

Olympia Fellowship of RECONCILIATION

ACCOMPLISHMENTS FROM MAY 2011 TO APRIL 2012

NEWSLETTERS:

- We published six more issues of our bi-monthly newsletter (SW Washington's most comprehensive peace & justice newsletter). We mailed copies of each issue to hundreds of people throughout Thurston and nearby counties, and e-mailed it to dozens of 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 Olympia FOR's activities, and we also publicize many other organizations' activities. We publicize information our readers don't see elsewhere.

TELEVISION PROGRAMS:

- The Olympia FOR produced and broadcast another year of one-hour interview programs with fresh information and insights about relevant topics. Each program aired twice a week for a full month on Thurston Community TV, cable channel 22 in Thurston County. Ours is TCTV's longest-running series – **25 years!**
- Our topics were: *“Causing and Exploiting Budget Crises,” “Stories of Working for Peace and Justice,” “The Arab World’s Democracy Movement,” “Teenagers Organize Peace and Justice Activities,” “A Public Park for Olympia’s Isthmus,” “Active Duty Troops and Veterans Work for Peace,” “Our Ongoing Relationship with Santo Tomás, Nicaragua,” “Washington State Needs Tax Reform,” “Occupy Wall Street, Olympia and Everywhere,” “Climate: Updates and Next Strategies,” “Strategy and Creativity for Building Grassroots Power,”* and *“Local Economics.”*
- We have posted approximately 80 of our TV programs since 2005 on our website so anyone anywhere can watch them. Simply visit www.olympiafor.org, click the **“TV Programs”** link, and choose the program you want to watch.
- Our additional TCTV series, “The Big Picture,” showed a wide variety of interesting video documentaries twice a week through December.
- Also, we videotaped and aired several special programs featuring high quality speakers visiting our area.

WEBSITE:

- Our attractive website, www.olympiafor.org, features newsletters, calendars, descriptions of our TV programs, groups of one-paragraph items of **“News-Resources-Opportunities,”** and information about the Olympia FOR, our vigils, the theory and practice of nonviolence, and various issues.
- The website's **“TV Programs”** page includes a link to let you watch our current and past programs on your computer.
- The website's **“Death Penalty”** page offers a huge amount of information, including many unique items written specifically for the Olympia FOR's efforts to abolish the DP.

PEACE VIGILS:

- We completed **32 years** of vigiling from 12 noon to 1 pm at Sylvester Park (Legion & Capitol Way) -- every Wednesday since March 5, 1980.
- We completed **13½ years** of vigiling from 4:30 to 6 pm every Friday at Percival Landing, 4th & Water.
- A lively street band, the Artesian Rumble Arkestra, performs at our Friday vigils from 5 to 6 pm, supporting our vigils and delighting vigilers and passersby!
- We welcomed other organizations to join our vigils with special themes on several special dates.
- Many persons participated in our 36th annual Holiday Peace Vigil on Saturday December 17.

BRING OUR BILLION\$ HOME:

- The Olympia FOR is vigorously and creatively participating in the Western Washington FOR's campaign to cut military spending and use the savings to fund human needs.
- Our “Turn the Budget Around” event on May 22 in Heritage Park used homemade art work on dozens of cardboard boxes to illustrate items in the military budget and the better uses for those billion\$. Three musical acts and several games made this a great day!
- Our “Jobs, Not War” forum on November 5 featured speakers and workshops about military spending.
- We continued encouraging people to send postcards to our US House and Senate members and the President each month on the date of your birth to urge cutting the military budget and funding human needs.
- We used several methods to urge Congress to audit the Dept. of Defense, which has been avoiding audits.

AFGHANISTAN AND BEYOND:

- We strengthened our close working relationships with Afghan Youth Peace Volunteers (aged 10 to early 20s) and vigorously promoted their heartfelt video messages for peace. (www.ourjourneytosmile.com)
- We created opportunities for local youths and adults to talk directly with them by phone and computer connections through quarterly and monthly “Days of Listening.” See www.globaldaysoflistening.org and www.thepeoplesjourney.org
- We supported the effort to make Global Days of Listening a national chapter of the FOR.

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DEATH PENALTY:

- The Olympia FOR's Committee for Alternatives to the Death Penalty persisted with monthly meetings where we educated ourselves and planned a variety of activities.
- We brought an innocent survivor from Florida's death row to speak in Olympia, and we videotaped his presentation and posted it on our website.
- We organized several film showings and discussions.
- We offer our 6-session study group to faith communities and other groups who want to study the various aspects of the death penalty. The host group may choose whether to include the optional interfaith aspect or focus only on facts.
- We staffed information tables at Olympia's Pride Celebration, Tacoma's Ethnic Fest, and elsewhere.
- We actively participated as an organizational member of the Washington Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

- We organized a big event in Heritage Park in September to mark the 30th Annual International Day of Peace.
- We sponsored an intensive training in nonviolence using the "Creating a Culture of Peace" curriculum.
- We sponsored David Korten's speaking engagement as part of the Occupy Olympia Solidarity Social Forum.
- We sponsored Bruce Gagnon's speaking engagement about endless war, global capitalism, and weapons in space, and videotaped it for posting on our website.
- We continued our monthly book study group about nonviolent alternatives to war.
- We welcomed about 30 people to our annual "Summer Social" to help new people and continuing members get to know each other and strengthen our friendships.
- 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 staffed information tables and spoke to audiences at several local events.
- We co-sponsored, endorsed, and/or financially supported a great variety of events and activities for peace, social justice and nonviolence.

ONGOING INFLUENCE AND SERVICE:

- 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 provided publicity, volunteers and financial support in various cases.
- The Olympia FOR is an affiliate member of Interfaith Works (www.Interfaith-Works.org). We participated in many of IW's activities and wrote some of IW's *Perspectives* columns for the *Olympian*.

- We actively participate in the Thurston County Progressive Network (TC Pro-Net), www.tcpronet.org
- We responded to a great many requests from individuals and organizations and provided an abundance of information, referrals, consultation, services and support for their efforts for peace, social justice, and nonviolence.
- We actively participated in activities of the Western Washington FOR. We contributed financial support to help WWFOR better serve us and the regional peace movement.
- Several Olympia FOR representatives actively served on the WWFOR's regional board and the planning committees of WWFOR's major events and activities.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTH:

- We continually welcome new people to our mailing list and to our many activities.
- We accomplish a tremendous amount 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 Meeting / Celebration / Election 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) and other activities through the national FOR (www.forusa.org). A growing number of Olympia members participate in WWFOR activities.
- We are an **all-volunteer** organization that relies entirely on **voluntary tax-deductible** contributions.
- While carrying out a greater number of activities since May of last year, we also raised enough money to pay for these ambitious new activities.
- We even had fun raising money! Seattle folksinger Tom Rawson performed a highly enjoyable benefit concert. We enjoyed a delicious gourmet Italian dinner to raise funds.

Olympia Fellowship of Reconciliation

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OUR FREE NEWSLETTER CAN KEEP YOU INFORMED.