



Merrimack Valley

People For Peace

Serving the communities of the Merrimack Valley

Merrimack Valley People for Peace, Inc. works for a sustainable future for all life on our planet. Our members commit themselves to the interrelated activities of education for peace and justice, the prevention of war, an end to arms sales, the abolition of nuclear weapons, and protection of the environment.

November 2015 – June 2016

GOOD NEWS

Kinder Morgan Abandons New England Pipeline Project. In April, the energy giant Kinder Morgan Inc. retired its controversial proposal for a natural gas pipeline going through parts of Massachusetts and Southern New Hampshire. Kinder Morgan said that its Northeast Energy Direct project didn't receive the commitments from big customers that it needed to proceed with the \$3.3 billion plan, which would involve building a 188-mile pipeline from a point west of Albany, NY, to Dracut, MA.

The Boston Globe wrote on April 20, *“The company’s withdrawal represents a huge victory for its array of opponents, ranging from grass-roots organizations to established environmental groups to powerful politicians. They also included residents of the many towns that would be affected by pipeline construction and activists who worried it could make New England overly dependent on natural gas.”*

Several of us in MVPP were active in opposing the pipeline, so we can take a moment to accept the Globe’s pat on the back and celebrate, and then join our neighbors in their ongoing fight to stop the West Roxbury Lateral pipeline which is being built by Spectra Energy right through densely populated West Roxbury residential neighborhoods.

Verizon Workers Claim Major Victory. On May 27, Verizon workers celebrated a huge victory when the six-and-a-half-week strike came to an end with a tentative contract agreement. Under its terms, Verizon agreed that no additional jobs will be outsourced overseas, while increasing the number of calls routed to domestic call centers. This will result in the creation of 1,300 new call center jobs along the East Coast, first-ever contracts for Verizon wireless store employees in Brooklyn and Everett, Massachusetts, and raises of nearly 11 percent over the life of the contract.

The workers beat back demands from the company to cut pensions, transfer workers out of state for up to two months, and cuts in disability and accident benefits.

Nearly 40,000 workers had been on strike since mid-April to the first week of June. This time they have much more to celebrate in comparison to the big strike in August 2011 when about 45,000 Verizon landline technicians and customer service employees returned to work without a new contract and losing two week’s pay.

The two unions representing the Verizon workers – Communications Workers of America (CWA) and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) – hailed the contract agreement as a victory for the workers and the unions, and in a broader sense, for the American middle class.

<http://www.merrimackvalleypeopleforpeace.org/>

You can view newsletters on line (where most links work) at <http://www.merrimackvalleypeopleforpeace.org/oldmins.hym>

Printed on recycled paper

Massachusetts Teens Win in Landmark Climate Change Lawsuit. Four teenagers who sued the Commonwealth of Massachusetts over its failure to adequately address the threat of climate change won a major court case on May 17, adding to a string of victories for young activists. The Massachusetts Supreme Court ruled in favor of the young plaintiffs, agreeing that the state Department of Environmental Protection was not making good on its goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions 25% below 1990 levels by 2020, as requested by a state law passed in 2008. The court ordered DEP to produce and implement stronger and more expansive regulations leading to mass-based reductions in greenhouse gases.

The teenagers – two Wellesley High School and two Boston Latin School students – had the support of the Conservation Law Foundation and the Massachusetts Energy Consumer Alliance.

This case is one of several similar cases in federal district courts in Oregon and Washington, and in the state courts of North Carolina, New Mexico, Pennsylvania and Colorado. All of these legal cases are supported by Our Children’s Trust, a nonprofit organization that seeks the legal right of our youth to a healthy atmosphere and stable climate in the future.

Democracy Awakening is a coalition of more than 100 groups representing a diverse array of issues and demanding “a Congress that stands up for democracy rather than stands in its way.” Lead organizations include the American Postal Workers Union, Common Cause, Communications Workers of America, Democracy Initiative, Every Voice Center, Food & Water Watch, Franciscan Action Network, Greenpeace, NAACP, People For the American Way, Public Citizen, Peace Action, Student Debt Crisis, ←350, CodePink, World Beyond War (a full list of organizations can be found at democracyawakening.org). They mobilized in Washington, D.C. “to protect voting rights, get big money out of politics and demand a fair hearing and an up and down vote on President Obama’s Supreme Court nominee.” Between April 16 and 18 participants went to teach-ins, workshops, non-violent direct action trainings, arts events, a rally for Democracy and a day of non-violent direct action at the Capitol.

Democracy Spring was an event with four specific legislative demands:

- Passing legislation to overturn the 2010 Citizens United decision,
- Passing an update to the Voting Rights Act to restore provisions of the law struck down by the Supreme Court in 2013,
- Passing the Voter Empowerment Act to make voter registration easier,
- Passing the Fair Elections Now Act to create a public financing system for Senate candidates.

Participants began a 140-mile walk from Philadelphia to the U.S. Capitol to “demand Congress take immediate action to end the corruption of big money in our politics and ensure free and fair elections in which every American has an equal voice.”

In the course of those joint actions, between April 11 and April 18 close to 1,400 people were arrested at the U.S. Capitol, in what has been called the largest mass civil disobedience since the Vietnam War era. “The Progressive” published a priceless photo of a young woman dressed as the Statue of Liberty being handcuffed and lead away by the police! Among those taken into custody were approximately 60 organization and movement leaders, including NAACP president and CEO Cornell William Brooks, Public Citizen president Robert Weissman, Greenpeace executive director Annie Leonard, radio commentator Jim Hightower, and Ben & Jerry’s co-founders Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield.

A "Media Matters" analysis of the broadcast evening and weekend TV news coverage revealed that the networks devoted only two segments – a total of 29 seconds of airtime – between April 11 and April 18 to the week-long demonstrations. Indeed we are lucky to have the Internet and the Social Media.

Escalation Summer in West Roxbury. West Roxbury residents are determined to stop the construction of a high pressure pipeline carrying fracked gas which will run within a hundred feet of an active blasting quarry, through residential neighborhoods, and past several schools.

Opponents of the pipeline have been meeting, contacting Representatives and Senators, holding

vigils, educating the public, rallying, marching, and canvassing with a petition to stop the pipeline since 2014. The opposition is growing and so is the grassroots support from across the region.

On May 21, there was a rally and march to the construction site organized by the group Mothers Out Front. On May 25 over 100 people gathered for an interfaith worship service at the site of the pipeline and sixteen clergy members from across the Boston area were arrested after they blocked construction work. On June 1, two men in their 20s dressed as Han Solo and Luke Skywalker were arrested after chaining themselves to a steel plate at the site. This is the opening of what the West Roxbury pipeline resisters call their "Escalation Summer." To learn more about their efforts and support them, go to www.resistthepipeline.org.

Boryana Tacconi

In Memoriam:

Daniel Berrigan

(May 9, 1921 – April 30, 2016)

"If you are going to follow Jesus, you better look good on wood."
Dan Berrigan

That's exactly what Fr. Dan Berrigan, S.J. did and he was crucified for years by the Jesuits and many citizens of the US; Catholics included. How dare a Catholic priest protest the Vietnam War and end up in jail?

On May 17, 1968, Dan, his brother Phillip and seven others poured homemade napalm on draft records in the parking lot of the Catonsville, Maryland Draft Board. So began this man's life of civil resistance.

"You have to struggle to stay alive and be of use as long as you can."
Dan Berrigan

That's exactly what Fr. Dan Berrigan, S.J. did. He managed to live, being of use, until he died on April 30th at age 94. He bluntly told us the truth.

"Of course, let us have peace, we cry, 'but at the same time let us have normalcy, let us lose nothing, let our lives stand intact, let us know neither prison nor ill repute nor disruption of ties ... ' There is no peace because there are no peacemakers. There are no makers of peace because the making of peace is at least as costly as the making of war - at least as exigent, at least as disruptive, at least as liable to bring disgrace and prison, and death in its wake."

Dan Berrigan

Submitted by Jane Cadarette and Mary Kate Small

GEORGETOWN POEMS

On Being Asked to Debate H. Kissinger

When I sat down
they said with relief,
He's sat down at last.
But I hadn't. I was off like a shot put
and over their walls.

When I grew silent they said,
We've convinced him at last.
But they hadn't. I beckoned my soul aside
Come! pick apples, feed on your vision.

Then I stopped breathing.
They said in relief,
We can breathe again in the world
and deceive with virtuous tongues
and kill with immaculate hands.

And they could, they could. Except
for these lines, those apples, that vision.

Daniel Berrigan

David Zackon

(September 30, 1957 – March 13, 2016)



It is with sadness that MVPP notes the untimely passing of David Zackon, activist, friend and scholar. He spent his abundant energy and determination trying to find solutions to the Middle East crises, focusing especially on the continuing Israeli/ Palestinian impasse. An active member of MA Peace Now, the North Shore Coalition for Peace and Justice, and other organizations, plus an adept internet user, David helped us understand the vast complexities of the area. At our NSC meetings he was quick to use his computer to look up helpful information to guide our discussions.

David was kind, gentle, clear minded, and had a wry sense of humor. We miss him.

Barbara Haack

Events 2015

November

We walked in the (cold) **Armistice / Veterans Day** parade in Boston by Veterans for Peace.

We wrote to government leaders about **refugees** individually and as a group. -gov. Baker soon backed down some from his stand limiting immigration especially from Syria.

At our **stone soup supper**, John and Carrie Schuchardt, described the heroic mission of the House of Peace. : Haley Kosek of **Unite Here** added a brief description of the new to Lowell organization at our Stone Soup Supper. Brian later posted their web site: <http://www.nejb.us/>

December

A local non-member contacted MVPP to give a toaster oven to refugees.

Events 2016

January

Niki Rosen went to hear a Syrian refugee speak, at the Unitarian church in Newburyport and her picture was in the Boston Globe.

At our annual potluck January 15, Debbie Grinnell explained how the group **C-10** keeps statistics and communicates with nuclear regulators about the Seabrook power station. Decaying concrete is a major concern.

Nevins Library in Methuen was crowded at an informative presentation by **Lowell Imam, Bashir Bilal**.

February

Some of us were inspired by the play, "**Haunted by God: The Life of Dorothy Day**" (founder of Catholic Workers) at St. Robert Bellarmine Parish, Andover. Lisa Wagner, in a traveling one woman show, portrayed Dorothy Day as having a big heart with courage to match.

Many of us attended with Veterans for Peace at the **Islamic Society of Boston Cultural Center** near Roxbury Crossing. In spite of cold weather, we saw many impressive speakers, then the people from the mosque asked us inside for some warm food and conversations.

March

Walk For a New Spring The Buddhist monks visited around Lawrence around March 17. Friday, MVPP and Saturday, the Vietnamese Buddhist temple in Lawrence hosted potlucks with interesting conversations. Walkers and monks stayed two nights at MVPP homes. Their main theme was peace through sharing, and some spoke against the proposed pipeline for shipping 'fracked gas' through New England. Some attended Mass Peace Action's annual meeting.

Good Friday vigils:

- In Reading MA, against the Death Penalty and
- Quakers at Boston Common, for peace and that "Black Lives Matter."

May

Veterans For Peace Memorial Day: The rain stopped and speakers reminded us that the holiday is to remember the suffering war produces for soldiers and populations.

June

We joined the chorus in a recording studio to help produce Pat Scanlon's Veterans for Peace video, "Extremists for Peace." See fundraising video at: <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/449781593/extremists-for-peace-music-video-project>

Brian Quirk

Meeting Notes

November 2015

A larger than usual group met for our annual Stone Soup Meal, donating to OXFAM America what we would have spent on a more substantial meal. After the meal, our two very special guests, Carrie and John Schuchardt gave us an overview of their commitment to peace and justice at their home for the past twenty five years, where people with developmental disabilities have been an integral part of the House of Peace community along with an untold number of refugees from war-torn countries, many of them children who have lived at the House of Peace while receiving medical treatment in Boston for their wounds. Haley Kosek, of Unite Here, added a brief description of the new-to-Lowell organization. Brian later posted their web site: <http://www.nejb.us/>

February 2016

We agreed to put MVPP on a map of peace organizations around the world, a program devised by Steve Leeper at: <https://pangaeallc.squarespace.com>. (Due to technical enhancements, this may not yet be visible.)

We discussed whether to support efforts to prevent Essex County from working with ICE to deport aliens deemed undocumented. We favor this but will seek more information. (ed. We found no more information.)

March 2016

We decided to get our local libraries interested in organizing an event with a Moslem speaker.

We remembered David Zackon whose unexpected death was a shock and a blow to the Massachusetts peace community and to everyone who knew him. We are mourning this wonderful peace and justice activist.

April 2016

We agreed to sponsor the Rolling Ridge Peace Institute.

We voted for the treasurer to donate to Mass Peace Action in memory of David Zackon and to help support Pat Scanlon's "Extremists for Peace" song/video project for the Veterans for Peace convention in California in August.

We arranged to donate our library to the Salem Peace Institute at Salem State College

May 2016

We planned the annual meeting. We also planned screening of the documentary, "Making a Killing: Guns, Greed, and the NRA."

Michael informed us that he'd been appointed to the Move to Amend Interfaith Council, which is recruiting faith groups to the effort to amend the Constitution to confirm that Corporations are not People. People agree to talk to their faith organizations about the effort.

Boryana attended David Zackon's memorial service and reported that the whole peace community was there. Everyone talked about what a wonderful person he was. Masood said he'd only met him 3 times but that David was such an incredible person Masood felt it as a personal loss.

Dee Halzack

Connections

From the 1990 trial of the Plowshares 8. (The first Plowshares actions took place in the King of Prussia, PA in 1980.)

"The defendants (*Fr. Daniel Berrigan, Philip Berrigan, Dean Hammer, Fr. Carl Kabat, Elmer Maas, Sr. Anne Montgomery, Molly Rush, and John Schuchardt*) were told today that they would have to serve 23 months in county jail if they are convicted of any more antiwar activity in the next 23 months, a condition that the defendants said they might not be able to fulfill.

After the sentencing, Daniel Berrigan, who is 68 years old, said: "I'm going to watch President Bush [Sr.] very closely. It all depends on him whether I go back in the pokey or not."

All readers are invited to watch the film about this trial, now on youtube:

In the King of Prussia. The Trial of the Plowshares 8.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kUph8GWFupE>

Coming Events

3rd Sunday of every month, Quaker **vigil at Textron** at Wilmington, MA on Rt 129, 11:00 AM --12.

Mary Kate Small invites all to the Bath Iron Works in Maine, June 18th. She will be representing the Merrimack Valley People for Peace there.

Friday, **June 24, 6:30 MVPP Annual Meeting.**
Pot Luck and hear from Scott Shaeffer-Duffy from Worcester Catholic Workers.

Sunday, June 26: 2:00pm, Afternoon of Thanksgiving
Honoring Retiring Rolling Ridge Executive Director
Larry Peacock (\$20)
<http://www.rollingridge.org/donate/honoring-larry-peacock/ticketsrsvp-to-june-26/> (RSVP by June 12)

Monday, July 18:

6th Annual Rolling Ridge Peace Conference

5:30 Reception & Dinner \$40

7:30 Public Address no charge

Guest Speaker: Celene Ibrahim, "Peacebuilding: An Islamic Imperative"

<http://www.rollingridge.org/>

July 29-31 (Fri-Sun): **Lowell Folk Festival**

MVPP Table Saturday July 30, 11am-5pm

Saturday August 6 **Hiroshima** commemoration
Andover Old Town Hall 7:00 PM

Monday Sept. 5. **Bread and Roses Festival** 12:00 --6.

Membership

**To continue to receive this newsletter...We Invite You to Join /Rejoin Us
(Unless 2016 appears on your label, your dues have expired. Please remember to renew.)**

\$20.00 Individual

\$10.00 Student/Senior

\$30.00 Family

Circle One

\$50.00 Supporting

\$75.00 Sustaining

\$100.00 Peacemaker

Name _____

Address _____

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Return to
P.O. Box 573
North Andover, MA 01845

MVPP is registered with the IRS as a 501(c)(3) organization. Contributions to MVPP are tax deductible.

Check here if you prefer to receive your newsletter via e-mail.

Weekly Vigils

Andover: Sunday, noon-1 pm; Shawsheen Square, Junction of Routes 133 and 28; Lawrence Friends Meeting/ Shawsheen Peace Witness; Allan Sifferlen, 978-397-6432.

Andover: Thursday, 6:30-7:30 am; in front of Raytheon plant near Routes 133 and 93; Raytheon Peacemakers; Allan Sifferlen, 978-397-6432.

Gloucester: Saturday, noon-1 pm; Grant Circle.

Marblehead: Tuesday, 6:30-7:19pm in front of the high school and Community Center at the lights at the intersection of Humphrey-Pleasant and Lafayette Sts.; Tom Gale, 781-631-1218.

Nashua, NH in front of Nashua City Hall from 11 to Noon every Sat. www.nashuapeace.org

Newburyport: Sunday, noon-1 pm; Market Square; Niki Rosen, 978-463-3208.

Reading: 2nd Saturday/each month, 11 am-noon; Reading Square; Reading People for Peace; Bob Connor, bobconnor1@yahoo.com.

Rockport: Wednesday, noon-1 pm; First Congregational Church (silent for peace).

Salem, MA: Saturday, 11-noon; Riley Plaza (by the Post Office).

Merrimack Valley People For Peace
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<http://www.merrimackvalleypeopleforpeace.org/>

PEACE IS
PATRIOTIC

COME TO OUR ANNUAL MEETING!

June 24, 2016 6:30 PM at North Parish Church
Hear Scott Schaeffer-Duffy of Worcester Catholic Workers.

The MVPP Newsletter is printed periodically and has a current distribution of 100. We are grateful for suggestions, comments, and help with publication

MVPP President: Brian Quirk. Vice President: Boryana Tacconi.

Newsletter contributors: Arthur and Margaret Brien, Jane Cadarette, Mary Kate Small, Barbara Haack, Dee Halzack, Brian Quirk, and Boryana Tacconi.

CALL AND WRITE YOUR REPRESENTATIVES & SENATORS TO MAKE YOUR VIEWS KNOWN

Every legislator knows one letter is worth a thousand votes.

President Barack Obama (202) 456-1111

The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Contact: www.whitehouse.gov/contact/

Senator Elizabeth Warren (202) 224-4543

317 Hart Senate Office Building Washington DC 20510

Form: www.warren.senate.gov/?p=email_senator

Senator Edward J. Markey (202) 224-2742

218 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

Form: www.markey.senate.gov/contact

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Form: <https://moulton.house.gov/contact/>

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A link to all in US legislature:

thomas.loc.gov/home/legbranch/legbranch.html

How Senators and Representatives voted:

Senate:

www.senate.gov/reference/common/faq/how_to_votes.htm

House: clerk.house.gov/evs/2004/index.asp

State Voting Information: Find your representatives at:

<http://wheredoivotema.com/bal/MyElectionInfo.aspx>