

» PEC Alternative Holiday Sale: A Well-Loved Tradition!

Contributed by Becky Payne



Members of the community shop and socialize at the 2011 PEC Alternative Holiday Sale

Holiday shopping brings mixed feelings... are we buying stuff no one needs... supporting wealthy corporations while salesclerks are barely scraping by. But there is another way to shop.

Almost forty years ago, the Peace Education Center began the annual Alternative Holiday Sale on a Saturday in November. Here you can buy from local artisans or from cooperatives selling goods made using fair-trade principles or supporting charitable causes. You can have a hearty bowl of homemade soup while learning about organizations that are doing good for the world.

Buy Local – Buy Fair Trade – Support a Worthy Cause

In recent years, this sale has hosted local makers of soap, jewelry, clothing, pottery, food and more. There are vendors selling goods to support needed services in poor areas of the world, such as a cooperative raising money for school supplies for children living in garbage dumps in Guatemala.

You can buy coffee from cooperatives that pledge to pay

farmers a decent wage. Browse books from EVERYbody Reads, a bookstore dedicated to putting local and life-affirming books in the hands of all readers. Buy UNICEF cards - or learn about the Palestinian/Israeli crisis while buying olive oil produced by Palestinian farmers under threat of violence.

Feel Peaceful with Every Purchase

Terry Link, co-director of PEC started going to the sale when his children were small – and has been coming ever since. When he and his family started attending, “Our heart and well of compassion was made larger just by seeing the alternatives to commercialism. We were introduced to children’s games that focused on co-operation as the winning strategy, not on winner takes all.”

Not only are you buying clever, unique goods for yourself or to give as gifts, you know that your money will make a positive difference in someone’s life. Terry continued, “We saw items that shifted our attention from the commercial side to the craft, skill, and heartfelt creations that small conscientious enterprises were producing.”

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In Memory

Bill Petry (1940 - 2009)
Tom Schneider (1942-2011)

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Universalist Church
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Visits to Our Senators – Thank You!

Becky Payne, Editor

Did you know that you visited Senator Gary Peters' office last month? It was exciting to travel with all of you up the brass-plated elevator to the 18th floor of Lansing's Boji Tower. Actually, there were only three of us that day, but my point is this: You did this. You, right now, reading this newsletter, you who sign our petitions, attend our events, you who have given us a few dollars - or a lot of dollars - to keep this organization alive; you are the ones responsible for getting us into that office.

This visit was to express our concern that Senator Peters was not committing to sign the newly-minted agreement with Iran. This agreement would be a significant victory toward backing down hostilities. Senator Peters' office was not as lavish as that polished elevator, but we felt honored to have this chance to make our position known. We ended up having a 20-minute conference call with the Senator's Washington foreign-policy aide, Jordan Wells.

We also handed over a stack of petitions that local people had signed in favor of the agreement. When we presented them, the aide said "Oh good, we need these!" Evidently, the Senator was being bombarded by calls against signing the agreement.

A few days later, you also made a visit to Senator Stabenow's office. She announced her support for the treaty hours before we walked in. We went anyway and thanked her for her support and gave her staff a stack of petitions, too.

We could not have gotten those meetings without you. This Iran agreement might have failed if not for your involvement. Whether you march and hold up signs or just sign up for a mailing list, you are making a difference!

As I sat in that office looking down on the whole city, I felt your presence. Thanks for having our backs. We'll try to keep you informed and involved so we ALL are moving toward a better world.

Concert Raises Funds to Help Rebuild Black Churches

Contributed by Jim Detjen

An Eastside Lansing concert featuring two Michigan musical groups raised more than \$500 on Sept. 25 to help rebuild black churches destroyed by arson. The concert was a collaborative effort between the Ten Pound Fiddle and the Peace Education Center. More than 75 people attended the concert at the Allen Market Place on E. Kalamazoo St. It featured Rev. Robert Jones and Deacon Earl & The Congregation.

Within a week after the murder of nine people at the historic Emanuel African Methodist Church in Charleston, S.C. on June 17, six black churches were burned in the southeastern United States. People throughout the United States have raised many hundreds of thousands of dollars to help rebuild the black churches that were damaged by fire.



PHOTO: Petitions are signed at Potter Park Zoo as part of International Day of Peace celebration. The petitions urge the creation of a U. S. Department of Peace and the auditing of the Pentagon

Another Year... Another Giant Budget Increase for Defense

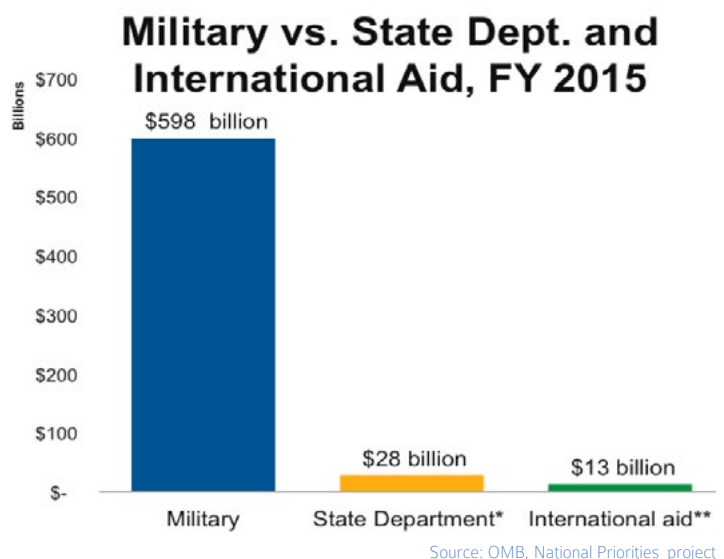
Contributed by Terry Link

On October 7, Senators Stabenow and Peters joined with 68 other senators in voting to approve the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). Those opposing it included Senators Sanders, Boxer, Leahy, Baldwin, Brown and as well as Reid and Durbin. Republicans Paul and Cruz also voted against the legislation. The National Policies Project (NPP) notes that legislation as passed increases the defense spending to \$612 billion for the coming year including an additional \$38 billion for war.

Like previous years' versions of this bill, the 2016 NDAA includes spending on a massive Pentagon slush fund known as the Overseas Contingency Operations fund, or OCO. The slush fund isn't subject to Budget Control Act (BCA) spending caps, and amounts to a huge spending gimmick that flouts fiscal responsibility. And it's only for the Pentagon - domestic discretionary spending has no such comparable fund. The total disregard for the goal of the BCA caps make this passage of the bill irresponsible. President Obama has already threatened a veto of the legislation over the way the bill allows the Pentagon to sidestep the caps. The NDAA provides a \$38 billion increase to the Pentagon's war chest. – NPP

This unrestrained commitment to military spending has great costs at home – money not available for improving infrastructure, repairing holes in our social safety net, or even improving our own diplomacy work. In fact the

defense budget in 2015 was 21 times larger than the Department of State budget.



Without any pushback from constituents, our Senators are likely to vote with the crowd that believes military spending is sacrosanct. The current legislation, yet unsigned by the president, is part of a continuing resolution that runs out December 11. Before this gets extended, those of us with concerns about this unbridled growth in war funding need to raise our voices.

» LOOKING FOR MORE?

more excellent information and illuminating graphics like the one above are at: <https://www.nationalpriorities.org>

PEC Alternative Holiday Sale... continued from page 1

Look for our New Location Next Year

The sale began almost forty years ago at the MSU Union, with a few dedicated folks selling UNICEF cards, buttons and pins, and handing out literature. (Check out www.peacedcenter.org for more of the history of this sale.) It

has been a popular event ever since. Now, we're moving! Our current location has been sold, so we will be moving, but the sale is not going away. Join us for our last sale in this building on November 21st – and look for the Alternative Holiday Sale in a new place next year.

A Fall/Winter Calendar for Peace & Justice Education, Action and Celebration

» Upcoming meetings, discussions on important topics and events that celebrate, and promote community .

Regularly Scheduled Events:

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

First Tuesdays: Greater Lansing Time Bank Potluck and Orientation at Foster Community Center from 6-9 p.m., midmichigantimebank.org

First Thursdays: Peace Education Center Board Meeting 7pm in the lower-level conference room of the Unitarian Universalist Church, 855 Grove Street, East Lansing.

Bi-Monthly on Third Mondays: Greater Lansing Network Against War & Injustice (GLNAWI) planning meeting, 7pm in the lower-level conference room of the Unitarian Universalist Church, 855 Grove Street, East Lansing. (See below for December meeting/event.)

1st and 3rd Tuesdays: The Cost of Militarism Education Team (COMET) Reading Group, 6:45 p.m. at Everybody Reads Bookstore - explores the use of U.S. military power to protect corporate interests, the excessive allocation of funds to "defense spending", and the costs of American imperialism to the country and to the world.

Third Thursdays: Michigan Energy Options Presentations, 405 Grove St., East Lansing

Upcoming Events:

Nov. 5, Thurs., 7pm • Doomed to Succeed: The US-Israeli Relationship from Truman to Obama. Ambassador Dennis Ross will explore the attitudes and approach of every president toward Israel and the Middle East, outlining the key assumptions, the unity or division of the president's advisors, the key events in each administration, and how the overall relationship has evolved. Based on his book by the same name. MSU. Kellogg Center Auditorium.

Nov. 2-19 • LookOut! Art Gallery will host "Courage Ablaze: The Women and Children of Congo," an installation by Grand Rapids artist Pamela Alderman that honors and informs about the experiences of women and children during the decades of war in the Democratic Republic of Congo. MSU Snyder Hall, 362 Bogue St. Rm. C210, East Lansing. Two related events are scheduled in connection with this exhibition. See Nov. 9 & 10 below

Nov. 5, Thurs., 5-7pm • Conversation with author Barbara Ehrenreich, author of "Nickel and Dimed" and other social justice books. Includes panel discussion. Residential College in Arts and Humanities (RCAH) Theater, Snyder Hall, MSU.

Nov. 9, 5-7pm • Screening of "When Elephants Fight" the documentary film about extractive industries in Congo, by Flint filmmaker Mike Ramsdell, who will speak with the audience following the film in the RCAH Theater.

Nov. 10, 5-7pm • Presentation to raise awareness of the war on innocent civilians in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. Pastor Kizombo Kalumbula, presents the reasons for the conflict and the complex history of the region. Artist Pamela Alderman will share the tragic stories of Congolese refugees that she has recorded in word and portraits. Also, the Les Clay Family Singers, a Congolese refugee family choir. RCAH Theater, Snyder Hall, MSU.

Nov. 10 Tues., 7pm • Gerrymandering/Redistricting Reform. League of Women Voters Town Hall Meeting. Fed up with gerrymandering? Want redistricting reform? Come to one of 30 Town Hall meetings across the state on this topic. Learn about the alternatives. Free. Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbott Rd., EL

Nov. 13-14, • Women in the Arts Festival, 5-9:30 on Fri., 10-7 on Sat. at Edgewood United Church, 469 N. Hagadorn, East Lansing.



PHOTO: Over 300 Lansing community members walk for peace on September 27, 2015 to mark the International Day of Peace

If you have an event related to peace & justice, let us know so we can consider it for our next newsletter!
peacecenter@gmail.com

Nov. 13, Tues. 10:30 - 1:30. Three hour workshop on how historically white faith groups can become more involved in racial justice. First Congregational Church of Battle Creek, 145 Capital Ave. NE, Battle Creek. emilyjoye@gmail.com or 269-965-1225.

Nov. 15, Sun. 6-9pm Fiesta Pequeña 2015 Annual fundraising event to support children in Antigua, Guatemala to attend school. Unitarian Universalist Church, 855 Grove St., East Lansing.

Nov. 19, Thurs. - PV & EV Together Dave Konkle, former Energy Coordinator for the City of Ann Arbor, will discuss his photovoltaic & electric vehicle charging systems. Learn how it all works together. Michigan Energy Options, 405 Grove, EL 6:00pm, social time at 5:30.

Nov. 21, Sat. 9am - 4pm – PEC Alternative Holiday Sale Unitarian Universalist Church, 855 Grove Street, East Lansing. See article on page 1.

Nov. 27, Fri. "We Care Friday," to counteract, "Black Friday"! EVERYbody Reads 2019 E. Michigan Ave, Lansing. As in years past, we will raise our rates 10% (option for participation), match that and add an additional 5% so that 25% of all sales go directly to the Garden Project of the Greater Lansing Food Bank! To make it even MORE exciting, at 2pm lauded Michigan author, Bonnie Jo Campbell will be stopping by to sign and discuss her newest book, "Mothers, tell Your Daughters"!!!

Dec. 21, Mon. 6:30-8:30, Annual Community Peace Potluck and Letter Writing Event. Sponsored by Amnesty International local group & GLNAWI. Unitarian Universalist Church, 855 Grove St., East Lansing. Who the letters will be sent to this year is yet to be determined....we may send them to prisoners on death row...per Bryan Stevenson's book "Just Mercy". For several years we have participated in the Amnesty Letter Writing event.

Make Your Voice Heard:

Your representatives need to hear from you on important issues!

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

<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/>



Removing arms from our public spaces, not increasing them, affords a better chance of nonviolent conflict resolution.

Legislation Would Allow Guns in our Schools

Contributed by Terry Link

Recently I attended the Michigan Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on Senate Bill 442, which would ban “open carry” but allow “concealed carry” in schools and other restricted zones. Currently Michigan’s schools are supposed to be GUN FREE ZONES, but a loophole in the law allows CPL (Concealed Pistol License) holders to openly carry a firearm on school property. Senate Bill 442 (SB 442) would close that loophole but would allow concealed carry in our public schools.

The leadoff witness was the bill’s sponsor, Sen. Mike Green, and John Lott, a reputed expert on guns and crimes. Chairman Rick Jones (a co-sponsor of the bill) allowed them to absorb nearly the first half of the committee’s 90 minutes before others were allowed one to two minutes each to express their opposition or support for the legislation.

A number of current and former school officials spoke against it. Dr. Linda Brundage, Executive Director of the Michigan Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence (PEC is an affiliate of the coalition) also spoke strongly against increasing the presence of guns in our schools. She also noted in her testimony that Lott’s supposed research has

been found to be flawed by numerous reviewers.

In looking into Dr. Lott’s research this evening, I see that he is an economist, not a criminologist. Mother Jones reported this summer that, “The National Research Council, a branch of the National Academy of Sciences, assembled a panel to look into the impact of concealed-carry laws; 15 of 16 panel members concluded that the existing research, including Lott’s, provided “no credible evidence “that right-to-carry laws had any effect on violent crime.”

The gun lobby is pushing hard to get this legislation passed. Removing arms from our public spaces, not increasing them, affords a better chance of nonviolent conflict resolution. Contact Sen. Jones and other legislators before this bill is rushed through to approval. Dr. Brundage has noted elsewhere “other legislation that has been introduced, HB 4261 (languishing in House Judiciary for 2 1/2 years) and HB 4944 (newly-introduced legislation which uses Governor Snyder’s suggestions for gun-free schools) would make true gun-free schools.” Why are those bills not being considered, while this bill gets fast tracked?

Enhancing Our Lobbying Skills

Contributed by Terry Link

A group of citizens in the Lansing concerned about the growing militarization of our society and government have been meeting with organizers from the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) to learn how to better stay on top of legislation and lobby for common sense nonviolent solutions. The Friends Committee for National Legislation is a Quaker lobbying group, open to all who support their vision:

- » We seek a world free of war and the threat of war
- » We seek a society with equity and justice for all
- » We seek a community where every person’s potential may be fulfilled
- » We seek an earth restored

The PEC is represented in this renewed effort to stay abreast and to affect the change we want to see in the world. Keep an eye trained on our website and Facebook page as we try to help spread information regarding pending legislation and how to lend your voice to the call for peaceful approaches to conflict.

Current efforts include a call to repeal the Authorization to Use Military Force (AUMF) passed immediately following the 9/11 attacks in 2001. Congress needs to reassert its constitutional authority to declare war. It needs to debate the call for new wars. Military first responses have failed. For more on how to contact our elected federal officials and let your voice be heard on this issue visit:

<http://fcnl.org/advocacy/teams/actionsheet.pdf>

“A lot of young people want to get involved in peace activities... they are just trying to find out the best way to do it.”

Shreya Srivistava, Haslett High School Model UN Club

Michigan Citizens Gather to Celebrate Peace Day

Contributed by Jim Detjen

More than 300 people celebrated International Day of Peace on a warm autumn Sunday with a one-mile march, petition signing, pizza, music and the planting of a peace pole at Potter Park Zoo in Lansing on Sept. 27.

The event, which organizers hope will grow in coming years, was organized by the Greater Lansing United Nations Association with assistance by members of the Peace Education Center and several other organizations. The festive event brought together the young and the old and people of many faiths.

Over 325 events were held throughout the United States to celebrate the International Day of Peace, which is held each year on Sept. 21. Peace Day is sponsored by the United Nations (UN) and was first celebrated in 1982.

These activities coincided with Pope Francis' visit to the United States, the successful adoption of an international agreement to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons and the 70th anniversary of the founding of the UN.

The peace pole, which was provided by the Peace Education Center, said “May Peace Prevail on Earth” in eight languages, as well as braille. MSU students planted orange and yellow marigolds in the ground near the base of the pole near the zoo's entrance.

Two recently-formed organizations that were involved in the peace march were the Michigan State University UN Association and the Haslett High School Model UN Club. “A lot of young people want to get involved in peace activities,” said Shreya Srivistava, 16, president of the Haslett High School Model UN Club. “They are just trying to find out the best way to do it.”

Srivistava and other Haslett students created more than a dozen posters of peacemakers, such as Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., Mother Teresa, John Lennon and Malala Yousafzai, the 18-year-old Pakistani activist who won the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize. These signs were posted along the path of the peace marchers, which was adjacent to the River Trail near the Grand River.

Students from the MSU United Nations Association helped participants create “pinwheels for peace” during the celebration. This organization was formed earlier this year to educate MSU students about international



disputes, such as the international refugee crisis and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Other events held during the festivities were the signing of petitions urging the creation of a U. S. Department of Peace and the auditing of the Pentagon, yoga, singing, face painting and brief talks by the organizers.


Other co-sponsors of the march included Edgewood United Church, Plymouth Congregational Church, Michigan Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence, Meta Peace Team, Zonta Club of Michigan Capitol Area, MSU Peace & Justice Studies program, MSU's Office of Outreach and Engagement, MSU Student Housing Cooperative and MSU International Studies & Programs. Food was supplied by the Grand Traverse Pie Co., Insomnia Cookies, Bell's Pizza, Foods for Living, Meijer, Tasty Twist and other businesses.

Immigration/Sanctuary City Updates

September 29 was the hearing on SB445 to prevent any Michigan communities from becoming sanctuary cities. This bill would penalize any offending city, township or other governmental entity through withholding state funds. It would also require law enforcement officers who suspect someone may be undocumented to contact Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The bill is still waiting for committee action. Similar legislation in the US Senate (SB2146) was more recently defeated.

The Peace Education Center's Annual

Alternative Holiday Sale

An illustration of several snow globes. Each globe contains a different scene: one shows a snowman holding a sign that says 'PEACE', another shows a snowman holding a sign that says 'NO WAR', and others show various winter scenes with snow globes and a dove. The background is a light blue gradient.

Fair Trade Goods
Local Vendors
& Artisans
Peace & Justice
Organizations
Bargains
Friends & Fun

Hot lunch, snacks
& warm drinks
available

Celebrate
an Annual
Community Tradition!

Saturday, November 21 9am-4pm
in the Unitarian Universalist Church Building

855 Grove Street in East Lansing

(just east of Abbot Road across from the East Lansing Public Library)