



PEACE NOTES

A PUBLICATION OF THE PEACE EDUCATION CENTER

FALL · 2016

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Election Season Is Upon Us – Be Intelligently Informed

by Terry Link

On Election Day, we will weigh in on races from county commission to state and US representatives. Who we elect matters, as their proclivity to support nonviolence through legislation is crucial, especially should we have separate parties controlling the legislative and executive branches. We hope folks will do their homework and not rely on misleading TV ads and robo-calls

One good website is the League of Women Voters' [VOTE 411](#). There you can look up your ballot and read non-partisan information on each candidate and ballot proposal. [Project Vote Smart](#) has available information on candidates. [Ballotpedia](#) has summaries of presidential candidates' positions on foreign policy.

Our real work begins the day after the election, regardless of who wins. While US Senators Peters and Stabenow are not up for re-election, we should note one recent vote of interest. Sen. Peters voted to support arms sales to Saudi Arabia, but Sen. Stabenow voted against. With the new proposal from President Obama for a similar arms deal with Israel for \$38 billion, we will need to pressure our Senators to prevent the further escalation of arms in the Middle East.

PEC will try and keep you informed of legislation that you can weigh in on with our newly elected officials. We hope to enhance our web site in the coming months to more easily provide citizen action updates. We will continue to work with the [Friends Committee on National Legislation](#) and the [National Priorities Project](#) as key resources monitoring federal legislation. FCNL includes information on how to ask questions of the candidates and some questions you might ask related to peace and justice.

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Money's Influence in Elections is Our Common Enemy

Luke Roy

Everyone working for social change confronts a dangerous, powerful common enemy - wealthy individuals and corporations exercising an inordinate amount of influence over the decision-making process in our government to advantage themselves economically.

Less than .03% of all Americans contributed the maximum amount in campaign contributions in 2012, but corporations, super-PACs and "dark money" sources have taken over funding elections. Donors enjoy far more access to legislators than non-donors, and the extraordinary influence that goes along with such access.

Lawrence Lessig, in a recent [Sierra magazine article](#), argues that "every group striving for progressive change needs to commit a slice of its resources to the common objective of a Congress and presidency no longer captured by money." He continues, "Every group that feels its fight is undermined by the power of money over voice should offer at least 10 percent of its activism to the common end of reforming this democracy."

This level of commitment would apply tremendous pressure toward reclaiming our democracy. Groups such as Common Cause, Center for Public Integrity, Move to Amend, and many others are leaders in political reform. Check their websites for ways to be involved. Working together we can defeat our common enemy, and wrest back control of our government!



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Peace Notes is a publication of the Peace Education Center. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Board.

An Autumn Calendar for Peace & Justice

» meetings & meaningful events that celebrate and promote community.

Regularly Scheduled Events:

Every Friday • Noon Peace Vigil, 12-1 in front of the State capitol

First Thursdays • Peace Education Center Board Meeting 7pm at University United Methodist Church, 1120 Harrison Road, East Lansing.

3rd Mondays • Greater Lansing Network Against War & Injustice (GLNAWI) planning meeting, 7pm. Held in the PEC office at University United Methodist Church 1120 S. Harrison Rd., East Lansing.

2nd & 4th Thursdays • The Cost of Militarism Education Team (COMET) Reading Group, 7pm at Everybody Reads Bookstore, 2019 E. Michigan Ave., Lansing - explores the use of U.S. military power to protect corporate interests, and the costs of American imperialism. pballbach@comcast.net

Upcoming Events:

October 30 • 3:30 to 6. UN Day. Refreshments, talks by Prof. Susan Waltz and Susan Pittman, and launch of "Adopt-A-Future" initiative. Tickets at www.GLUNA.org. Erickson Hall-Kiva, MSU.

October 26 • 7pm. [Muslim Journey's Book Club](#) Fall "Sneak Peak" of group starting in the spring. Thomas Jefferson's Qur'an: Islam and the Founders by Denise A. Spellberg. Prof. Salah Hassan, speaker. MSU Main Library Green Room.

November 1 • 11:30-12:30pm. [So You Want to Change the World?](#) by Terry Link C204 Snyder Hall, MSU.

November 4 • 12noon. [The Grapes of Labor and Consumer Wrath: Michigan and the Farmworker Grape Boycott](#). MSU Museum Auditorium.

November 7 • 7pm. [Looking at Flint: Past, Present and Future of the City](#). MSU Main Library Green Room

November 13 • 1-6 pm. [Global Festival](#). Exhibits, performances, interactive. MSU Union.

November 19 • 9-4pm. PEC's Alternative Holiday Sale - NEW LOCATION: Edgewood United Church of Christ, 469 N Hagadorn Rd, East Lansing

November 20 • 6-9pm. Fiesta Pequena Mid-MI Immigration annual fundraiser. Handmade crafts, music, food, report from the Mayan Women's Cooperative. U.U. Church, 5509 S. Pennsylvania Ave. Lansing.

Dec 19th • 7pm. GLNAWI sponsored "Write for Rights" Informational potluck and opportunity to sign Amnesty Letters of support. Location to be determined. Check [our website](#) for updates.

Check our website at www.peacedcenter.org for calendar updates and additional information. This newsletter will be posted there, with live links giving additional information and background to some of the stories and information listed here.

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Interceptor Missile Site: Bad for Michigan, Bad for the Country

Becky Payne, editor

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Recent headlines lauded Michigan's Senators Peters and Stabenow and all but one of our Michigan Representatives for their efforts to get a new interceptor missile defense system built in Michigan. But is that a good thing? Interceptor missiles are supposed to protect US soil from incoming nuclear missiles, but in test after test, the interceptors are duds. Besides, the US already has two sites; military leaders have not asked for a third!

There is much foolish and even dangerous here. If leaders begin to think that this interceptor system works better than it actually does, it could lead them to take more risks than necessary. And what about the huge amount of money wasted on a junk missile system? Is it worth it just for the jobs it might create? A dollar given to the Pentagon creates [fewer jobs](#) than putting that same amount of money to more worthy causes – schools, health care, infrastructure, etc. Our congress should put our tax dollars where they will do some good!

This is not about US safety. The Pentagon and their favorite contractors have become masters at slurping up tax money for no-good weapons systems. Our politicians say "Yes" to building more weapons because it's easier than explaining a "No" vote – and if it generates a few campaign contributions in their pockets, so much the better. But if we continually allow money to be wasted on ineffective systems, are we stupid or what?

For more about this, read Laura Grego's account for [The Union of Concerned Scientists](#).

USE YOUR VOICE!

If the issues you are reading about in this newsletter are important to you, your representatives in Washington (and in Lansing) need to hear from you. Take a moment each week to contact the people making decisions about war, peace and justice...

Senator Debbie Stabenow

1-202-224 4822

731 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

www.stabenow.senate.gov/?p=contact

Senator Gary Peters

1-202-224-6221

724 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

www.peters.senate.gov/content/contact-gary

Representative Mike Bishop

1-202-225-4872

428 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

<https://mikebishop.house.gov/contact>

Representative John Moolenaar

1-202-225-3561

117 Cannon House Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20515

<https://moolenaar.house.gov/contact/email>

Representative Tim Walberg

1-202-225-6276

2436 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

<http://walberg.house.gov/contact/>

My Granddaughter Signed an Enlistment Document... Help!

Youth Outreach Committee

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Recently Elaine called us, panicked because her granddaughter Keya had just signed a military enlistment agreement at her high school. What could she do? What did this mean?

Keya is not in the military yet (more on that later). But if she follows through, being in the military means she is giving up control of her life for eight years – or longer. She gives up all rights to quit and go home, to refuse orders, to keep herself out of danger. G.I. stands for “government issue.” By signing up, Keya becomes a cog in the machinery of war.

Yes, Keya may feel pride in helping her country, but at a big cost. The military is not a jobs program or a way to a cheaper education. The jobs training she may get is often so specific to the military that it isn't useful when she gets out. She will be less likely to go to college, and statistically, her lifetime earnings will be less than those who never joined, even those from poor families.

Military training is designed to desensitize recruits like Keya to killing, or inflicting pain, or even listening to their own morality, as it molds them into a “fighting machine.” That conditioning isn't a switch that gets turned on and off. Rates of spousal abuse, child abuse, rape and drug abuse are high for those in service. Once discharged, suicide and even homelessness are higher than for the general population. The remorse, feelings of being different, or being “hardened” make it difficult to fit back into society.

Is there assistance? For active-duty soldiers, ask-

ing for help means admitting weakness – which often leads to shaming or even being demoted by commanding officers. (Even soldiers who report being raped are more likely to be punished than their rapists.) And once out of the military, veterans seeking medical care are often forced into long waits; when they find it, care is often inadequate.

The good news for Elaine and Keya? The agreement Keya signed at her school is not as binding as it might seem. She is not in the military until she is inducted at basic training. So, Keya can just not go on her designated date to the Military Entrance Processing Station. It's as simple as that. It is against military regulations for any recruiter to try to threaten or coerce her. [GI Rights Hotline](#) has information that can be helpful. (Call the GI Rights Hotline at 1-800-447-4487.)

And we suggest that if Keya really wants to help her country, there are plenty of other, healthier and constructive ways.

The PEC, although opposed to war, and the over-funding of the U.S. Military, believes that it is our obligation as a nation to support the veterans that have been harmed in service to this country. It is unconscionable that we as a nation continue to fund violence, and support the manufacturers of weapons, and do not adequately care for the men and women we have sent into harm's way

LEFT: Participants in Peace Quest 2016 listen to music and speakers

RIGHT: Terry and Ellen Link step off as standard bearers for a peaceful planet. A teen drum-line for peace follows.

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More than 200 people gather for Peace Quest 2016

By Jim Detjen & Terry Link

Some came to walk with peace signs in their hands. Others came to listen to protest music. Still others came to smoke a peace pipe at a ceremony led by Chippewa Native Americans.

All came to show support for peace and justice.

Close to 300 people gathered at the Union Missionary Baptist Church in Lansing on September 18 to take part in the kickoff event of Peace Quest 2016. It was part of a 10-day series of events to help mark the International Day of Peace. The events were coordinated by the Peace Education Center and the Greater Lansing United Nations Association, with many other volunteers helping.

Among the kick-off activities were petitions to sign, pledges to make, opportunities to buy buttons and bumper stickers and messages of peace and justice from religious leaders. Participants could also register to vote and learn about peace and justice groups.

Other activities included yoga, opportunities to make peace bracelets, a United Nations quiz, an art contest, a chance to learn about other cultures and lessons on conflict resolution.

Terry and Ellen Link led a peace walk around the grounds of the church on South Martin Luther King Boulevard in Lansing. The participants walked past signs showing the faces and quotations of famous peacemakers, such as Gandhi, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Martin Luther King Jr.

Week-long Peace Quest Events

The rest of the week continued with meaningful events. The 15th anniversary of weekly peace vigils at the Capitol saw more than 50 participants. Later in the week, Fr. Peter Dougherty of the Meta Peace Team, spoke about the power of nonviolence, emphasizing both “inner” work – actualizing our own human potential, and “outer” work that attempts to affect change in our social, economic, and political relations. Rabbi Michael Zimmerman led us through a litany of Jewish proverbial calls to curb Lashon hara (the evil tongue), in short, to refrain from speaking ill of another person. Erick Williams joined a panel to put forward his proposal to license police officers, given the recent awareness of police violence (see article in our last newsletter).

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TOP: Drummers from Haslett High School lead a walk for Peace
MIDDLE: Musicians entertain and inspire at Peace Quest
BOTTOM: Youth art for peace from contest was sponsored by the Niagara Foundation

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Peace Quest 2016 continued

Petition & Lobbying Efforts Reach their Target

In related activity, local activists, based upon efforts from the Friends Committee on National Legislation, have made significant inroads in pushing legislation to strengthen the fabric of our community. After a July phone meeting with Rep. John Moolenaar's staff on criminal justice issues asking for support of bills which would reform mandatory minimum sentencing for nonviolent offenders and reduce recidivism, we met face-to-face with Rep. Moolenaar, introducing him to some of the issues regarding the reforms, and we left with his thanks for putting this legislation on his agenda, which lies outside his committee's work.

On the International Day of Peace, Terry Link delivered petitions the PEC has collected at summer events to the offices of Senator Peters and Senator Stabenow. Petitions were to support the Auditing of the Pentagon Act (the one agency of government that has never been audited) and to support sentencing reform legislation. The Peace Education Center mailed copies to Representatives Bishop, Walberg, and Moolenaar.



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LEFT: Maggie Hackett

RIGHT: Alice Kocel



Alice Kocel & Maggie Hackett: Remembering Two Great Women

by Phil Ballbach

The local peace community is saddened by the recent deaths of two long-time activists. Alice Kocel, age 96, died September 6, and Maggie Hackett, 69, died September 11.

Alice Kocel was inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame in 2003 for her contributions in the area of civil rights. She is credited with writing Michigan's first civil rights law and as being one of first advocates for the need for affirmative action in the state. She was appointed by Governor Bill Milliken to coordinate a review of employment opportunities for minorities and women in state classified service and, in this capacity, was assigned as liaison to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Alice was active locally with the ACLU, Nuclear Freeze, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, East Lansing Human Relations Commission, and was a regular contributor to the Peace Education Center.

Maggie Hackett's activism goes back to SDS and her student days at MSU and the Vietnam War protests of that time. She remained a consistent supporter of the peace movement and pro-

gressive politics over the years while raising her family in the Lansing area and California. Maggie served on the PEC Board from 2006 to 2008 and has been a regular member of the Cost of Militarism Education Team (COMET) and handicrafts vendor at PEC's annual alternative holiday sale.

Maggie's son, Colin, is currently an international affairs advisor to Vice-President Joe Biden and her son, Ian, a children's music teacher in San Francisco.

**...And I'll use my voice
I'll use my mind
I'll use my heart
I won't cease 'til I find some justice
The kind that feeds the people...**

from Why Not Feed the People
by Kathie Kuhn

PHOTOS: Participants in the 783rd Peace Vigil marking 15 years of opposing war, violence and injustice.

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15 Years of Weekly Peace Vigils

At noon on Friday, September 14th, 2001, just days after the horrific events on September 11, a group of citizens held a vigil for peace in front of the Federal Building in Lansing. Their purpose was to raise awareness that our nation was at a crossroad that, if taken would lead us to war. Their hope was that our leaders would choose a nonmilitary response to the violence our country had endured earlier that week.

September 16th this year marked the 15th anniversary of what has become a weekly community event (now held in front of the State Capital). Advocates for peace and justice have been present from noon until one every single Friday since 2001.

They have stood in all kinds of weather; during routine Friday lunch-hours and on major holidays. They have also formed close friendships and enjoyed the solidarity of people with shared purpose.

Many of that original group continue to attend, including teachers, clergy, veterans, parents with children, state workers and visitors to the capital. It is common for someone just passing by to grab a sign and stand, even for a few moments to show support for peace.

Individual vigils have focused on environmental justice, racism, nuclear arms and gun control, but the primary message has always been one of choosing peace over war; nonviolence over violence and serving people, not the military machine.

The 783rd gathering drew local peace and justice activists, as well as people who drove in from out of town to mark the day.



vig·il
[vij- uhl]

NOUN

a period of devoted or watchful attention.

Alternative Holiday Sale – New Location, Same Great Causes

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PEC's favorite event of the year is our Alternative Holiday Sale. Shop where you can really feel GOOD about buying stuff! You will find locally-made items, imported goods made by disadvantaged people, and information tables supporting social causes. Even sharing lunch with us does some good for the world, since all food revenue supports the PEC.

We are working to bring back an old favorite - cooperative games for kids, along with new teen/adult games that have players working together to save the world. The 10,000 Villages craft co-

operative will be back with their lovely and unique items. As in past years, you can also buy quality olive oil from Palestine, sweet-smelling soaps, cards, ceramics, books, jewelry... and more! If you want to be a vendor, look on our website for an application. If you'd like to rent a table to sell your goods, an application can be found [here](#).

The sale will be November 19th at Edgewood United Church of Christ, 469 N Hagadorn Rd, East Lansing.

PLEASE NOTE THIS YEAR'S NEW LOCATION



The Peace Education Center's Annual
**Alternative
Holiday Sale**
At a New Location!
the Edgewood United Church Building
469 N Hagadorn Road in East Lansing
**Saturday
November 19, 2016
9am-4pm**