

Meta Peace Team

Formerly Michigan Peace Team



**Lansing and Detroit
Offices**

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From Memory to Vision: 'Where Everything Yet Can Happen'

By Kim Redigan

*"We see the brightness of a new page
where everything yet can happen."*

- - Rainer Maria Rilke

As MPT celebrates 20 years of peacemaking, we look forward to the next chapter in our work, a future where "everything yet can happen." A hope-filled future rooted in a past defined by profound joy, daunting challenges, and the messy, humbling, and blessed work of trying to inch ourselves and our world a bit closer to the vision of the Beloved Community articulated by Dr. King and so many other teachers and prophets of nonviolence.

Today our hearts are filled with deep gratitude as we ponder the past two decades. Twenty beautiful years of fielding peace teams around the world and in our own backyard. From Chiapas to Ciudad Juarez. From Bosnia to Bil'in. From the West Bank of Palestine to the Eastside of Detroit. Whether standing with friends in Gaza or with friends on Gay Pride Day, MPT's violence reduction teams have saved lives by creating safe spaces for people in areas of conflict.

In addition to twenty years of training and deploying peace teams, MPT's message of active nonviolence has empowered tens of thousands of people through educational outreach that includes the publication of a quarterly newsletter, workshops on a variety of topics related to peacemaking, preaching, table displays, and an annual dinner featuring prominent speakers on themes related to peace, justice, and human rights. Over the years, MPT has also instituted an intern program that draws young peacemakers from around the globe and developed a thriving corps of volunteers.

Today we celebrate two decades of working for peace but the best is yet to come! MPT began with a vision, and the vision has never dimmed.

Continued page 2



From Memory to Vision continued

A vision of a world grounded in the sacred interconnectedness of all beings, a vision of community, a vision of peace. A vision that requires action and all the love our hearts can muster.

Today we celebrate as we turn the pages of the past and embrace – with great hope and expectation – a vision that leads us toward “the brightness of a new page” of peacemaking where “everything yet can happen.”

From the Past Into the Future

By Annette Thomas

With millions of Americans arming themselves in paranoid anticipation of eminent burglary, mass shooting or attack, it is now more important than ever to embrace the fundamental values and philosophies of great peacemakers like Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King. It has become increasingly critical to incorporate their practices and basic principles into our own lives so that others may be influenced by our actions.

The founders of Meta Peace Team have devoted their lives to encouraging ordinary citizens to learn about and participate in non-violent resistance and peacemaking. For twenty years, these dedicated individuals have been ensuring the safety of those threatened by violence in areas of conflict throughout the world by training teams in peacemaking and then sending them to areas where they have been invited, to witness unjust situations and protect those under assault.

In November of 2006, MPT co-founder Peter Dougherty and Sister Mary Ellen Gondeck joined dozens of Gazans to thwart off the Israeli military as they prepared to bomb the home of the leader of the Popular Resistance Committees. Four families, 22 people, resided in this home targeted for destruction. The residents had received a call from the military and were warned they had 30 minutes to evacuate the premises, initially prompting hundreds of friends and relatives of the families to rush to their aid.

Stories like this by peacekeepers aren't out of the ordinary. Activist Rachel Corrie of the International Solidarity Movement lost her life as an Israeli soldier ran over her with his bulldozer, dropped his blade and backed over her again as

she protested (in a bright orange vest) his attempts to demolish the home of a Palestinian pharmacist. The soldier was eventually acquitted and the home destroyed.



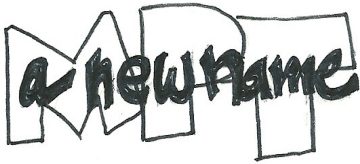
Gaza Rooftop

Meta Peace Team has a permanent presence in Palestine, where members have participated in non-violent demonstrations alongside the villagers of Bil'in as they protest the uprooting of olive and citrus groves and land theft, while Israeli settlements continue to grow like a cancer. Bil'in has been thrust into the spotlight with the Oscar nomination of *Five Broken Cameras*, a documentary by farmer Emad Burnat. He purchased his first camera to film his youngest child and began using it to document the abuses by Israel Defense Forces and Israeli settlers. With each destruction of a camera, Emad would replace it with another and continue filming. Shooting with his camera was more powerful than anything he could possibly have accomplished with a gun.

We can honor the outstanding contributions of Meta Peace Team by continuing to educate others about their exemplary work, their commitment to peace with justice, their selfless gifts to humanity and their tireless efforts to ensure everyone is guaranteed a peaceful existence. It would be wonderful if the sort of non-violent training offered by MPT could be incorporated into school curricula, so that children might have a strong foundation in conflict resolution and alternatives to violence, allowing them the opportunity to live long, productive and peaceful lives.

The Passion Continues to Transform

By Peter Dougherty



The name was different in the beginning – Michigan Faith and Resistance Peace Team. It transformed to Michigan Peace

Team (MPT), and now to Meta Peace Team. The vision twenty years ago was a movement grounded in nonviolence that would follow through on Gandhi's idea of Shanti Sena – a nonviolent Peace Army. We had in mind placing international peace teams that would reduce violence in war zones.

How would we go about doing this? It was not clear at all. We began as a Core Community of folks who had in mind being a peace team that would go to war zones themselves. We realized that MPT would need to do nonviolence trainings to recruit and train other volunteers also for the task.

Our first nonviolence trainings were in the summer of 1993, preparing ourselves and others for the Mir Sada (Peace Now) peacemaking venture in Bosnia. Two great peacemakers, Kathy Kelly and Brad Lyttle, invited us to join in doing a nonviolence training in Chicago for several planning to participate in the mission. From that beginning, nonviolence trainings became a trademark of MPT.

Six of us went as MPT on the Mir Sada 1993 international peacemaking mission in the Bosnian civil war. The plan was for thousands of trained peacemakers, mostly from Europe, to caravan through the war zone to Sarajevo, which was then under siege, to help impact an end to the war. Faced with intense fighting by opposing armed militias on the way, the Mir Sada leaders called off the trip to Sarajevo – to the intense consternation of many who believed we could and should have accomplished the mission. We learned much from that experience.

The next year we had MPT members on two different peace teams in Haiti. From then on we have regularly placed international teams – in the Middle East, Mexico, Panama and Canada.

MPT was challenged with an invitation to place a peace team in the Keewenaw Bay Indian Commu-

nity near Baraga, Michigan in 1996. Two hundred were cut off the membership rolls by the Tribal Council and in response those excluded occupied the tribal headquarters and barricaded the only entrance. They were threatened with violence from tribal police and feared for their lives. They asked MPT and another group to provide nonviolent protective accompaniment. For six weeks that summer we had a continual peace team presence, and because of our presence there was no police attack, and the threat ended. Since then, domestic (U.S.A.) peace teams have become a fabric of MPT.

Looking back, we can say we have stuck to a basic plan – being a catalyst and promoter of nonviolence as we network with other groups; conducting nonviolence trainings; and placing domestic and international peace teams.



In these best of times, worst of times, we know nonviolence works, and that MPT remains committed to being a vital part of the Meta –morphosis, the Meta-noia of our world from violence to wholeness. We hope you will be part of MPT for the next twenty years.

MPT and St Peter's Episcopal celebrate MPT's new Detroit Office with A WEEKEND OF PEACE!

Step One: Basic Nonviolence Skills Training
Saturday, February 23, 2013 - 9 AM–5 PM
Register by calling Kim Redigan at 313 520-7465

Gospel of Nonviolence – Peter Dougherty
Sunday, February 24, 2013 - 10:30 AM Service

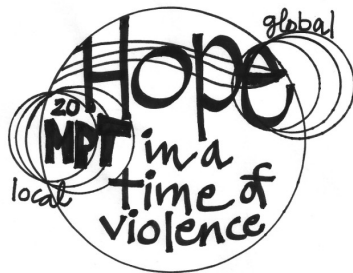
**Potluck Meal and "Meet & Greet"
Community Conversation**
February 24, 2013 - Noon

Location: 1950 Trumbull St. Detroit, MI 48216

All are welcome! All events are free!

Voices from MPT's International Policy Committee: Our Continuing Commitment to the Future

An Interview with Sebastian Ziem



MPT's International Policy Committee works together weekly to create sound guidelines for the deployment of our international peace teams.

[Did you know the committee also re-

sponds to NEW requests for Peace Teams from communities in conflict internationally every year? Keep reading for more information on exciting new possibilities!] IP Committee members support each and every international peace team – usually, this means 3-5 MPT international teams per year, and sometimes more. They meet weekly via Skype and phone, and create work product via email and Google Drive. It's very satisfying work and directly helps get people in the field to participate in critical non-violent action.

As committee member Sebastian Ziem put it, this group “helps deploy peace teams, who use proven nonviolent action to prevent or reduce violence in places of conflict.” Not only do Teamers impact the lives of those they work with, but Teamers themselves “**experience the transforming power of active nonviolence** practice in conflict, when as ordinary people they become the Shanti Sena-Peace Army.” Sebastian is a graduate student in Conflict Transformation and Peace building, a member of MPT's IP Committee, and an MPT Intern. He is currently writing his thesis on MPT's international peace teams.

Sebastian goes on to say that “we seek a just world grounded in nonviolence, and respect for the sacred interconnectedness of all life. The goal of our Peace Teams is to create trusted space for people to be able to take charge of their lives and work together to resolve conflict peacefully.” Further, Sebastian sees a real area for the growth of MPT's work - helping more people outside our core supporters to understand what Peace Teams *do*. “It seems many people are not really aware of, or don't clearly understand, MPT's reasons and meth-

ods of intervention. **The public needs to know where we're coming from (we're not diplomats, mediators or negotiators) and our commitments to nonviolence.**” In new initiatives and continued work in 2013, MPT's IP Committee will try to reach out to new communities - from colleges to retirees -to increase awareness of MPT's nonviolence work and recruit members for Peace Teams.

We're getting more inquiries about our Teams than ever (from all over the world, including Europe, Latin America, and Africa). We're also getting more requests for new International Team Locations. You may know that in addition to teams to Palestine/Israel, in recent years **MPT has deployed teams to First Nation's Algonquin Territory in Canada, Juarez (Mexico), and Panama, plus many more Domestic Peace Teams.** We also receive regular requests for teams to new international conflict areas, and it's the job of IP Committee to take the lead in evaluating and responding to these requests. It's a very detailed and difficult process, and **this year we've undergone evaluations for possible teams in response to requests from Uganda, Honduras/El Salvador, Cameroon, and Panama.** Watch for more information and updates as we complete these evaluations, and consider joining us on an exploratory team in 2013/14!

Want more information on any of the ongoing work, new location requests, or new initiatives by International Policy Committee? Would you like to contribute further to this committee work? Contact NicoleR.MPT@gmail.com, or consider joining us for the upcoming Step 2 nonviolence retreat (and information session about MPT International Peace Teams). The next **Step 2 session is Thursday, February 14 to Sunday, February 17, 2013.** Check this newsletter for the next Step 2 dates. They are scheduled throughout the year. All of MPT's International Policy Committee wishes you the best in 2013, and we hope you can join us at Step 2!

Domestic Peace Team at Right to Work Protest, 12-11-12

By Pat Niewiadomski



Pat Niewiadomski

I was a member of the Right to Work Protest MPT Peace Team at the State Capitol in Lansing, MI on December 11, a peace team invited to serve at this historic event by the Michigan Education Association.

That day, I was deeply touched by the outpouring of so many people from so many walks of life whose behavior was really noteworthy, in light of a decision being made that so adversely affects them. It was a privilege to be among them.

The respect shown toward the Peace Team was remarkable, with many people wanting to know what the Peace Team was all about. Many media interviewers also were curious and asked for statements about the Peace Team. Many people approached us, thanking

us for being there and we were treated very well by people in the crowd who would often make a way for us to pass through the masses of people gathered at the protest.

Although probably more than 99% of the crowd was cooperative, there was a very tiny presence of people in opposition to the protest, who gathered in a concentrated area and whose taunting attitude made this area a place for venting and anger.

The biggest challenge was the unwanted news of the passage of Right to Work legislation and the reactions, fueled by extreme emotions, that this prompted. Even during the most challenging moments, however, we were always treated respectfully.

There are so many poignant images of that day that will stay with me, but one of the most symbolic was the family with the father in his hardhat bending over his children in their stroller. What about the livelihood of this family and the bread earners of all the families gathered there that day?

I am so glad to share what I witnessed that day - the wonderful work of MPT and the impressive gathering of hard workers who are the bedrock of our communities.



Elizabeth Walters, IHM and Sandra Cade



Martha Kuant, Affinity Team, & Crowd

MPT 20th Anniversary Monthly Themes

By Sheri Wander

January 2013: Fresh Starts and Forgiveness

"Forgiveness is not an occasional act, it is a constant attitude." -- Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

February 2013: Love - The Heart of Nonviolence Is Love

- Black History Month
- February 4, 1913: Birth of Rosa Parks
- February 14: Valentine's day
- February 18, 1934: Birth of Audre Lorde

"... caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is an act of political warfare" -- Audre Lorde

Continued page 6

Monthly Themes continued

"Unless one lives and loves in the trenches, it is difficult to remember that the war against dehumanization is ceaseless." -- Audre Lorde

"What is needed is a realization that power without love is reckless and abusive, and that love without power is sentimental and anemic. Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice. Justice at its best is power correcting everything that stands against love." -- Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

March 2013: Solidarity

- March 2, 1955: Claudette Colvin (a teenager) was arrested in Montgomery, Alabama for refusing to give up her seat to a white woman
- March 8: International Women's Day
- March 14 1879: Birth of Albert Einstein
- March 21: International Day to End Racial Discrimination (UN since 1966)
- March 31, 1927: Birth of Cesar Chavez

"The fight is never about grapes or lettuce. It is always about people."
 - Cesar Chavez

IT IS NOW MORE
 IMPORTANT
 THAN EVER
 TO EMBRACE
 THE FUNDAMENTAL
 VALUES AND
 PHILOSOPHIES
 OF GREAT
 PEACEMAKERS.

MPT Core Community Celebrating Past, Present, Future!

Meta Peace Team's Core Community is a model of governing that is collective and communal. Meeting monthly, the Core is non-hierarchical in structure and process and dedicated to consensus decision-making. Here are some thoughts from Core members about MPT and the 20th Anniversary ...



Mary Pat Dewey, OP: 2013 is an exciting time for MPT. As we celebrate 20 years and change the name to "Meta Peace Team" the need for nonviolent peace-making is greater than ever. We have opened an office in downtown Detroit. Our work now extends worldwide. We have been integral in the creation of the North-American *Shanti Sena Network*. We have interns from all over the globe. This gives us hope in a time of violence.



Peter Dougherty: I remember vividly MPT's first nonviolence training in Chicago in July 1993 - preparing many heading into the war zone in Bosnia; and MPT's first international peace team - in Bosnia in August 1993; and MPT's first domestic peace team - in the Keewenaw Bay Indian Community near Baraga, Michigan June/July 1996. Since those first seeds we have been faithfully in the struggle, and boldly continue on the metamorphosis from violence to wholeness.



Mary Hanna: What MPT has been doing for TWENTY YEARS is nothing short of miraculous. The ripple effect of what a handful of people started 20 years ago has become a powerful tide of people who are determined to revolutionize the world through love, compassion, and nonviolence. To be a part of this revolution is an honor. Congratulations, MPT....To paraphrase Gandhi, you *are* the change we want to see in the world!

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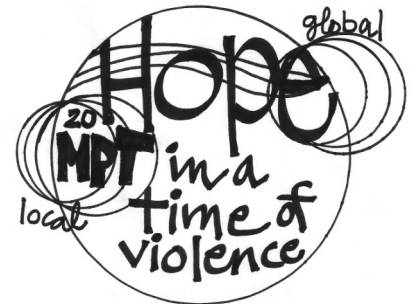
MPT Core Community *continued*



Mary Ann Ford, IHM: In 2003 I joined an MPT International team to Gaza, Palestine. The required trainings introduced me to the power of nonviolence. In Gaza, I saw fearful toddlers, bombed and bullet-riddled homes, and adults struggling for food, shelter and their dignity. Despite horrendous oppression and injustice, the many acts of concerned love of parents for children, and their determined efforts to teach the youth to be nonviolent transformed me. Now I want to share the power of non-violence everywhere.



My earthling sermonette is that we continue to reject violence and war making, ... greed, nationalism, and power over anyone, and that we cling to Truth, Love, Simplicity, Non-violence, the Sermon on the Mount and standing up for each other.



Paul Pratt: Peter Dougherty convinced me to join the Core Community in 2001, so I have done my best to support this audacious program of active nonviolence for 12 of MPT's 20 years. Service on the Core has been inspiring and eye-opening.



Nicole Rohrkemper: It's so exciting working with MPT at the 20th Anniversary (and going into my sixth year with the organization)! It's a time of growth and development to complement our rich history and accomplishments in nonviolence. There are both longstanding and new opportunities for our International Peace Teams. One thing that drew me to Meta Peace Team, which continues today, is that we act and think both *locally AND globally*.



Elizabeth Walters, IHM: Our MPT community strives to live-teach-do active nonviolence with all the love in our hearts. This is a transformative power far greater than the power of guns and bombs. I cherish the vision-mission of MPT and delight in working with each of you in Core, Staff, EtE Committee/Teams, Volunteers, Donors, Teamers, Readership, and so many more ... TOGETHER we reduce violence and open the way to peace with justice at home and abroad.



Sheri Wander: I am so grateful to be doing this work with MPT, because not only are we confronting the issues in all their connections, we are building the world we want by acting as if that world already exists — Ending militarism and war by creating an alternative and BEING that alternative — Violence reduction peace teams in place of militarized police forces and armies.



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Our Vision:

We seek a just world grounded in nonviolence and respect for the sacred interconnectedness of all life.

Our Mission:

MPT pursues peace through active nonviolence in places of conflict..

Our Goals:

- Recruiting, training, and placing Peace Teams both domestically and internationally;
- Educating the public to the vision and practice of nonviolence, particularly as it relates to nonviolent conflict intervention;
- Cooperating, supporting, and participating with local peace and justice groups, particularly as it relates to our Mission; and,
- Providing training in active nonviolence designed for the specific needs of the participants.

Meta Peace Team Web Site: metapeaceteam.org

International Peace Team Blogs:

<http://MPTinPalestine.Blogspot.com>

<http://MPTinJuarez.Blogspot.com>

MPT Newsletters, 2008-2013, are available online

<http://michiganpeaceteamnewsletters.blogspot.com>

2013 MPT Newsletter Team

Nancy Ayotte, IHM
 Barbara Nolin
 Kim Redigan Peter Dougherty
 Annette Thomas
 Elizabeth Walters, IHM

Newsletter Artwork

Nancy Ayotte creates all the artwork for MPT newsletters. Her creations are a pure gift to MPT and our readers. This gift is yours to freely use in other peace work.

MPT Core Members

Mary Pat Dewey, OP	Jasiu Malinowski
Peter Dougherty	Paul Pratt
Mary Ann Ford, IHM	Sheri Wander

MPT Staff and Email Addresses

Mary Hanna	maryhanna.mpt@gmail.com
Nicole Rohrkemper	nicoler.mpt@gmail.com
Elizabeth Walters	elizabethwalters.mpt@gmail.com

Weekly MPT Volunteers

Margaret Beahan	Anna Malavisi	Mark Zussman
Charlene Jamison	Lourdes Nearon	
Barbara Kinsey	Kim Redigan	

NEWS & OPPORTUNITIES - MPT INTERNATIONAL PEACE TEAMS

Are you a returned MPT Peace Team Member?

Can you leverage your valuable experience & continue to contribute to this critical work by:

- Being on a Peace Team in 2013/14? We need experienced teamers.
- Joining the International Policy Committee?

Are you new to MPT or haven't been on a Peace Team?

- We are accepting applications now for all of 2013 and 2014 from NEW TEAMERS!
- The best way to get more information and decide if an MPT International Peace Team is right for you, is to come to one of our regularly scheduled trainings.

Step 2 nonviolence retreat sessions: This is the step to take now if you're considering a team, want to learn more, or want to meet potential teamers and build community with others deeply exploring nonviolence.

2013 Step 2 Nonviolence Retreat Dates:

(Each event runs Thursday evening through Sunday afternoon)

February 14 – February 17, 2013

April 18 – April 21, 2013

June 6 – June 9, 2013

August 15 – August 18, 2013

October 25 – October 27, 2013

Get more information, register for Step 2, or request an application now: NicoleR.MPT@gmail.com or Nicole at 586-419-1070 (cell)