

# Olympia Fellowship of RECONCILIATION

ACCOMPLISHMENTS FROM MAY 2016 TO APRIL 2017

2017 is THE Olympia FOR's 41st YEAR

## NEWSLETTERS:

- We published six more issues of our bi-monthly newsletter, SW Washington's most comprehensive peace & justice newsletter with substantive information about important issues and a huge calendar of local events. We mailed hundreds of copies of each issue to people throughout Thurston County and beyond. Also, we e-mailed each issue as a .pdf attachment to more than 200 other people nationwide.
- Our newsletters inform and inspire people in a great many ways in support of peace, nonviolence, the environment, sustainability, and social & economic justice. We publicize the activities of not only the Olympia FOR but also those of many other organizations. We publicize information our readers don't see elsewhere.

## TELEVISION PROGRAMS:

- The Olympia FOR produced and broadcast another year of one-hour interview programs about topics with fresh information and insights not available elsewhere. Each program aired 3 times a week for a full month on Thurston Community TV, cable channel 22 in Thurston County. Ours is TCTV's longest-running series – **more than 30 years!**
- Our topics were:
  - May: "Vietnam War: What **Really** Happened?"
  - June: "TPP and Other 'Free Trade' Schemes Endanger Us All"
  - July: "Nisqually Canoe Journey"
  - August: "How Science and Art Explain the Carbon Cycle and Climate"
  - September: "How to Reduce Gun Violence"
  - October: "De-Militarize U.S. Foreign Policy"
  - November: "Social and Political Implications of Death Anxiety"
  - December: "Healing from Political Blame, Shame, and Trauma"
  - January: "Nonviolent Grassroots Remedies for Our Current Crisis"
  - February: "Innocent, But 49+ Years in Prison, Including Death Row"
  - March: "Protect America's Best Values from Attack"
  - April: "How to **REALLY** Make America Great"
- **More than 160 of our TV programs since 2005 are on our website so anyone anywhere can watch them at any time.** Simply visit [www.olympiafor.org](http://www.olympiafor.org), click the "**TV Programs**" link, and choose the program you want to watch. Many of these include links to Word and/or .pdf documents that thoroughly summarize what the guests said and provide additional sources of information.
- Also, look at the bottom of the website's "**TV Programs**" section for links to watching a good variety of additional special programs featuring high quality speakers.

## WEBSITE:

- Our robust and interesting website, [www.olympiafor.org](http://www.olympiafor.org), informs you with our newsletters, calendars, information about a number of topics (climate, death penalty, global economics, drones, guns, nuclear weapons, etc.), and information about the Olympia FOR, our vigils, the theory and practice of nonviolence, etc.
- Many new items on the "**Nonviolence**" part provide insights and resources to help you organize to overcome the political crisis imposed upon us since November 2016.
- The website's "**TV Programs**" page includes a link to let you watch our current and past programs on your computer. Next to most program titles is a link to a .pdf or Word document about that program, the guests and sources for more information about the topics.

## PEACE VIGILS:

- We completed **37 years** of vigiling from 12 noon to 1 pm every Wednesday since March 5, 1980, in the NW corner of Sylvester Park (Legion & Capitol Way).
- We completed **18½ years** of vigiling from 4:30 to 6 pm every Friday since Nov. 1998 at Percival Landing, 4<sup>th</sup> & Water. We have enjoyed an especially positive response leading up to the November 2016 election and ever since.
- A lively street band, the Artesian Rumble Arkestra, performs from 5 to 6 pm during our Friday peace vigils. They delight vigilers and passersby!
- We welcomed other organizations to join our vigils and featured special themes on some special dates.
- Many persons participated in our 41<sup>st</sup> annual Holiday Peace Vigil on Saturday December 17.

## NUCLEAR WEAPONS:

- We joined a new statewide coalition to abolish them.
- We created a new committee within Olympia FOR to work to abolish them and planned our first meeting for May 2017.
- We prepared to produce a TV interview for June 2017.

## AFGHANISTAN AND BEYOND:

- We stayed connected with Afghan Peace Volunteers (aged teens to 20s). See [www.ourjourneytosmile.com](http://www.ourjourneytosmile.com)
- We continue helping local people to talk directly with young and adult peace supporters in Afghanistan and elsewhere through monthly "Global Days of Listening" phone and computer conversations. See [www.globaldaysoflistening.org](http://www.globaldaysoflistening.org) and [www.thepeoplesjourney.org](http://www.thepeoplesjourney.org)

**SEE PAGE 2 FOR MORE ACCOMPLISHMENTS.**

## THE CLIMATE CRISIS:

- Our “Confronting the Climate Crisis” committee worked in several strategically smart ways, both locally and regionally.
- We met monthly for much of the year and then suspended our monthly meetings.
- We organized and co-sponsored a variety of public events that attracted many people. We staffed information tables on several occasions and vigiled to protect the climate.
- We shared information through our listserv.
- Our climate committee’s Direct Action group maintains its own website, [www.olyccc.org](http://www.olyccc.org), and e-mail list. Please sign up for those.
- We published climate information in each newsletter and on our Olympia FOR website’s “**Climate Crisis**” page.

## DEATH PENALTY:

- The Olympia FOR’s Committee for Alternatives to the Death Penalty educated ourselves and the public.
- We communicated with many people through e-mail lists, an interactive listserv, and a Facebook page, **Olympia Neighbors Against the Death Penalty**.
- Our website’s “**Death Penalty**” section offers a huge and varied amount of information, including many unique items written specifically for the Olympia FOR’s efforts to abolish the death penalty, and not available elsewhere.
- We tabled at two public events – Capitol City Pride Festival in June and Harbor Days during Labor Day weekend – and enjoyed very positive responses from people visiting our information booth.
- We continue to offer our 6-session study group to faith communities and other local groups who want to study the various aspects of the death penalty. The host group may choose whether or not to include an interfaith aspect.
- We actively participated as an organizational member of the Washington Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty and of the Safe & Just Alternatives campaign initiated by WCADP and the ACLU of Washington.

## BOOK DISCUSSIONS EVERY MONTH:

- On the first Tuesday evening of every month we gather at 6:00 pm to discuss books we have read on the chosen topic. We choose a new topic each month.

## BRING OUR BILLION\$ HOME:

- The Olympia FOR devoted less effort to our BOBH campaign to cut military spending and use the savings to fund human needs, but we can mobilize if volunteers want to.

## SPECIAL EVENTS:

- We brought a nationally respected peace activist to speak publicly to an audience.
- We enjoyed a potluck picnic in August.

- We organized a public display of children’s peace-related art for Fall and Spring Arts Walks in downtown Olympia.
- We organized and/or co-sponsored with other groups some events related to peace, social justice and nonviolence.
- We staffed information tables and spoke to audiences at several local events (e.g., “Love Our Local” in NE Olympia).

## ONGOING INFLUENCE AND SERVICE:

- The Olympia FOR is an affiliate member of Interfaith Works ([www.Interfaith-Works.org](http://www.Interfaith-Works.org)).
- We actively participate in the Thurston County Progressive Network (TC Pro-Net), [www.tcpronet.org](http://www.tcpronet.org)
- We participated in Western Washington FOR’s activities.
- The Olympia FOR took leadership in planning WWFOR’s annual Fall Retreat in November, this year focusing on interracial and intergenerational movement building.
- We collaborated with a variety of local organizations to support their efforts and activities for peace, social and economic justice, human rights and nonviolence.
- We responded to requests from individuals and organizations. We provided information, referrals, consultation and other support for their efforts for peace/justice/nonviolence.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTH:

- We continually meet new people through our various activities, welcome them to our mailing list, and help them act.
- We accomplish a tremendous amount of good results because we are committed to our values, are well organized, cooperate well with others, and earn the larger community’s respect and cooperation. Also, we work very hard!
- Our large, active Steering Committee meets regularly and provides wise and capable overall direction and decisions.
- Our Annual Gathering / Celebration / Election in May of each year encourages broad participation in strengthening the Olympia FOR and having a good time as peacemakers.
- We connected local folks with regional activities through the Western Washington FOR ([www.wwfor.org](http://www.wwfor.org)) and other activities through the national FOR ([www.forusa.org](http://www.forusa.org)). More Olympia members are participating in these ways.
- We are an all-volunteer organization that relies entirely on voluntary tax-deductible contributions.
- While carrying out many activities since May of last year, we also raised enough money to pay for these ambitious new activities.

## WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN WITH US AS AN ACTIVE VOLUNTEER!

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OUR FREE NEWSLETTER CAN KEEP YOU INFORMED.