

Handful of Salt

Volume XLII, Number 1

March-April-May 2018

**“Organizing, troublemaking, peacemaking, changemaking, plus fun at the same time”
PJALS 2018 Priorities**



By Liz Moore, PJALS Director

On a cold and icy day in January, I joined our PJALS Steering Committee at a planning retreat to set priorities for 2018-2019. We discussed

your responses to the member survey, the sober realities of the current political landscape locally and nationally, what makes PJALS unique and strong, and how we want to grow going forward.

The Steering Committee reached consensus on these priorities for 2018-2019:

- 1. Poor People’s Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival:** We organize to expose and transform systemic racism, poverty, ecological devastation, and the war economy. (www.poorpeoplescampaign.org)
- 2. Smart Justice Spokane:** With our partners, we organize to end mass incarceration and racial disparities in our

(Continued on page 4)



Legislative Update on Criminal Justice Reform: some disappointment, many victories



By Shar Lichty, PJALS Organizer

This year’s short legislative session was a whirlwind with the new majority seeming to have an agenda of finally pushing through as many

progressive bills that have been stalled in recent years as possible. A lot of legislation that will advance equity and justice in our state was passed this year. As an organization guided by our member-driven priorities, PJALS was focused on several bills centered on advancing criminal justice reform including police accountability, removing barriers to re-entry, and ending the death penalty. We had a lot of victories this year and some disappointment.

Supporting incarcerated and decarcerated individuals: Following our victory at the City level, the State passed the Fair Chance Hiring Act (HB 1298) “banning the box” from unemployment records. After years of statewide organizing and leadership from impacted communities, Legal Financial Obligation reform (HB 1783) passed reducing

(Continued on page 9)

Affiliate of **Fellowship of Reconciliation & Showing Up for Racial Justice**

35 W. Main Ave, Suite 120M, Spokane, WA 99201
509-838-7870 · www.pjals.org

The Handful of Salt is the member newsletter of 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: Bill Aal, Audrey Burr, Dom Felix, Fitz Fitzpatrick, Celia Friedman, Alyssa MacKay, Ami Manning (Secretary), Taylor Weech (Chair). Legal Advisor: George Critchlow. Interim Treasurer: Mike Nuess.

Staff: Shar Lichty, Organizer; Farand Gunnels, Development Coordinator; Liz Moore, Director

Practicum Students: Megan Juneau & Caty Youso, School of Social Work, Eastern Washington University

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

Facebook: [peacejusticeactionleague](https://www.facebook.com/peacejusticeactionleague) **Twitter:** @pjals **Instagram:** @peacejusticeaction/

Volunteers Make It Happen!

Thank you to all the volunteers at the Action Conference, mailings, Peacekeeper Teams, committee members, clipboard outreach teams, benefit booksale, and more!

If you'd like to join our great volunteer teams, please email Audrey Burr at volunteercoordinator@pjals.org.

Our Top Priorities for 2018-2019

Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival: We organize to expose and transform systemic racism, poverty, ecological devastation, and the war economy.

Smart Justice Spokane: With our partners, we organize to end mass incarceration and racial disparities in our Spokane County regional criminal justice system.

Rapid Response and Organizing Against Racism and War: We reject war, torture, militarism, imperialism, white supremacy, and targeting of immigrants, refugees, non-Christians, LGBTQ people, and people of color. We organize to enlarge and mobilize our base and build collective power with targeted communities.

Grassroots Leadership Development: We support youth and everyday people as leaders by offering our Young Activist Leaders Program, annual Action Conference, and our grassroots organizing workshops.

Become a Handful Contributor.

We welcome your articles, subject to editing for space and appropriateness of content.
Contact lmoore@pjals.org



On Peace & War: Prepping a New Generation of Truth-Tellers

By Rusty Nelson, former
PJALS co-director

In a community of people who care about what happens in Syria, D.C., Olympia, and around the corner, one can be overwhelmed by calls to action. Choosing a struggle for personal engagement would be almost impossible except that the most compelling struggles often have a way of choosing us. Just when you think you can dedicate your life to saving pampered puppies from confused flight attendants, you might become inspired by hundreds of kids challenging authorities who want them to accept a few minutes of silence as assurance they won't be terrorized, even killed, in the worshipful proliferation of semi-automatic weapons.

Is it enough that we trust these kids to walk out of school for a few minutes, or make up their own minds about the intent of the 2nd Amendment? Of course not. Some of us have been content with vicarious rebellion, and some of us didn't notice revolutions until they were over. Some are parents who have bumped into emotional and communication barriers of our own construction. We all have limits, and we're all still learning, but each of us has something constructive to offer young people who've learned it's up to them to improve the toxic environment foisted upon their generation. Students taking on gun violence, in symbolic or tangible ways, need us. They don't need us to tell them what to do, to organize them, or to empower them, but to encourage them, trust them, and watch their backs for administrations that tremble to think students might drag them out of the ruts of our hair-trigger paradigm.

I need your help communicating with these students because I'll appear radical, perhaps

scary. As my intermediary, you might explain that I lost many years to my inherited conservatism. I was brought up to conserve racial segregation, modest xenophobia, and brutal military adventures, and I think a reasonable education would inform young people that these anachronisms are obstacles to human progress.

I wish I could go into schools and encourage students, faculty and staff to pick up the pace, find a voice on matters of life and death, rattle the cages of more office holders and power brokers, make consumer choices that reflect consideration for the environment and labor relations. But if I get started, where will I stop connecting the dots? How can I present modest proposals for ending public policies of murder and oppression? Officials will be alarmed. Parents will be outraged. Educators will seek shelter. Maybe I'm taking myself too seriously, but it happened in 2001, as documented in the annals of this publication.

One of the first things I learned when I stuck my toe into the turbid waters of social justice, is the meaning of radical. You'll quickly recall its connection to radish because it's about getting to the root of things. And in any peace movement, you get to the grass roots or you don't last. PJALS has lasted 40 years, and to last another 40, we have to cultivate more of the newer grass. It starts with telling the truth about war. War is wrong and evil, and it's a shame we don't teach our children that. Americans refuse to learn we have not won a war since 1945; preparations for war make more war inevitable; killing in war is still killing and dying in war is still dying. We have continuous reinforcement of the myth that weapons of war contribute to the security of our country and our society. That makes the glorification of war a routine effort of nearly every element of our culture. Any mainstream writer, reporter, politician, entertainer,

(Continued on page 8)

PJALS 2018 Priorities, cont from page 1
Spokane County regional criminal justice system.

3. Rapid Response and Organizing Against Racism and War: We reject war, torture, militarism, imperialism, white supremacy, and targeting of immigrants, refugees, non-Christians, LGBTQ people, and people of color. We organize to enlarge and mobilize our base and build collective power with targeted communities.

4. Grassroots Leadership Development: We support youth and everyday people as leaders by offering our Young Activist Leaders Program, annual Action Conference, and our grassroots organizing workshops.

As an organization working for racial justice, peace, and economic justice, we are



Young Activist Leaders (YALPistas) Dec 2017 retreat on Identity Oppression, & Privilege

committed to using a racial equity lens in every area of our work and working with accountability to impacted people. In addition to the member survey and our staff and Steering Committee discussions, we are now in the process of asking for feedback from leaders of communities of color about our work and about these priorities going forward.

In November 2017 we started our biennial priority-setting process with a member survey.

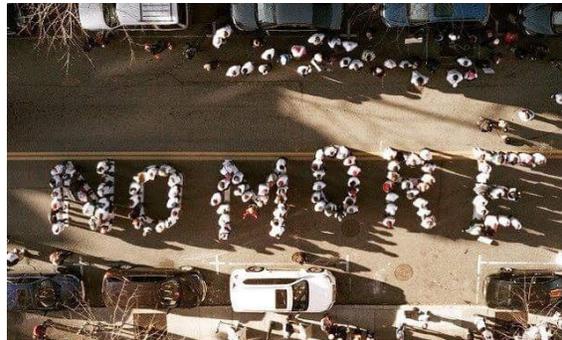
Who responded? We had more survey responses than ever with 144 answering, and the most racially diverse group of respondents with slightly higher percentages of people of color than the demographics of Spokane

County's population. We also had our youngest and most age-diverse respondents.

We are truly a cross-class organization: 43% of respondents identified as poor or working class, 39% as middle class, and 18% as upper middle or upper class. We also learned:

- * 81% of respondents or their loved ones are affected by federal and/or state budget cuts;
- * 63% of respondents or their loved ones are affected by living in or near poverty or economic insecurity;
- * 45% report that they or their loved ones are affected by war and/or occupation.

Highlights from the Member Survey:
How have you participated in PJALS events or actions?



PJALS members told Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers "No More" on December 11, 2017

- I came to a rally or march - 77%
- I supported PJALS with a donation – 64%
- I came to a speaker, panel, or film – 51%
- I attended a PJALS Action Conference, workshop or training – 51%
- I brought friends or family with me to an action or event – 45%
- I came to City Council, SRLJC meeting, or lobby day – 44%
- I came to a PJALS luncheon or auction – 40%

Read more highlights in following pages and more at www.pjals.org/blog

(Continued on page 6)

You are invited to attend our 2018 Benefit Luncheon —

Everyday People Building Beyond the Moment!

Please join us on Wednesday, May 2, 11:30am - 1pm, at Spokane Valley Event Center, 10514 E. Sprague Ave, just minutes from Downtown with ample free parking. *There's no cost to attend – you will have the opportunity to give at the luncheon!*

Visit www.pjals.org/2018luncheon to reserve your seat or sign up to host a table of 7 guests!

We're delighted to host Mijo Lee (below) as our keynote speaker. Mijo Lee is executive director of Social Justice Fund NW, a community foundation that funds grassroots movements for social justice. Except for five years in New York, she is a lifetime Northwesterner. As an activist and organizer, Mijo has worked in a variety of movements including domestic violence advocacy, fair trade, police accountability, immigrant rights, and youth organizing, and also as an appellate public defender. She loves helping people



Building Beyond the Moment

realize their power as fundraisers, donors, and activists. Mijo lives in South Seattle with her teenage son and loves watching superhero movies, singing 80's rock ballads at karaoke, and baking pie.

We are Building Beyond the Moment in 2018. We would love you to join in building towards peace and justice as we continue to grow and push past the many obstacles and challenges faced by the Trump administration.

You are invited to host a table of friends to hear firsthand how our work together exposes and transforms systems of violence and oppression to build a just and nonviolent world, as well as provide the opportunity to connect with like-minded peers to become part of a movement for peace and justice.

For over 40 years, Peace and Justice Action League of Spokane has engaged everyday people to build a just and nonviolent world through community organizing and advocacy for peace, economic justice, and human rights. This luncheon event will bring like-minded people together, strengthening relationships, and building capacity to move forward and transform systems of violence and oppression!

Our goal is to engage 400 members and individuals throughout the Spokane and surrounding community in our multi-level work for peace & justice and to better acquaint members with the intersectional lens of our analysis - looking at race, class, and gender as we examine community impact of the issues we work on.

Please join us!

PJALS 2018 Priorities, cont from page 4**Highlights from the Member Survey
What sets PJALS apart from other groups
you're part of?**

- * Long history of resistance, so very needed at this time.
- * Active, inclusive, gets work done
- * Commitment to nonviolence.
- * Community building, speaking truth to power, kickass small staff
- * It is fearless and non-partisan.
- * PJALS gets the job done without having to engage in the typical "niceties."
- * Creates coalitions in the broader community with those with similar goals. Addresses social justice issues. Makes nonviolence a priority. Has a global perspective. Addresses the folly of militarism and the military industrial complex. Uncovers and shines light on injustice.
- * Easier to connect in, feels local while addressing larger issues
- * It is led by women and queer folks and does work nearer to the community
- * PJALS is very public. In your face. Can't be ignored.
- * Its effective development of the next generation of activists.
- * It's very empowering and makes me feel like I'm doing something.
- * Only peace group in town.
- * Multi-faceted, intersectional approach with the best group of inter-generational fighters and advocates around.
- * Ability to mobilize, being action-oriented
- * Local, dynamic, smart, visible
- * PJALS educates + activates people
- * Consistency, integrity and non-violent
- * Passion, Quick response, Youth involvement, Creativity
- * PJALS is the premier peace organization in our region. Actions are smart, focused, organized and leveraged.

(Continued on page 10)

"Vital that we come together"

By Caty Youso, PJALS Intern

As a PJALS intern for the last 6 months, I have learned so much about what the organization stands for. I am glad to be here because what I have stood for for most of my life very much aligns with PJALS' mission and values.

PJALS has provided me many opportunities to be involved in my community. I'm looking forward to seeing how the skills and education I have obtained while here play out in my future endeavors as a community member and as a professional.

Now that our wonderful annual Peace and Justice Action Conference has ended, I am looking forward to my work in the Stop the



Nuclear Arms Race Campaign. It is vital that we come together to make sure that the United States' nuclear weapons never be used, and that no *one* person has the

authority to push that "button." There should be more outreach and education in our community regarding nuclear weapons so that we can feel empowered to demand answers to our questions such as: Is Fairchild clear of their nuclear weapons? Why hasn't the government cleaned up the Midnight uranium mine on the Spokane Indian Reservation, which has been closed for decades and has killed many people due to uranium poisoning? Why did Boeing just get a contract to revise the nation's nuclear weapons?

I am also excited to be involved in the Poor People's Campaign. I have always admired Martin Luther King Jr. for his strength, determination, and advocacy. We need to finish fulfilling his dream of confronting racism, poverty, militarism, and ecological devastation. Thankfully, PJALS provides myself and others opportunities to advocate for these types of changes.

Open eyes, warm heart

By Megan Juneau, PJALS Intern

Over the last six months as an intern, I have had many eye-opening, humbling experiences. I have had the pleasure of working with Greater Spokane Progress, Smart Justice Spokane, the NAACP, Spokane's city council members, the Inland Northwest Death Penalty Abolition Group, the Young Activist Leaders Program, the Spokane Police Accountability Reform Coalition, PJALS members, and other various members and leaders of my community.



I have gained experience in all levels of social work (micro, mezzo, *and* macro) and in a wide array of issues including immigration rights, refugee rights, death penalty abolition, nuclear weapons, militarism and the war budget, and criminal justice reform. I believe the skills, education, and exposure I have obtained while here at PJALS will be very applicable to my future work.

There has been a lot of firsts for me this year—I was able to attend the Fig Tree Legislative Conference, the Women's Persistence March, the Smart Justice Spokane

Community Voting Party, the Peace and Justice Action Conference, the Books Not Bombs Book Sale, the Why Race Matters workshop, and the Hiroshima and Nagasaki Memorial (just to name a few).

Through these experiences and through the relationships I have built within my community, I have become more culturally sensitive, culturally competent, inclusive, trauma-informed, empathetic, organized, involved, and excited about my future as a social worker.

It has been truly moving witnessing this

organization's ongoing dedication to advancing peace, social and economic justice, and human rights. And it's also been very heart-warming to see just how many people in my community have the same mission, values, and dedication as well. It's been really neat to see how working on a mezzo and macro level for social, political, and economic change has impacted one individual, one family, one neighborhood, one city at a time.

I am looking forward to my third quarter with PJALS, as the responsibilities and challenges grow throughout the year. I'm excited to get involved in the Poor People's Campaign and assisting people in stepping into leadership and participation roles in this movement.

Thank you to each and every one of you for the many opportunities that have been given to me for self-growth and self-reflection this year. Because of your involvement, I have received the gift of an internship with PJALS. This has been a truly memorable experience.

“A New Generation” continued from p 3

educator, clergy, or public figure who fails to agree that our military has to be prepared to kill many, many humans quickly and efficiently, will place personal success in jeopardy. It is also considered bad manners that we realize the Soviet Union won the Cold War by dropping out of the Arms Race.

If we could tell the truth about war, we could de-escalate the sidearms race. It would be easy to raise the age for buying semi-automatic weapons if we could raise the age for sending our children to war. Before I went to Vietnam, my army job was baby-sitting.

That's what we called administering companies full of student soldiers. Many of those young men were sent to Vietnam after graduation. Others had make-work jobs until their 18th birthdays, when they were considered old enough to kill and die to make America safe from Communism's march through southeast Asia. Is it any wonder, between early enlistment, military prep schools for rich kids and Junior ROTC for poor kids that the U.S. refused to sign the international agreement against the institution of child soldiers?

If we tell the truth about war, we can tell the truth about guns. There is no more sport in hunting deer with an AR-15 than there is honor in the American military victory at My Lai, fifty years ago, March 16. Although the M-16 is now proven as a weapon designed to kill human beings, I was told something different in the 60s. The new rifle was said to be a great advance in combat weaponry because the tumbling bullet shattered flesh and bones, disabling the target (always a vicious,



Students at Spokane's Lewis & Clark High School walk out on March 14, co-organized by YALPista Ellary Lockwood

well-armed and trained Communist combatant bent on invading my hometown) so two of his comrades would be taken out of combat when they went to his aid. I never touched an M-16 until I was in Vietnam, having qualified as a small arms expert with a transitional rifle I never saw again.

With all the public discussion about recent horrors of guns in schools, it seems the shooting at Lewis and Clark High School has been forgotten. My daughter was one year out of LC, when a student brought a big handgun to class, confident that it would induce suicide by cop. His plan went well until one of the

responding officers deviated from his script, stopped the bleeding in his neck, and ruined his suicide. My daughter is now a well-established teacher in Spokane. She and her son, in his first week of kindergarten, were locked down at Wilson School as authorities tried to sort out the shooting at Freeman, the school in my neighborhood.

Reports from Freeman High last September say the child shooter went to his handgun when his AR-15 jammed. I boldly speculate the kid had posed with his daddy's gun without actually knowing how to use it. If he had been well-trained, there could well have been twenty dead children in his wake instead of one.

I'd be glad to see the 2nd Amendment repealed if it would reduce the carnage by one death/year, in or out of schools. And military-style weapons could be banned without damaging the 2nd Amendment anymore than it's profaned by each public pronouncement of Wayne LaPierre. One alternative to banning the 2nd is banning the discharge of firearms, which would make the agricultural process, for which I have borrowed firearms, more unpleasant, while doing wonders for noise pollution in my otherwise peaceful neighborhood.

I like the bumper sticker, "Peace is Disarming," and personally, I see lots of room

“A New Generation” continued from p 8
 for disarming to make all of us, not just the folks in schools, a whole lot safer. Law enforcement agencies deserve our assistance and cooperation in making our streets and neighborhoods safer, but they keep losing our trust with their accumulation of and reliance upon excessive firepower. Every time I hear about officers shooting someone holding a knife, a rock, or piece of glass or someone reaching for a blanket that might have a gun under it, I long for someone with the courage and good will to serve, protect, and defend me without lethal weapons, just as I tried to teach my children to look after themselves without hurting someone else. Yes, I'm different, and I won't hold you to my standards of faith and community. But remember that neighborhood policemen in London worked effectively for many years without firearms.

Speaking of faith and trust, do you ever ridicule our government for splashing "In God We Trust" all over while spending more on weapons of mass destruction and pre-emptive war, calling it national defense, than on infrastructure, education, and health, combined? Do you ever laugh at people who claim to have absolute faith in God and won't venture far without a loaded gun? Do you pray for peace and pay for war? Yeah, me too.

I think students and their parents and their neighbors should demand more than an end to school shootings. It's a logical starting place, but let's all challenge the way we think about guns and other lethal weapons. I'm hearing, right now, about school districts handing out detentions to hundreds of students who walked out in protest of semi-automatic weapons. I wish I could be in detention with them and with a singer, to teach them songs of disarmament and solidarity. That would be educational.

If school children can teach us that guns never make them safer, perhaps we can teach our leaders, again, that militarization, war, and nuclear weapons offer no security, but only increase the risk of destroying the earth. - RN

Renew your membership!

If your most recent donation to PJALS was before Sept 2017, you're due to renew!

Go to www.pjals.org or send a check before April 15 and help save money on our spring renewal mailing!

PJALS is powered by YOU!

Legislative Update continued from page 1

the financial burden folks face upon re-entry due primarily to out of control interest rates. Legislation to create an Office of Corrections Ombuds (HB 1889) to improve conditions and programs for inmates also passed this year.

Advancing police accountability: PJALS endorsed I-940, the De-escalate Washington initiative to the legislature during the signature collection phase. We were excited to see it pass through the legislature and be signed into law by the Governor during the session. This initiative requires all law enforcement officers in the state to receive violence de-escalation, mental health training, and to provide first-aid to save lives. It also amends the standard for justifiable use of deadly force by law enforcement, including adding a “good faith” standard and requiring independent investigation.

Repealing the death penalty: PJALS has worked on this issue at various levels for more than three decades. In recent years, our work with our statewide partners increased bi-partisan support yet we continued to face obstruction from Senator Padden in his role as the Chair of the Senate Law & Justice Committee. This year due to the change in leadership, we made history with successful votes in both the Senate and House Committees and a successful vote on the Senate Floor. Despite the bi-partisan support and momentum the bill seemed to have this year, it was not brought forward for a House Floor vote before the deadline. Despite our disappointment in not clearing our last hurdle this year, we celebrate the historical victories we did achieve and will continue our efforts next year.

Member Survey Highlights cont from page 6

What sets PJALS apart from other groups you're part of? (continued)

- * PJALS stands up and takes action to get positive changes accomplished in our community and country!
- * The history, the commitment, the transparency, the in-it-for-the-long-haul attitude, the hope, the love I feel at PJALS events.
- * Their ability to move the needle
- * You are an original nonviolent group of well-organized activists, who also welcomes kids, and young adults to learn, and participate. Not all groups have all your specific views. Not all groups have been around as long.
- * PJALS takes the time to get membership opinions
- * You do a lot with a little.



Women's Persistence March

Spokane, Sunday January 21, 2018

Top: P-Jammers!
 Middle: PJALS Peacekeeper Team members
 Bottom: marcher's sign; Maddie, member of the Young Activist Leaders program, says "We Can All Do It!"

What is PJALS doing well, in your view?

- * Creating hope when there is despair
- * Building slow relationships of trust with accountability partners most affected by the issues at hand
- * Great leadership, openness, communication, workshops, rallies
- * Holding local officials accountable and strengthening coalitions
- * I see you participate, at so many functions at so many levels. Ban the Box was a huge success on a local level. In Washington you are being noticed.
- * Youth education and involvement.
- * Action Conference and workshops
- * Choosing important issues and working on them effectively.
- * Organizing, troublemaking, peacemaking, changemaking, plus fun at the same time.



More highlights at www.pjals.org/blog



Fair Chance Hiring victories!

On November 27, 2017, after more than three years of organizing by members of I Did The Time, NAACP, PJALS, Greater Spokane Progress, and other Smart Justice Spokane coalition partners, the Spokane City Council passed a Fair Chance Hiring ordinance to reduce barriers to jobs for people with conviction records, setting the stage for a state law passed in spring 2018!



2018 Peace and Justice Action Conference

Nearly 200 of us came together to Build Beyond the Moment. Watch Eric Ward's keynote address: <http://pjals.org/2018/03/highlights-9th-annual-peace-justice-action-conference/>



Peace & Justice Action League of Spokane
35 W Main, Suite 120M
Spokane, WA 99201
509-838-7870
www.pjals.org

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Spokane, WA
Permit No. 263

Address Service Requested

You are invited to our PJALS Benefit Luncheon!

Everyday People Building Beyond the Moment

Wednesday May 2, 11:30 am – 1:00pm

Spokane Valley Event Center, 10514 E. Sprague Ave, just minutes from downtown with ample free parking.

There's no cost to attend – you will have the opportunity to give at the luncheon!

Visit www.pjals.org/2018luncheon to reserve your seat or sign up to host a table!

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 believe everyday people can accomplish extraordinary things together! Join us!

PJALS, 35 W Main, Suite 120M, Spokane, WA 99201.

You determine your own level of support and participation. PJALS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation.

Name(s) _____

Essential members \$60/year

Address _____

Living Lightly \$20/year

Phone: _____

**Visit www.pjals.org/contribute
to become a monthly donor
or give at any level!**

Email: _____











