

Handful of Salt

Volume XXXVV, Number 1

March-April-May 2016

PJALS in our 40th year and beyond: The Power of Grassroots



By Liz Moore,
PJALS Director
PJALS
today is the direct
result of 40 years
of the people's
support and desire.
It has survived
because the
community has

needed it to survive, it has grown because of our rich history of engagement, conversation and shared actions.

Our current efforts to think, analyze and organize while mindful of the inter-connections between race, class, gender and sexuality is the result of 40 years of community engagement. As Angela Davis reminds us: "...behind this concept of intersectionality is a rich history of struggle. A history of conversations among activists within movement formations..."

The next two years present a serious challenge to democracy both nationally and locally.

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Will you help win Smart Hiring for Spokane?



By Daniel Geiter,
PJALS intern
A Smart Hiring policy
for Spokane would
reduce barriers to jobs
for people with
conviction records. The
policy means removing
the check box on job
applications that asks if
the applicant has a

history of convictions. This policy change gives people the chance to get their foot in the door and show their worth instead of being disregarded for checking a box.

Nearly one third of Americans have a criminal record. Excluding them from the workforce amounts to continual punishment

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The Handful of Salt is published quarterly by the Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane. Its name comes from Mohandas Gandhi's salt tax protest in India, a successful, nonviolent, grassroots action that created significant social change against overwhelming resource advantages.

Steering Committee: Louise Chadez (Vice Chair), Cly Evans (Chair), Dom Felix, Jessica Jahn, Adrian Murillo (on leave), Taylor Weech, Deb Svoboda, Ray Thorne (Secretary)

Staff: Teresa Kinder, Office Manager; Andrew Lack, AARP SCSEP Administrative Assistant; Shar Lichty, Organizer; Adrian Murillo, AARP SCSEP Communications Coordinator; Liz Moore, Director

Interns & Practicum Students: Tyler Aguilar, Daniel Geiter, Cassandra Guerrero, Monce Rodriguez, Jessica Silva, Maddie Tappa

Volunteers, December 2015-February 2016: Airely Beltran, Alyssa Henderson, Andrew Budde, Celia Friedman, Chris Nerison, Christopher Martin, Clare Newell, Deb Conklin, Dennis Medina, Eli Svoboda, Eric Robison, Jacina Scamahorn, James Wallrabenstein, Jeffrey Carrol, Joshua Washington, Justin Mauger, Kelly Mathews, Larry Deemer, Lin McGinn, Linet Molinero, Lynette Vehrs, Lynn Sexton, M. Obaid Abdul, Salam, Maria Felice, Marilyn Deemer, Mark Hamlim, Maurina Ladich, Naima Quarles-Burnley, Naomi-Ann Gaspard, Pauline Druffel, Phil Svoboda, Sarah Tosch, Shawn Mackay, Stacy Cossey, Susan Goertz, Thulani Burnley, Tim Connor, Tom Schmidt, Valerie Waley

Contact PJALS: 509-838-7870, www.pjals.org, pjals@pjals.org

Volunteers Make It Happen!

Contact Adrian at 838-7870 or amurillo@pjals.org to share your time and talents.

Our priority areas for 2016-17

As determined by our member priority survey responses and our Steering Committee!

1. **A Just Society:** Smart Justice and Police Accountability
2. **Peace:** Truth in Recruitment, Consciousness-Raising about Militarism, and Mobilizing against War!
3. **Human Rights Community Organizing:** Building collective power with targeted communities.
4. **Ending the Death Penalty in Washington** as our top legislative priority.

Exposing & transforming systems of violence & oppression to create beloved community.

Become a Handful Contributor.

We welcome your articles, subject to editing for space and appropriateness of content.



Rusty Nelson on Peace and War

Forty Years and Counting

I love this column, but writing for this space isn't as easy as it used to be. I may be a little like Peyton Manning, feeling like I'm still the right person for the job but knowing I'm not as quick, agile, and durable as I once was. If I admit Peyton is too old to elude the rush or hit the deep receiver, how much longer can I dot the i's and cross the t's of social commentary?

For an old sports announcer and sports dad, I've used great restraint with sports analogies and cliches in this space, but the football allusion materialized as rumination for this piece went into overtime. There were some incomplete passes and dropped snaps the other day that kept me from following my game plan of relating PJALS' past successes and current relevance at the Peace and Economic Justice Action Conference.

The panel, 40 Years of PJALS Leadership, was a winner. I feel as honored to have been on the team as I was to be invited. Reflections on organizational accomplishments are susceptible to congratulatory sentimentality, but our participants are grounded in today's issues and the audience was young enough to demand a



connection to the future. I couldn't score on every drive, so I want to mention a few more plays from the PJALS highlight reel. In other words, I didn't follow my script and talked too much about too few items, while Nancy was at home recovering from knee surgery instead of keeping me accountable with our ritual

combination of telepathy and hand signals.



Death penalty abolition work and the beginnings of Youth for World Awareness were covered definitively by Mary Pat Treuthart. She

was fully involved in those projects and others very soon after arriving in Spokane to teach Law at Gonzaga.

Like Mary Pat, Teresa McCann spent years on the PJALS steering committee, and she was uniquely qualified to recount some of our earliest and most relentless actions around nuclear weapons, as well as militarism in general.



Ken Isserlis gave us the spellbinding narrative of PJALS (then the Peace and Justice Center) advocating for Yvonne (Wanrow) Swan in the 1970s. Yvonne was in the audience to validate the story of our fledgling organization's role in not only overturning her unjust sentence but getting a bad state law changed, too.

You'd think I could squeeze in more than a couple of the campaigns that made my PJALS career what I consider to be my life's work. Recognizing that it's only a snapshot, I want to add to the commentary.

(Continued on page 8)

Welcome Tyler!



By Maddie Tappa

Tyler Aguilar is one of our new interns this spring. Tyler is a senior at Whitworth University, majoring in

Political Science on the Pre-Law track. After he graduates in May he hopes to work as a paralegal in Seattle.

Aside from his studies, Tyler is very involved in the community at Whitworth. He works in the dormitories as a Cultural Diversity Advocate. In that position he helps put on events to promote dialogue around issues of diversity in and around Whitworth. On campus, Tyler is also involved in concerns surrounding LGBT+ rights and race issues. Tyler is especially interested in undocumented persons rights and hopes to use his various roles to create conversation and spread knowledge on the issue.

Tyler is very passionate about social justice and chose to do an internship with PJALS to pursue that passion “beyond the Whitworth community and into the greater Spokane community.” He hopes to build connections between PJALS and his university by getting student support for the issues we are fighting for.

Connect with PJALS:

Facebook.com/peacejusticeactionleague/

Facebook.com/groups/peacejusticeaction/

Twitter: @pjals

Welcome Maddie!



By Tyler Aguilar

We are pleased to announce Maddie Tappa as one of our newest interns to join our PJALS team.

Maddie is a senior studying Sociology at Whitworth University. Maddie hopes to use her knowledge in

sociology and her platform at PJALS to promote equality and equity through social interactions in the community.

After graduation, Maddie is planning to spend a year with the Jesuit volunteer corps, where she will have the opportunity to pursue her life’s passions. Maddie has is interested in social justice, particularly she enjoys working for immigrants and international issues. Maddie says she is looking forward to gaining experience in the non-profit world and being able to help those in our community who are marginalized.

Maddie will be a part of our communications team to work towards

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Host a house party for your friends, family, neighbors, co-workers and raise funds for our ongoing commitment to peace and justice at the same time. We’ll show you how!

We’ll provide you with a tried and true house party kit and further support. Our intrepid director Liz Moore will be the featured speaker and you can decide the ambience (theme, music?). Contact Adrian at amurillo@pjals.org for more details.

Remember: grassroots money

Truth in Recruitment and Militarism Awareness



By Jessica Silva

On February 4, 2016 we held our pre-re-launch meeting for our Truth in Recruitment program. Concerned people came and expressed what they wished people knew

about the military. What stood out to me was that everyone agreed that militarism and war are causing terror among countries and most of the people being affected by war are innocent people. Since the war on Iraq started about 13 years ago, innocent people have been displaced from their home and murdered by militia or drones. Countries live in a state of fear.

At the meeting we also discussed ways PJALS members can get involved in creating militarism awareness among young people. We want adolescents to know before enlisting that there are alternatives to joining the military and that before enlisting they should understand the pros and cons of militarism.

During the Peace and Economic Justice Action Conference, my fellow PJALS intern Monce and I offered a workshop on “*What is militarism and how does the ideology of militarism impact our world and our communities?*” The workshop gave a more clear understanding of why it is important for younger people to understand the concept of militarization before enlisting and the importance of knowing what life is after the military.

Come out and support the work on Truth in Recruitment and Militarism during

Anti-Immigrant Initiative Back On For 2017 Ballot



By Cassandra Guerrero

The time is NOW to gather and mobilize to educate our community on why we need to stand up against hate, racism, and racial profiling!

Since July 2015, we have been at a stand still not knowing if the controversial anti-immigrant profiling initiative will be on the municipal ballot in 2017. The wait is finally over: on February 23 city council members were advised to reverse their course with a push from the city attorney’s analysis that city council has little choice under city code, and must put the initiative on the ballot.

If approved, the initiative would overturn the council’s 2014 decision prohibiting profiling based on suspected citizenship status by law enforcement. Supporters of this discriminatory initiative want to allow any city employee to profile and



harass anyone, and we know people of color will experience degrading harassment.

The reason city council considered preventing the initiative from going on the ballot is that its sponsor, Jackie Murray, withdrew her support from it because she felt that council member Mike Fagan and the anti-immigration group Respect Washington used her as a pawn and tricked her with misleading language within the initiative to sponsor and lead it.

This initiative is a major step backwards for the city and cannot be tolerated

A Winter of Discontent!

PJALS members and staff have been busy!

Festival of Fair Trade—PJALS Table
Nov 27-29

Continued coalition-building and organizing against the anti-immigrant profiling initiative

Smart Justice Spokane “Community Meeting on Strategies to Reduce Jail Population” Dec 2

PJALS Holiday Party Dec 17

Year-End fundraising raised \$18,000!

Tamir Rice Solidarity Action with EWU Black Student Union and Spokane NAACP, Jan 12

Spokane Police Accountability & Reform Coalition planning for 2016

Olympia delegation to “Safe & Just Alternatives” Advocacy Day, to end the death penalty – largest stack of postcards from any part of the state!
Jan 26

Police Accountability Issue Briefing and Community Forum on Police Leadership, Jan 21

Welcoming 2 new interns from Whitworth University: Tyler & Maddie!

Young Activist Leaders workshops on “Campaigns to Build Power,” “Organizing Our Selves and Our Work,” and “Earning Media Coverage and Organizing Kick-A\$\$ Events”

Truth in Recruitment program re-launch!

Smart Justice Spokane quarterly meeting: Smart Hiring, legislative update, county update

“Love and Outrage: 40 years of peace & justice music & poetry” Opening Reception



Our holiday party and Fellowship of Reconciliation Local Hero Peace Award



The Raging Grannies!



Community Forum on Police Leadership



Our n and J

Action Conference: laughter, anger, & encouragement!

By Celia Friedman, Young Activist Leader



I enjoyed the opening reception because of friends and laughter. The “Raging Grannies” performance was my favorite. Their songs were so clever and funny, I laughed along with the

audience plenty of times.

I got to thinking about how special and different their performance was. They took serious topics such as the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) and sang about them in a hilarious but educational way. I appreciated being encouraged to laugh at topics like the TPP that can be very alarming and confusing.

I was also very moved by what Layne Pavey said when she introduced herself and then sang a beautiful a capella song: I’m paraphrasing and she said that the people closest/most affected by the problems are also closest to the solutions but they are farthest from the resources. I felt a surge of anger after she said this because of its ironic truth.

At the conference I attended Wake Up and Work for the first session. We defined white supremacy and talked about how intertwined the manufactured image of whiteness is in our culture and how it is a norm everyone is expected to conform to. Someone in that workshop who is in the I Did The Time group compared white supremacy to a gang. Hearing that was very powerful to me and I think others in the group would agree with me. The workshop included mock conversations between volunteers in the group talking constructively about race to someone who doesn’t think racism exists. This exercise really helped encourage me to continue talking



Action Conference workshop “How to be an Ally to American Muslims”



Our marvelous interns: Maddie, Daniel, Tyler, Cassandra, Monce, and Jessica!

"40 years and counting" cont fr p 3

PJALS was not the lead organization in transforming Spokane from a homophobic hard case to a leader in recognizing the humanity and gifts of gay individuals and organizations, but began in 1988 to join every positive effort of the GLBTQ community.

New on staff and tentative on this polarizing issue, I was nervous when my boss, the late Kathleen Donahoe (she and Diane Jhueck, a lesbian activist, had co-directed PJALS in 1987. I was hired as half-time associate director when Diane moved to Seattle.) declared that we would seize the issue regardless of the fallout in members and funding. There was a cost, but it may have been the best risk we ever took. My world expanded beautifully when I began wearing a pin that said, "Don't assume I'm straight."

Before Bill Clinton found his mantra, "It's the economy, stupid!" Kathleen and I ran into the rule for investigating systemic injustice, "Follow the money!" It became apparent that every opportunity and every barrier had a money trail, and we scrambled for information and background on the economics of social justice, which would lead us into successful projects like the farmworkers' boycott of Ste. Michelle wines and the state minimum wage campaign. Our subsequent living wage campaigns were more frustrating, but can now be linked to stunning successes in other local efforts. We made a lot of noise and a lot of friends tilting at that windmill.

PJALS already had a record of empowering

women when we took on the first local celebrations of International Women's Day, an event that further challenged women to synergize their influence for peace and justice. Racial injustice was confronted from the earliest days of the PJC, and we took on specific incidents when we could, having an especially vital campaign against South



Africa's apartheid. With a group called Unity in Action, PJALS stepped up its monitoring of xenophobic police conduct and built a foundation for police accountability projects that

have become prominent in the PJALS agenda.

With every new assault of our government against the national tranquility, we rallied advocates for peace, and success is not the primary product when 3,000 enthusiastic people gather in Riverfront Park to embrace nonviolence. Perhaps there was too much attention on the arrests of our activists, but that kind of confrontation was often the best way to educate the public about issues and our commitment to nonviolence. There's still a

need for transformative and disciplined direct action, and you may soon be called upon to prepare the next generation for following the way of King and Gandhi.



(Continued on page 9)

"40 years and counting" cont fr p 8

The spirit of Christian base communities in Central America has been in our DNA for decades. Just as the horrors of Vietnam propelled the founding of the Peace and Justice Center, U.S. support for the worst regimes and dictators of Latin America clarified the PJALS positions on foreign and military policy well into American preoccupation with creating enemies in the Middle East. Social justice organizing came of age in Spokane while PJALS wrote, spoke, marched and lobbied, inspired by Archbishop Oscar Romero and other martyrs, as well as local activists who risked emerging careers in the clergy, health care, education and politics to stand up for oppressed and threatened Central Americans. We attained standing with Tom Foley and access to area students on Latin American issues. Beyond protests, advocacy and education, we provided material aid and exchanged inspiring visitors. Many helped engage us in the continuing struggle against poverty and militarism in Latin America, including School of the Americas Watch. We sent PJALS activists to the SOAW rallies at Ft. Benning for seven consecutive years, and tried to support our own Eric Robison and Paddy Inman, who were among movement leaders given excessive federal prison sentences for nonviolent protests against the School of Assassins.

In 1992, Nancy organized an ambitious event marking 500 years of Euro-centric oppression and wound up with one of the largest Counter-Quincentennial events in the country, highlighted by a public apology from Bishop Skylstad to American Indians for their suffering at the hands of the Catholic Church. Representatives from every regional reservation, nation and urban Indian organization not only attended, but

Grassroots, continued from page 1

We are close, closer than we've ever been to that global tipping when humanity shifts its sense of collective strength towards peace and justice. To the creation of a beloved, poly-cultural, community rather than a competitive, possessive, system.

Democracy requires the ethical convergence of communities in fluid interaction to keep equality clear and justice a matter of balance. The next 40 years require a continual education which inspires the skills by which we joyously sustain this balancing act of rights and freedoms.

For our work together in PJALS, our next 40 years must include several clearly essential ingredients:

- * A tectonic shift in culture and what's acceptable.
- * Sustaining ourselves and each other in this movement, for ourselves and for the movement.
- * Engaging positively outside of our borders of comfort: Spokane Valley. County. Region. Globe.
- * Insisting on a global perspective.
- * Continuing to name and focus on King's triple evils: Racism, capitalism, and militarism.

Assata Shakur says, "It is our duty to fight for our freedom; it is our duty to win. We must love & support one another. We have nothing to lose but our chains." Each piece of this statement is powerful, true, and so necessary!

Kim Klein says to succeed as a social justice activist, we must cultivate three things: "A sustaining belief in our cause; high hopes & low expectations; and faith in the basic goodness of people."

(Continued on page 10)

“Grassroots” cont from page 9

As Eleanor Roosevelt lay dying in her bed, Pauli Murray, an African American lawyer, activist, and lesbian wrote in that combined “graciousness with moral principle, straightforwardness with kindness, political shrewdness with idealism, courage with generosity, and most of all an ongoingness which never falters, no matter what the difficulties may be.” These are essential qualities in the next 40 years.

Our future together must also have a strong thread of humility, listening, speaking truth, and growing.

As Vu Le says in his hilarious blog Nonprofit with Balls, we need to react to learning of our own bigotry as we’d react to learning we had something stuck in our teeth. Jay Smooth says “Being a clean person is something that you maintain and work on every day. We don’t assume that I’m a clean person therefore I don’t need to brush my teeth.

And when someone suggests to us that we’ve got something stuck in our teeth, we don’t say ‘Wh-what do you mean? I have something stuck in my teeth? I’m a clean person!’”

Vu Le goes on: “Just because we attend a racism or sexism training or whatever, doesn’t mean that we are done forever. We need to constantly look in the mirror and floss each day, and appreciate those kind enough to give feedback. (‘Dude, you got a little racism stuck in your teeth. ...’)”

Our 40-year plan must be to continue the work of building The Beloved

Community. According to the King Center:

The Beloved Community” is a term that was first coined in the early days of the 20th Century by the philosopher-theologian Josiah Royce, who founded the Fellowship of Reconciliation. However, it was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., also a member of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, who popularized the term and invested it with a deeper meaning which has captured the imagination of people of goodwill all over the world.

For King, Beloved Community was a realistic, achievable goal that could be attained by a critical mass of people committed to and trained in the philosophy and methods of nonviolence.

Dr. King’s Beloved Community is a global vision, in which all people can share in the wealth of the earth. In the Beloved Community, poverty, hunger and homelessness will not be tolerated because

international standards of human decency will not allow it. Racism and all forms of discrimination, bigotry and prejudice will be replaced by an all-inclusive spirit of sisterhood and brotherhood. In the Beloved Community, international disputes will be resolved by peaceful conflict-resolution and reconciliation of adversaries, instead of military power. Love and trust will triumph over fear and hatred. Peace with justice will prevail over war and military conflict.

Dr. King’s Beloved Community was
(Continued on page 11)



“Grassroots” cont from page 10

not devoid of interpersonal, group or international conflict. Instead he recognized that conflict was an inevitable part of human experience. But he believed that conflicts could be resolved peacefully and adversaries could be reconciled through a mutual, determined commitment to nonviolence. No conflict, he believed, need erupt in violence. And all conflicts in The Beloved Community should end with reconciliation of adversaries cooperating together in a spirit of friendship and goodwill.

Thanks to Joan Medina for sharing this from the King Center.

I would define Beloved Community as enoughtness, curiosity about each other, joyful, recognizing our shared humanity, compassion, nonviolent communication, welcoming, reassuring, engaged, liberated, creative, flexible, kindness, opportunity and equity.

For me, my social justice organizing and activism is a Spiritual practice – it’s one place where we each can contribute our unique gifts, intermingling what we bring to plant, cultivate, tend, and harvest something bigger and better than we could possibly do alone.

Last spring, I was weeding my grandmother’s flowerbeds, which are now my flowerbeds. They were full of grass. So as I was pulling and weeding and pulling and weeding, I had the opportunity to think about this word we use all the time: “Grassroots.” We use it to mean bottom-up, genuine, of the people. But, I had many little chances to think about the roots of grass, and that metaphor is much more powerful than I originally thought. What are the qualities of grass roots?

Grassroots are tenacious. Interwoven. Deep.

Smart Hiring, cont from page 1

after having served their time. Because of the huge racial disparities in the criminal justice system, Smart Hiring is key to advance racial equity in employment. The costs of not having a Smart Hiring policy are high, as unemployment can, in many cases, lead to recidivism and reinforce the cycle of incarceration that the U.S. struggles to combat.

Through coalition building and collaboration with city leaders our Smart Hiring campaign resulted in the implementation of a Smart Hiring policy for job applications with the city. Now we are striving to expand this policy to include the whole of Spokane’s private sector through a city-wide Smart Hiring Ordinance. We just had a Community Forum that invited city council members and businesses to learn about the issue alongside businesses and community members.

Here are three things you can do:

1. Contact your City Councilmember and let him or her know you support Smart Hiring and urge them to vote in support of an ordinance that would implement it citywide.

Ben Stuckart bstuckart@spokanecity.org

Amber Waldref awaldref@spokanecity.org

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Candace Mumm cmumm@spokanecity.org

Karen Stratton kstratton@spokanecity.org

Lori Kinnear lkinnear@spokanecity.org

Breean Beggs bbeggs@spokanecity.org

2. Do you know employers and business leaders that support Smart Hiring? Elected leaders want to hear from businesses! **Please share business contacts** with Shar Lichty at slichty@pjals.org.

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Friday, May 20, 5:30-9:00 pm, at St. John's Cathedral, 127 E 12th @ Grand

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Live music, delicious dinner, auction items for every budget — an evening of inspiration!

Tickets & Tables available April 1 at www.pjals.org or 509-838-7870

PJALS needs you!

The Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane is everyday people building a just and nonviolent world. We depend upon gifts and dues from members to continue to work for peace and justice, locally and globally. We welcome anyone who favors free exchange of ideas, community-building, and nonviolent action to war, inaction, or ignorance. PJALS, 35 W Main, Suite 120M, Spokane, WA 99201.

You determine your own level of support and participation. Members also determine issues and projects that get the most attention and effort. PJALS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation.

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