



PEACEWORKS KANSAS CITY

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PeaceAction



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KC MO, epicenter of new arms race—RESIST!

By Mary Hladky

The Kansas City nuclear bomb plant, officially named the Kansas City National Security Campus, is of vital importance in the making of nuclear weapons. This facility is an integral part of the manufacturing chain, producing and procuring over 85% of the mechanical and electronic parts for US nuclear weapons. Without these parts, nuclear weapons production would cease.

“The US has embarked on the largest and most expensive nuclear build-out ever,” according to an article in the December *Scientific American*. In its



deadly pursuit of the most dangerous weapons on earth, the US government will double the size of KC’s already massive bomb plant beginning in 2024. With little public notice, the land has been purchased, zoning has been granted, and earth movers are preparing the land for building. Expansion includes 2.5 million square feet of new office, manufacturing, and support space as well as adding an additional 1,000 employees to its current 7,800 employees. So much time, energy, and trillions of taxpayer dollars in-

RESIST! — *continued on page 2*

From UN meeting to local work vs. nuclear weapons

Two PeaceWorks KC Board members—Kimmy Iгла and Ann Suellentrop—went to the UN meeting in late November in New York City on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Their reports, and reflections of others, came Jan. 7 in KC MO. It was an opportunity to call peace activists to urgent action.

Opposing genocide in Gaza is depleting her energy for

anti-nuclear work, Ann said. She handed out fliers from two groups leading many of the KC peace-in-Palestine efforts: Al-Hadaf KC and KC Tenants. She quoted Martin Luther King, Jr.: “The choice today is no longer between violence and nonviolence. It is either nonviolence or nonexistence.”

From UN meeting to local work — *cont. on p. 4*

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Calling ‘All Allied Artist Artists’

By Kristin Scheer

We’re calling “All Allied Artist Artists” to join our shows at Blip Roasters at 1302 Woodswether Rd. in the West Bottoms, KCMO. Our open-mic events showcase, promote, share, perform, and discuss politically relevant art with pro-love, pro-justice, anti-war, and anti-establishment messages. In a recent interview on “The KC Morning Show” (on KCUR-FM, 89.3) with Hartzell Gray, Cameron of our MO Peace Theater Group called us “an interdisciplinary creative catalyst for

change.”

Tommy of the same MO Peace Theater Group that is sponsoring and performing at the events said, “Let’s talk art through politics and politics through art.” MO Peace has been bringing art to the streets to inspire political discourse as an alternative to the sanitized messages dominated by corporate news media outlets.

The mission of AAAArtists, according to Tommy, is “intersectional networking and outreach to the public to instigate revolution

... (we are) ready and able to throw down the poisonous establishment and dream our visions into reality, or just mock the oligarchy.” Contact tommy@peaceworkskc.org to share in the solidarity, vulnerability, and strength the arts can bring towards creating and realizing healthy change for more peace and justice in our world. Remember: All that is personal is also political. ♡

—Kristin Scheer serves on the PeaceWorks KC Board.

KC MO, epicenter of new arms race—RESIST! — continued from page 1

vested to kill life.

The US government is capable of destroying life on earth many times over. There are nine nuclear-armed nations, many of whom have already threatened the use of nuclear weapons during conflicts. Due to human error and misunderstandings, the United States and Russia, along with others, have experienced numerous nuclear close calls. We are tempting fate. One of these days, “luck” won’t be on our side.

The entire nuclear production system has contaminated, sickened, and killed untold numbers of US citizens—men, women, children, and babies. The same has happened all over the world, which has led to the new Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

This madness must stop.

Instead of paying people to produce/procure parts for killer bombs, let these same employees use their knowledge and expertise to reduce global warming. The plant should transition to green energy solutions providing employees with good-paying jobs that build a sustainable, more livable society. Warheads to Windmills has an informative website (warheadstowindmills.org) addressing the climate

catastrophe and nuclear war, the two existential threats facing the world.

WE MUST RESIST. Plan to attend the **Catholic Workers Resist Nuclear Weapons events April 12-15 here in Kansas City.** For those who can attend, April 12-14 are set aside for planning and nonviolence training, as well as fellowship. The events will conclude on Monday, April 15, with a Day of Action at the plant, alongside PeaceWorks KC (a local affiliate of Peace Action), numerous non-profits, and the people of KC. Details are being finalized and will be posted at peaceworkskc.org. In the meantime, write a Letter to the Editor of your favorite publication. And contact your elected officials to let them know you want your taxpayer dollars spent on improving the living conditions in the US instead of the evil of nuclear weapons.



Sign up to join us!

For further information on the plant’s expansion, read the Nov. 7 *Kansas City Business Journal* article at bizjournals.com/kansascity/news/2023/11/07/nnsa-honeywell-office-manufacturing-campus-nuclear.html. ♡

—Mary Hladky is a vice chair of the PeaceWorks KC Board and serves on the Coordinating Committee of United for Peace & Justice.

PeaceWorks Annual Meeting just around the corner

Mark your calendar for Sunday, March 3, from 2 pm to 4 pm, for the PeaceWorks Annual Meeting. Last year we had a full house and a joyous in-person reunion. We invite all PeaceWorks members, and those interested in learning more about PeaceWorks, to join us for food, speakers, fun, and the annual election. Our gathering will be held at Simpson House, 4509 Walnut St., KCMO. Make plans now to attend. Please bring finger-food to share, and be ready to celebrate winners of our awards--the Charles E. Bebb Peace Merit Award (for an individual) and/or the Kris and Lynn Cheatum Community Peace Award (for an organization). We are looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible on March 3!

Slate of candidates

Here is the current ballot of people running for the PeaceWorks Board of Directors. It is subject to change, with some additional candidates likely being announced at the March 3 PeaceWorks KC Annual Meeting. Our all-volunteer Board members make possible many of the good works of PeaceWorks. If you want to join us in promoting peace and justice in our community as a Board member, or if you know of someone who would make a good candidate, please let us know. Simply send PeaceWorks an email at peaceworkskc@gmail.com.

Candidates for the Board's Executive Committee

| | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------|
| <i>Chair</i> | Tommy Indigo | <i>Treasurer</i> | Dave Pack |
| <i>1st VP</i> | Cris Mann | <i>Secretary</i> | Spencer Graves |
| <i>2nd VP</i> | Ann Suellentrop | | |

Candidates for Board Members

Mary Hladky
Christopher Overfelt
Kristin Scheer

Notes: The term for Board Members is two years; the term for the Executive Committee is one year. Persons who are just entering their second year as Board Members (not needing to be on the slate) are Breanna Crawford, Debora Demeter, Kimmy Igla, and Henry Stoeber. The Nominating Committee consists of Mary Hladky and Ann Suellentrop. The Board is deeply grateful for the service of Charles Carney and Jon Shafer, who recently retired from the Board. ♡

Farewell, Helen Woodson

Helen Woodson, famed resister of nuclear weapons, died Dec. 2 of heart failure at age 80 in Kansas City, MO, her home since Fall 2011. She had spent 27 years in federal prison for various resistance actions, including joining with three men in 1984 to use a jackhammer to damage the concrete cover protecting a Minuteman Missile silo 45 miles east of KC. Her 1984 action got her about 12 years in prison. In retirement in KC, she joined both St. Philippine Duchesne Catholic Church and St. Vincent's, and she delighted in playing piano, singing, and caring for her cats. Resist in peace, Helen! ♡



Helen Woodson —Photo taken in 2011 by Felice Cohen-Joppa of The Nuclear Resister.

Contact elected officials

Mayor Quinton Lucas: 816-513-3500
City Council: 816-513-1368
President Joe Biden: 202-456-1111
comments, 202-456-1414 switchboard
Sen. Josh Hawley (R-Mo.): 202-224-6154
Sen. Eric Schmitt (R-Mo.): 202-224-5721
Rep. Emanuel Cleaver
 (D-5th dist., Mo.): 202-225-4535
Rep. Sam Graves (R-6th dist., Mo.):
 202-225-7041
Rep. Mark Alford (R-4th dist., Mo.):
 202-225-2876
Sen. Roger Marshall, MD
 (R-Kan.): 202-224-4774
Sen. Jerry Moran (R-Kan.): 202-224-6521
Rep. Sharice Davids (D-3rd dist., Kan.):
 913-621-0832

From UN meeting to local work — *continued from page 1*

Ann introduced Christopher Overfelt and Kimmy Iгла, whose talks are on p. 5. Christopher condemned the US empire for genocide in Gaza. Kimmy shared the hope she experienced at the UN, meeting persons whose countries have ratified the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

The UN meeting refuted the deterrence claim for nuclear weapons, said Ann; that claim has not prevented war after war, and the weapons threaten all life on Earth. “Nuclear weapons do not keep us safe,” she insisted. One of the main things propelling the treaty forward, she said, was that communities affected by nuclear weapon production and storage are speaking out and organizing. “The ban treaty provides for compensation to affected peoples, health care for them, and remediation for contaminated environments,” she said. “These demands will not go away because radioactivity damages DNA and affects generation after generation.”

At the UN meeting, called the Second Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, Ann and Kimmy met Hirotsugu Terasaki, the vice president of Soka Gakkai International, a global Buddhist organization. Ann and Kimmy spoke with him through a woman interpreter and talked with them about persons in KC who have died or been ill from contaminants from the production here of mechanical and electronic parts for nuclear weapons. Ann said at the Jan. 7 meeting, “The interpreter said to us, ‘Those persons are your hi-bakusha,’” referring to those in Japan who survived the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs.



Standing in line to enter the UN in NYC: in the back row, from left, Hirotsugu Terasaki, Ann Suellentrop, and Kimmy Iгла; in the front row, from left, the unidentified person who took the photo and their interpreter.

Ann also explained at the Jan. 7 meeting that the Radiation and Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) failed in 2023 to be expanded to many outside the nuclear weapon production or storage facilities who have become sick or died from the toxins. Here, in the KC area, the Bannister Federal Complex HVAC system included both the nuclear weapon production plant and other federal offices, said Ann, and many workers near the weapons plant contracted illnesses from the contaminants there. Those workers “should be compensated just as much as a down-winder,” she said. Ann and others, including a former supervisor at the weapon plant, Maurice Copeland, met to ask for Sen. Josh Hawley to call for a town hall to press for RECA expansion.

David Pack, treasurer of PeaceWorks, spoke Jan. 7 about Back from the Brink, a campaign to ask federal lawmakers and local council members to take steps to eliminate US nuclear arsenals. Dave offered lists of local council members and a proposed resolution to the 15 participants in the Jan. 7 meeting. Action time! Email DJPack.12645@gmail.com to join in council contacts in KC MO, KC KS, Independence, or Overland Park.



Spencer Graves, secretary of PeaceWorks, noted the new edition of *Warheads to Windmills*, on transforming nuclear weapon facilities to other work, such as solar/wind energy production. Author Timmon Wallis spoke via zoom to the All Souls Forum in KC MO Jan. 14, and his talk is at allsoulskc.org—select the second YouTube channel, “UU Forum at All Souls Church Channel” and find the *Warheads to Windmills* video. ♡

Abolishing nuclear weapons: ‘An existential imperative’

By Kimmy Igla

Note: On Jan. 7 in Kansas City, Kimmy Igla gave this talk on the 2023 UN meeting on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

I had heard the statement “Nuclear weapons are illegal” before, but I didn’t understand what it meant until I attended the 2MSP, the 2nd meeting of states parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The ratification and progress of the treaty was put into action before my eyes at this Nov. 27-Dec. 1 meeting.

Growing up in a country that’s made nuclear weapons throughout my lifetime made the idea of abolition sound far-fetched. But at this meeting, nations shared about what’s already been done—in nuclear weapon-free zones—showing what’s possible.

This didn’t happen overnight, and in the words of Melissa Parke, executive director of ICAN (International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons), the pace of progress has not matched the pace of the problem at hand. Ms. Parke encouraged delegates to expedite ratification in their countries.

The minister of science and innovation for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dr. Gilbert Kabanda Kurhenga, said of the

treaty: It’s not just a legally binding instrument, it’s a tool of informing the community of nuclear risk—to spur the international community to avoid these weapons.

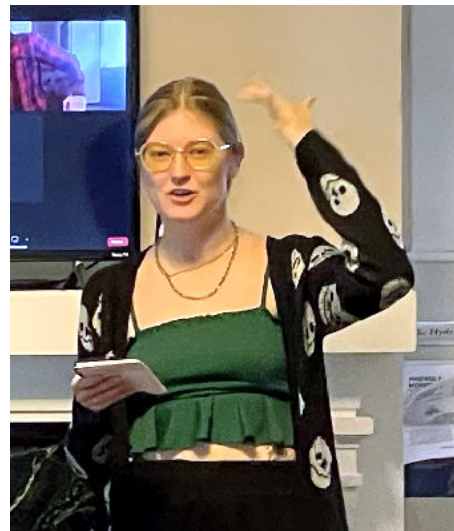
Patricia Jaworek, of the Nuclear Threat Initiative, made clear that the world and our societies have significantly changed since the Cold War, where the concept of Nuclear Winter was introduced to the world. Our societies are fragile and interdependent, and the impacts could be catastrophic. Ms. Jaworek, herself appearing to be millennial-aged, said we need young people to be scholars, researchers, and public diplomats. We must make this information more *accessible* to people. And I couldn’t agree with her more.

Nuclear weapons abolition is an existential imperative for humanity, and there is a path forward toward progress.

Members of No Nukes Tokyo, a youth organization and ICAN partner, also highlighted the importance of ample educational opportunities. Attendees noted that the select youth represented there at the meeting came from a place of privilege and resources. These hurdles should be eliminated. It is only right to uphold the value of inclusivity by investing in the growth of the younger generation.

I thank Ann Suellentrop and Spencer Graves for making it possible for me to go to this meeting and eliminating the hurdles for me. I was grateful to witness the power of international collectivism, and the opulence of the NYC UN. However, in the midst of what’s happening in Gaza, the UN is laughable, and is at the root of the conflict today. And is proof that people

coming together to educate and organize is the solution. And us coming together to talk and learn together gives me hope. ♡



*Kimmy Igla speaks about the UN meeting on banning nuclear weapons.
—Photo by Kriss Avery*

An ‘emperor with no clothes on’ moment in Gaza

By Christopher Overfelt

Note: Christopher Overfelt, of Veterans for Peace, gave this talk Jan. 7 before others reported on the recent UN meeting on banning nuclear weapons.

When we talk about the abolition of nuclear weapons, we are also talking about the abolition of the power structures that enable their appli-

cation. These power structures lie primarily in the American military-industrial complex. They also lie in the extractive resources—the corporations and the banks and hedge funds that interact with them.

Essentially, those who profit from the manufacture and application of nuclear and non-nuclear weapons are those

An ‘emperor with no clothes on’ moment — *cont. on p. 8*

Poets for nuclear justice ... young folks on the move!

By Kimmy Igla

PeaceWorks gave a generous donation in 2023 to the Fountain City Poets local slam team so they could go to a regional slam in Portland, OR, where they took 2nd place as a team, and two teammates took first place in other side competitions.

Now, the poets are galvanized for nuclear justice. I've been meeting with the poets to share KC's nuclear history and relate nuclear violence to colonization. The Fountain City Poets are using their craft to shed a light on what much of the public is unaware of: nuclear weapons production with our tax dollars, and the ramifications of nuclear violence. We aim to educate ourselves, so we can educate and inspire others.

The annual DC Days lobbying event by Alliance for Nuclear Accountability (ANA) happened last spring, and I joined PeaceWorks—hear me when I say this trip changed my life. New chambers of compassion opened in my heart for the unfathomable reach of nuclear violence on our planet. I was inspired by organizers across the country col-

laborating for a nuclear-free world. There was so much to learn, and I was surrounded by experts. I am grateful for the opportunity of DC Days—and it was only

made possible by PWKC, and donations.

The ANA is raising money to help cover the cost of young people joining DC Days to learn alongside fellow organizers. They understand that financial barriers must be removed to widen the ability to access this monumental week of informative meetings and engaging strategy sessions.



After crossing the property line on Memorial Day at the KC MO nuclear weapon factory, the National Security Campus, Kimmy Igla and Rylan Scott Keeling report to the probation office at Municipal Court.—Photo by Kriss Avery.

I brought a fiery passion home to my dearest friend Rylan, a leader within the poetry community. This ignited a chain reaction—and now we have the whole slam team learning about our nuclear past and present, and crafting poems that inspire folks to learn more, and take action.

Financial support removed the hurdles that could have kept me from going to DC. I was able to learn more, share information, and now 6 other young people are interested in going to DC to take action themselves.

It is imperative that the next generation have the opportunity to show up at our capitol and demand justice from our elected officials, while also learning from the experts most close to their local nuclear issues. Please support young folks being able to join these pivotal events. Your contribution will lift the financial burden of travel expenses from our shoulders.

Thanks for supporting PeaceWorks KC and anti-nuclear work. The next generation is committed to carrying this work forward, and with your help, we can build the nuclear-free future we all deserve. ♡

—Kimmy Igla serves on the PeaceWorks KC Board.

Here is my annual membership for PeaceWorks

- Membership.....\$40
- Donor.....\$50+
- Major Donor.....\$100+
- Family Membership.....\$60
- Group Membership.....\$75
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- Lifetime Membership.....\$1,000
- Sustaining Membership.....\$5+/mo.

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You can donate online at <https://peaceworkskc.org/donate>

'Ceasefire now!' says KC peace coalition

By Kristin Scheer

The Holy Land Peace Coalition held a vigil, "Peace in the Holy Land," at Theis Park in Kansas City, Mo., on Dec. 14. Thirty people gathered on that cold afternoon to mourn those killed in Israel and Gaza since Oct. 7 and to call for a ceasefire. White flags planted nearby had written on them the names of a few of the many thousands of children killed.

Margot Patterson of Citizens of Justice in the Middle East (CJME) welcomed those gathered. She said decades of irresponsible US policy had contributed to the current crisis, which the US is deepening by arming Israel's war against the civilian population of Gaza and obstructing efforts in the United Nations to end the war.

Ian Munro of CJME read a statement issued by Rabbis for Ceasefire expressing grief at the loss of Israeli and Palestinian lives. The rabbis say, "The US and Israeli governments are using our grief to justify genocidal violence directed against the people of Gaza."

Ira Harritt of the Greater Kansas City Interfaith Council read the Council's statement. The Council "grieves the loss of life in Israel and Palestine. We believe a path to peace is possible."

Ghassan Elkhatib of CJME said, "I am a Muslim American. Palestinians were told they needed to leave their home. They left with the summer clothes they were wearing on their backs. They need essential goods." Elkhatib concluded, "I pray for all of us to find the truth and not get it from our mainstream media. ... I pray for the world's protection of 2.3 million Palestinians under siege." See a video by Ann Suellentrop of his talk at youtube.com/watch?v=sjuuIN0yvk0.

Henry Stoeber of PeaceWorks KC spoke about the United Nations' nonbinding resolution for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza. On Dec. 13, 153 nations voted for a ceasefire. Ten nations (including the US and Israel) voted against the resolution; 23 nations abstained. Stoeber said, "The US is aiding and abetting the criminal actions of the Israeli government."

We planted flags and lit candles, and we prayed. We heard prayers for peace, prayers for the dead, prayers for those suffering in Gaza, prayers for enlightened leadership among world leaders. We heard, "No more war!" ♣

—Kristin Scheer serves on the PeaceWorks KC Board

For your calendar

John Dear is coming to KC to discuss *The Gospel of Peace*. Dear calls this new book his life's work, exploring the first three gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke) strictly related to nonviolence. He speaks Saturday, **March 2**, at St. Therese Little Flower Church, 5814 Euclid Ave., KC MO, 10 am to noon.

On Sunday, **March 3**, 9:30 to 10:30 am, coauthor Maria Stephan will talk about *The Critical Struggle for Multi-Racial Democracy in the US and Globally*. Stephan will address the All Souls Forum at 4501 Walnut, KC MO. She and her coauthor have done path-breaking research in violence and nonviolence.

The Nevada Desert Experience will host the annual 60-mile Sacred Peace Walk from Las Vegas to the Nevada National Security Site (NNSS, formerly the Nevada Test Site). This **March 23-29** walk with indigenous persons traverses the beautiful lands of the Western Shoshone and Paiute peoples, and ends with a procession from the Peace Camp to possible arrest at the NNSS test site. ♣



Each flag bears the name and age at death of a young child killed in the war. —Photo by Ann Suellentrop

An ‘emperor with no clothes on’ moment — *continued from p. 5*

who control them and decide when they are used and for what reasons.

We are in an “emperor with no clothes on” moment as we watch the American military-industrial complex destroy the lives of thousands of children in Gaza, destroy their homes, schools, hospitals, power stations, and food and water sources. There is no word for this display of power other than genocide.

Genocide was, is, and always will be a tool of the American empire. More tonnage of bombs has been dropped on Gaza since Oct. 7th than what was contained in the nuclear weapons dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

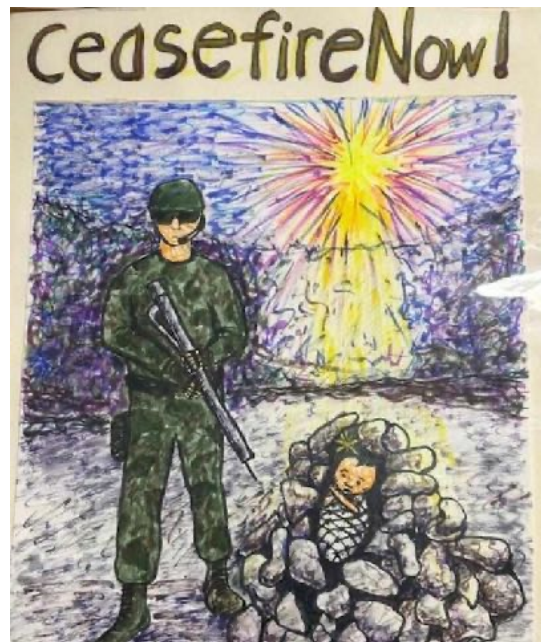
So it is no stretch of the imagination that the nuclear weapons now being developed by the American military-industrial complex will be used regularly around the world in the future. Gaza is being used

as a clear example as to what will happen to anyone who stands against the American empire. I find it fascinating that there has been no debate in the political rank and file around our war on Gaza. The aircraft carriers and weapons were on their way well before the public had even become aware of what was happening. The corporations and plutarchs who profit from the American empire will not stop until they have consumed everything in the world, and if we try to stop them, they will destroy us too. If you want to see a vision of the future, look at what is happening in Gaza.

There is no safety in nuclear weapons, and there is no safety

in the arms of the American empire. There is only death and destruction. †

—*Christopher Overfelt serves on the PeaceWorks KC Board.*



—*Illustration by Ann Suellentrop*