalendar@abqpeaceandjustice.org

The Guild Cinema is still offering home-viewing options for a variety of movies. Visit guildcinema.com for NOW PLAYING streaming options, and look for the link in each listing that will walk you through. More info: 255-1848

Sunday AUUF services take place via Zoom calls 11am-Noon, email renu.nrg@gmail.com for link. More info: abquuf.org/sunday-services.html or abquuf@gmail.com

St. Oscar Romero Catholic Community hosts mass online Sundays at 1pm via fb.com/bloscaromero

Generation Justice broadcasts every Sunday, 7-8pm on KUNM 89.9FM & kunm.org

The Don and Sally-Alice Thompson Chapter of Veterans for Peace meet online via Zoom every 2nd Monday at 5:30pm, platform opening 5pm. For details, email vhtiwal@gmail.com

Indivisible Nob Hill meets via Zoom every Monday from 5:30-7pm. More info: indivisiblenobhill.com, fb.com/groups/IndivisibleNobHill

Chair Yoga is at the P&J, Wednesdays from 1:30-2:30pm. Free, donations accepted. For more info contact: lisbethcarlisle@aol.com

Good Food Distribution every Saturday from 8-10am in the P&J parking lot. More info: 315-4167. The Peace Center accepts food donations Friday, 11am-12:30pm

Activist Community Podcast is produced at the Peace Center, 2nd/4th Thursdays, 1-3pm. If you wish to call in for a broadcast, contact Tom Dent: 450-1268 or tnldent4@msn.com.

Open Mind Discussion (NVC/TC) meets 2nd & 4th Fridays, 11:30am-1pm at the P&J. Welcome to all for conversations about strategies for survival in these times. Please bring a mask, and observe social distancing. :-)

Coming to the Table (CTTT) meets via Zoom on the 3rd Monday of each month at 6:30pm. For the Zoom Meeting info, email RacialJustice@OurBestTeam.com with “CTTT-ABQ” in the subject line. Info: ComingToTheTable.org

The Peace Center Coordinating Council meets 3rd Wednesday of each month at 5:30pm. For further details call 268-9557 or email jim.abqpaj@gmail.com

350NM meetings on 1st and 3rd Mondays are cancelled. Speaker Meetings on 4th Mondays are moved to Zoom for the time being. More info: contact tasolomon6@gmail.com

Building & Grounds Committee meets 2nd Friday, 2pm at the P&J. Contact: mgwright@comcast.net

Calendar of Ongoing and Special Events

Note: Please double-check all events for any changes using the info provided in the listings.

Tuesday, Sept. 1, 6:30-8 pm
Retake Our Democracy Zoominar TBA. Link/More info: retakeourdemocracy.org/retake-zoominar-series

Thursday, Sept. 3, 3-5pm
UNM Continuing Ed. offers A Brief History of Social Justice and Nonviolent Action Movements, a live online class led by Katherine Fraitekh-Hughes. Cost is $20, register at newmexico.augusoft.net/index.cfm?method=ClassInfo.ClassInformation&int_class_id=90564

Alternative Radio broadcasts every Saturday at 6pm on KUNM 89.9FM, online at kunm.org/listen. More info at alternativeradio.org. Proposed upcoming schedule:
Sept. 5- Chris Hedges, “Trump & the Christian Right”
Sept. 12 - Ralph Nader interview
Sept. 19- Yanis Varoufakis, “Two Years That Changed Capitalism Forever”
Sunday, Sept. 6, 11am-Noon
ABQ Unitarian Universalist Group weekly Zoom services, with “We Believe 2”, a discussion based on thoughts and writings from the UU game. Email renu.nrg@gmail.com for link. More info: abquuf.org/sunday-services.html or abquuf@gmail.com

Monday, Sept. 7
The Peace Center will be closed in observance of the Labor Day holiday.

Tuesday, Sept. 8, 5pm
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee webinar series, Taking a Collective Breath: Deepening Our Alignment to the Movement for Black Lives. Webinar #3: Education - Allocating New Money to Build Healthy, Sustainable & Equitable Communities for All People. Register via zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_tltjyMKZTD69ZQW3K3LomQ

Thursday, Sept. 10, 6-7:15pm
Nuclear Issues Study Group concludes We Are Not a Wasteland, a series of webinars to educate and inspire activism to stop the largest proposed high-level radioactive waste dump on Earth, in NM and TX. Watch it live via fb.com/NuclearIssuesStudyGroup.

Saturday, Sept. 12, 10am & Sunday, Sept. 13, 12:30pm
Virtual Red & Green VegFest: Creating A New World online event, register at register.gotowebinar.com/register/5535367453854596364. More info: fb.com/events/595185868028329

Sunday, Sept. 13, 11am-Noon
ABQ Unitarian Universalist Group weekly Zoom services, with Carol Miller on “How to cut the War Budget”. Email renu.nrg@gmail.com for link. More info: abquuf.org/sunday-services.html

Monday, Sept. 14, 1pm MT
Interfaith Power & Light present Climate Change, Our Faith Values, and 2020: A Conversation Between Dr. Katharine Hayhoe and Rev. Susan Hendershot about how to communicate with your family and friends about the climate crisis from a position of shared values. Register via bit.ly/Sept14Hayhoe. More info: fb.com/events/634362707241580

Tuesday, Sept. 15, 6:30-8 pm
Retake Our Democracy Zoominar: Water Policy, Quality and Management in New Mexico with Rep. Melanie Stansbury, an expert on water management and water policy issues, Norm Gaume, former Dir. of the Interstate Stream Commission, and one or two others TBA. Zoom link: us02web.zoom.us/j/88651724599. More info: retakeourdemocracy.org/retake-zoominar-series

Wednesday, Sept. 16
Nuclear Issues Study Group hosts a People's Hearing via Zoom regarding Holtec's proposed nuclear waste dump in NM, and as a means of boycotting the Nuclear Regulatory Commission’s sham “public hearings” on the matter. Email protectnewmexico@gmail.com for more info, check out fb.com/NuclearIssuesStudyGroup and see also the Front page article, continued on the Back page.

Thursday, Sept. 17 through Oct. 8, 1-3pm
UNM Continuing Ed. offers An Exploration of History and Human Rights in Palestine & Israel: 1890-Present, a weekly live online class led by Katherine Fraitekh-Hughes. Cost is $49, register via newmexico.augusoft.net/index.cfm?method=ClassInfo.ClassInformation&int_class_id=90380
Friday, Sept. 18, 8am to Saturday, Sept. 19, 9pm

16th Annual Gila River Festival online is an opportunity to learn, collaborate and prepare for the challenges that lie ahead for our community, the Gila River and its watershed. Explore how we cultivate resilience in our communities and ecological systems and address the crises of climate change, coronavirus, and systemic racism. Registration and full schedule at accelevents.com/e/gilariverfestival. Info: gilariverfestival.org, fb.com/events/3176617955709192

Saturday, Sept. 19, 1-8pm

The 2nd annual Burque Ninos Music Festival is now an online fundraising event. Stream performances by local bands “almost live” at the Launchpad to raise money for Cuidando Los Niños (clnabq.org) and their efforts to end child homelessness in ABQ. More info: fb.com/events/653013792197338

Sunday, Sept. 20, 11am-Noon

ABQ Unitarian Universalist Group weekly Zoom services, with “Humor, Joy and Delight”, sharing poetry readings that make us smile. Email renu.nrg@gmail.com for link. More info: abquuf.org/sunday-services.html.

Monday, Sept. 21

Get ready for the International Day of Peace, coinciding with the launch of a weekly Peace Center podcast (more info to be found in Noticias, pg. 5). Visit internationaldayofpeace.org/get-involved for possible actions, and see also Front page.

Tuesday, Sept. 22, 5pm


Thursday, Sept. 24, 6-8pm

Virtual Sierra Club & Root Beer meeting via Gotowebinar. Maggie Toulouse Oliver, NM Secretary of State, discusses the State of the Election System in NM. Contact: dianeabqnm@gmail.com

Save the Dates:

Monday, October 12, 6-8pm.

This year's Annual P&J Membership Meeting will be a virtual meeting, with limited in-person attendance at the Center. Everyone is encouraged to save the date and the Zoom Invite link will be posted in late September. The theme for the Annual Meeting will be, "Honoring Indigenous Rights Day". A special presentation will be offered during the meeting.

Tuesday, Oct. 13, 5pm

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee webinar series, Taking a Collective Breath: Deepening Our Alignment to the Movement for Black Lives. Webinar 5: Holding Officials Accountable & Enhancing Self-Determination of Black Communities. Register via zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_tItjyMKZTD69ZQW3K3LomQ

Interested in Meditation in These Challenging Times?

Meditation is a relatively easy process to learn and can be used routinely as a daily practice or whenever one wants to simply reset from anxiety, exhaustion, upset or any experiences we may have throughout a day. This is a process of focusing on the breath, allowing the body/mind to be present to it's internal and external state. Research has demonstrated that it can increase focus, decrease anxiety and lead to a calmer presence towards life with all its ups and downs. Let us know if a class is right for you. Call the Peace Center at 268-9557.
You are invited to join a Working Committee at the Peace and Justice Center

Committees are forming to address critical issues that the Center and some of the PAJOLA (Peace and Justice Organizations Linking Arms) Groups are working on. Once formed, these issue groups will (1) meet regularly to discuss, research and develop responses and actions, (2) create important educational messaging to inform the public, and (3) help recruit others to join the efforts. Here are the Committees currently being formed:

* Climate Justice
* Racism
* Militarism of our police
* Justice for Palestine
* Poor People's Campaign
* Nuclear Armaments and Nuclear Waste
* Immigration and Prisons
* Homeless Services

Please call The Center office at 505-268-9557 and sign up for the committee of your choice today. WE NEED YOU!

Starting Friday, Sept. 4, the Peace Hall will house “How Shall We Breathe”, a special art exhibit consisting of 8 veiled, interactive paintings. Viewers are invited to lift the veil from each painting and contemplate the face whose gaze is centered on them. There is a shrine (shelf) beneath the paintings with offerings, upon which the viewer may also place gifts. A printed introduction is provided, as well as information for each painting.

From the introduction:
I. We are all under the “knee-hold” (we can't breathe) of an ubiquitous threat.
II. We heed the call for a healing shift in our collective perceptions; the “Rising-up” of the Great Antique Heart.
III. We lift the veil from Her face to recognize our own reflected there: that “we are the ones we've waited for.”

Through Her Grace We Breathe Again.

Monday, Sept. 21 is the launch of the Peace & Justice Center's weekly podcast show, *Journey to Peace and Justice*. The first show will feature discussions about International Day of Peace and a new show will air every Monday thereafter. We will feature current news and events, things happening at the P&J, and conduct interviews with special guests and PAJOLA group representatives. The show will also be posted for rebroadcast on a variety of outlets to be announced..more details coming soon!

All Hands on the Peace Deck!

* **Save Our VA**: The Veterans Administration Health is being gutted. We are starting to see the VA skeleton now. The failure of the organs is imminent. We must stop the administration's efforts to privatize! The Chapter has joined Save Our VA (SOVA). SOVA’s mission right now is to spread the word that collapse is coming with help from Congress and the White House. If the American people really knew what this meant for our veterans, Congress would be playing a different tune. Write our Congressional delegation (see their addresses at the end of these messages). Spread the word!

* **Convention**: The chapter worked hard with the Santa Fe Chapter to bring a VFP convention to NM. After a year of meetings, the Nat’l VFP Board and staff were on board. Last March when Covid struck the ink was almost dry with the bus companies and a hotel, but an online convention was opted for instead. The online convention of this past early August was a great success. We will see if there is a way if it can be shared with this newsletter next month digitally, including the panels and plenaries, poetry and music. We need help this coming year’s convention again slated for New Mexico. Join Veterans for Peace! We have lots of good to do.

* **May 8, 1970, A Day to Remember**: A panel of peace protestors, survivors of violence by the NM National Guard of that era, and other citizens of that era, that are producing a documentary. This shocking true story happened here in ABQ and UNM in May 1970. This panel will meet virtually on September 26. Watch a trailer: drive.google.com/file/d/1t_A_cgjxk8aDWvAa9Aco87gyoH7-8C-h/view. Info: vhtiwal@gmail.com.

* **Continued next page...**
Black Lives Matter: Even through the pandemic, Veterans for Peace has stayed at the front lines in the Black Lives Matter. Black Lives have always mattered with the Great Spirit, but in the U.S. the police arm of government has a culture left over from slavery times and is currently fueled by a powerful White, segregationist subculture. The BLM movement is huge umbrella: Red Lives Matter, Brown Lives Matter, Yellow Lives Matter, and with Covid the movement has embraced everyone. The demonstrations are led by the Black community’s non-violent resolve.

Tularosa Basin Trinity A-Bomb Downwinders are the folks that remain victims of that first and dirtiest of all nuclear bombs. Plutonium is the most poisonous known substance, and 23% of that bomb’s plutonium spread in a plume of tons of sand and soil over a large part of New Mexico, concentrating near the site of the detonation in and around the Tularosa Basin. Ionized radiation causes 30 types of cancer in the victims and their children and generations following. Be prepared to write the 2021 Congress and White House and insist on relief for our Tularosa Basin Trinity A-Bomb Downwinders. We also must take care of our Native uranium mining victims. trinitydownwinders.com

Deported Military Veterans: The Trump Administration has taken aim at the military veteran community of color that have scandalously not been made citizens by this country. These veterans put their lives and health on the line. The fact they swore military oaths in support of the Constitution and the nation is more than those who are citizens either born here or naturalized here. Yet, Trump has seen them deported to countries they have perhaps never known, and last left as infants and toddlers. They have lives, families and careers here in the U.S. These veterans in most cases have committed minor, pardonable offenses. ICE has kidnapped and deported the veterans and they often are now living in the shadows in dangerous countries that they have never really known. They have anxious families and friends back in the U.S. that need them too. Through the consistent efforts of our VFP chapter, Gov. Lujan Grisham has pardoned one of these veterans of a cannabis conviction, and he now awaits the opportunity to fully reintegrate in the U.S. and become a citizen. There are hundreds of deported veterans, some from here in N.M., that await pardons from governors. Stay tuned in the coming months as how you as P&J members can help our deported military veterans.

The VFP as a Safe Place for All - We at VFP wish to be sure our members make the chapter safe for everyone: people of color, LGBTQ people, all ethnicities and religions, all people. We work on that consciously at every meeting and are right now formulating statements and policies to that end.

Plutonium Bomb Factory - Los Alamos: Both major political parties are fueling an arms race manufactured here. 1.5 to 2.4 trillion dollars is slated to build plutonium and new nuclear weapons. And unfortunately, this buildup is triggering a new nuclear arms race!

The construction of a huge, new plutonium bomb factory at Los Alamos is already underway. The engineers, physicists and scientists need to think and act clearly through all phases of construction and plutonium production. The draft doc found here can be used to write your own letter to the addresses below.

Also, please write or call Senator Heinrich's office (346-6601), Senator Udall's office (346-6791), and Congresswoman Haaland's office (346-6781) and demand that they institute a Site-wide Environmental Impact Study (SEIS) regarding the manufacture of plutonium pits for nuclear bombs in Los Alamos. We deserve to know what plans they've made for water use, waste disposal, emergencies such as wild-fires or earthquakes.

Congressman Ben Ray Lujan
2323 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
Office of the Governor
490 Old Santa Fe Trail
Room 400
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Senator Tom Udall
531 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
Congresswoman Deb Haaland
1237 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
Senator Martin Heinrich
303 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
Call 268

Other IT issues related to the planned resource center also need to be addressed. Please sign on the East Wall. We also have on our list to repair of some of the tiles in our floors.

Fridays of the month, 11:30am in the Peace Hall. Social distancing is followed.

If you think you could help, and if you enjoy listening and talking and don’t mind using your masks, please join us on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month, 11:30am-1pm in the Peace Hall. Social distancing is followed.

People of the Peace Center

Coordinating Council:
Samia Assed, President
Rashid Ahmad, Treasurer,
Margarita Mercure Hibbs, Vernon Butler,
Tonya Covington, Hope Alvarado,
Tom Dent, Elizabeth Smith

Executive Director: Jim Harvey
Finance Manager: Martha Engberg
Food Distribution: Mollie Wilkie

Web Calendar: Michelle Meaders
Building & Grounds Committee:
Maureen Wright, Mollie Wilkie,
Jim Bown, Nick Aragon
Staff:
Martha Engberg, Coordinator
Derek Caudwell, Newsletter
Rick Keeney, Cleaning Services

Website: Derek Caudwell

NVC-TC i.e. Non-Violent Communication/Transformative Communication discussion group is happy to welcome newcomers. If you enjoy listening and talking and don’t mind using your masks, please join us on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month, 11:30am-1pm in the Peace Hall. Social distancing is followed.

Building and Grounds Committee

We usually don’t mention our projects, but maybe some of you would like to help us complete our “wish list” items. Right now we are aiming to put a dishwasher in the kitchen. This will take some cabinetry work, as well as purchasing the machine. The other big project is to install a new sign over our door so folks approaching our corner will know who we are, and we want to replace or repair our sign on the East Wall. We also have on our list to repair of some of the tiles in our floors. Maybe you have noticed something that you believe we should add to the list. To offer help, comments or suggestions, please leave a message at our desk: 268-9557.

Appeal for Help

The Peace Center really needs a computer tech or IT person willing to lend a hand from time to time. We need to have all the office computers networked together, and have the ability to print from them. Other IT issues related to the planned resource center also need to be addressed. Please call 268-9557 or email jim.abqpaj@gmail.com if you think you could help, and thank you so much!
They have already held two webinars of this type which demonstrated their poor technical capacity to include the voices of our people living in a state that has overwhelmingly limited internet and cell phone access. To be able to see the NRC slides, you will need a computer or mobile device with an internet connection. In addition, to hear the presentation and to give your public comment, you will also need a reliable phone connection. This is a tall order for our communities living in rural areas and folks who do not have a computer or internet in the home, making it nearly impossible to voice their opposition to Holtec’s dangerous proposal to transport and store this deadly waste in our state.

In a March 20, 2020 letter to NRC, our full NM Congressional Delegation urged the NRC “to extend the public comment period until the threat of covid-19 has passed and it is again safe to attend public meetings.” The NRC responded on April 21 stating that, “The NRC staff plans to hold a nationwide webinar and five public meetings in New Mexico.” The NRC reneged on that commitment and is using the pandemic to fast-track the public comment period in favor of a for-profit company over the safety of the public and the urgent appeal of our elected representatives in Congress. Last month, on August 10, NRC announced the dates for these webinars which will take the place of in-person public meetings.

NISG and others are outraged that the Nuclear Regulatory Commission is blatantly disregarding their obligation for public participation as well as the formal requests made by our U.S. Congressional Delegation. On previous webinars, a member of NISG and allies across the country submitted their names to be in the queue to give comments and were never called on by the moderator. The slideshow does not give adequate information and we cannot see if anyone from the NRC is even listening! The NRC webinar substitution for in-person public meetings is a violation of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process and an egregious form of environmental racism.

For all of the above reasons, the Nuclear Issues Study Group announces it is boycotting the NRC webinar process for public input on storing forever deadly nuclear waste in New Mexico. Shame on the NRC, shame on Holtec International, and shame on the NM-based Eddy-Lea Energy Alliance (ELEA) for pushing to construct this incredibly toxic and dangerous project during a global pandemic! Join us in our boycott of the NRC so-called public meetings. We demand that the NRC pause the entire process until no sooner than six months after a vaccine for Covid-19 is available.

On Wednesday, Sept. 16th NISG will hold a People’s Hearing via Zoom where we can see each other's faces and hear your voices and concerns of why we do not consent to Holtec bringing 173,600 metric tons of high level radioactive waste to southeast New Mexico. If you would like to get involved with the organizing of this People's Hearing, please email us at: protectnewmexico@gmail.com.

Thank you for standing up against Holtec, ELEA, and the NRC and protecting New Mexico from becoming a national sacrifice zone!

With Revolutionary Love,
Leona Morgan, Coordinator/Cofounder, Nuclear Issues Study Group