



From Our Director

"There is a big difference between throwing a pebble in a pond and throwing a big rock. The pebble causes gentle ripples that go a long way. The rock makes a big splash that quickly disappears."
- Arun Gandhi

It is a great joy for me to produce our Fall/Winter newsletter annually because in listing all our financial contributors over the past year I get to see how wide the support for the SSJ Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence really is. Each donation may seem like a small pebble, but the gentle ripples they create go a long way in fulfilling our mission to eliminate violence in ourselves, in our society and in our world. One example is money for Camp Peaceprints scholarships, which has a far-reaching effect through the lives of our campers and all those they touch.

We are thrilled to announce that Arun Gandhi, grandson of Mahatma Gandhi, will be sharing more of his insight at our annual event on April 24, 2016. It will be a special remembrance of the 10th anniversary of Sister Karen's journey to God. Check our website for details.

Gandhi encourages us to keep throwing those pebbles to gently spread nonviolence. We are so grateful for all of your pebbles! (Of course, if anyone wants to make a splash with a big rock of a contribution, we'll happily accept!)

Giving thanks for you,

Vivian

Vivian Ruth Waltz



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You can make a secure donation online by going to

www.sisterkarencenter.org

and clicking on the PayPal Donate button.

It's fast and easy to increase the impact of nonviolence in the world!

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Just A Little Help From Our Friends **By Bill Marx**

I recently decided to update my Will, as we all should do from time to time, and I was thinking about all the people in my life that I wanted to thank in some way. I also wanted to show my appreciation to the charities and the nonviolent social justice organizations whose work I value.

It will be ten years from April 14, 2006 that Sister Karen Klimczak, SSJ, was taken from us. Shortly thereafter, the SSJ Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence was established to keep her memory and mission alive for the creation of a community without violence. I think we are all well aware of the need for this to continue and grow in order to meet the transformation of our violent culture into a society of love and nonviolence.

I have included the Sister Karen Center in my Will and am going online to make a monthly investment, by credit card, to the work of the SSJ Sister Karen Klimczak Center For Nonviolence. I hope and pray that others will consider this as an alternative to the approximately 50% of our tax dollars that go toward our Military budget. It is the sort of thing that Sister Karen would appreciate.

If you would like help in planning a legacy gift to the SSJ Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence, please call Vivian at the Center. To set up monthly credit card deductions, go to sisterkarencenter.org and click on the PayPal Donate button.

2nd Annual Peace & Nonviolence Festival



Martin Luther King Park in Buffalo was the setting for the Labor Day Peace and Nonviolence Festival sponsored by over 80 organizations and churches comprising the WNY Coalition of Nonviolence Advocates. The festival was just one of the multitude of ways these groups are hard at work to reduce violence in our community and world.

The family event featured a Walk for Peace around the perimeter of the park in the sunshine and strong breeze, a free cookout, children's activities, music provided by Ismail and Co. and Chuckie Campbell along with a Civil Rights puppet show by puppeteer Michele Costa. There was tabling by many organizations, and the Buffalo Peacemakers, Sheriff's mounted patrol, Buffalo Fire Department and Police Athletic League all took part in the festivities.



Participants in the festival were called to emulate the examples of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Sister Karen Klimczak whose lives were dedicated to nonviolence. The violence of poverty, in our streets, environmental degradation and from war-making are all interconnected. The WNY Coalition of Nonviolence Advocates believes that every person, every group and every religion can embrace its nonviolent roots to mainstream nonviolence and move humanity to a more just and compassionate world.



The second event by the Coalition was an Interfaith/Intercultural Celebration on September 21st, the International Day of Peace, which took place at St. Mary's School for the Deaf. The service featured youth from different faith traditions singing, dancing and reading poetry. These events were part of a nationwide Campaign Nonviolence movement.



Building a Culture of Peace
CAMPAIGN NONVIOLENCE



CAMP PEACEPRINTS 2015

"Unity in Community"

By Victoria Ross and Vivian Waltz, Camp Co-Directors



Camp Peaceprints had its best year yet in 2015! "Unity in Community" was our theme for our second year at St. Mary's School for the Deaf, 2253 Main Street in Buffalo. Over the course of two weeks in July, we served almost 50 youth who were enthusiastic and eager to learn about and practice being a community guided by peace and nonviolence.

Our diverse staff included dynamic members of WAVE (Women Against Violence Everywhere) who mentored and taught the youth and whose work in the inner city made our staff team even easier for campers to relate to. Other collaborators were the Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, the Interfaith Peace Network, St. Mary's School for the Deaf, St. Columba-Brigid RCC, Veterans for Peace, and the WNY Peace Center.

Our great group of youth assistants included Roman Catholic Young Neighbors in Action teams from New Hampshire and Wisconsin; our 2nd-year UB School of Social Work Intern, Alessandra Waylon; young women from TRY (Teaching and Restoring Youth); and a few very gifted young men from Buffalo Public high schools.

Our increased diversity also included four Foster Grandparents from the Catholic Charities program who were wonderful supporters and mentors for the children and youth.

The shorter day – 10am to 3pm – enabled the youth (and the adults!) to be fresh and rested each day, and to bring greater intensity to the Camp time.

Increased swimming time (4 one-hour sessions at the Canisius College pool) allowed campers to build self-confidence by overcoming their fears, and fostered trust and a feeling of community.

The rotating station format gave an intimate experience to the campers as they learned in small groups from the speakers, artists, activists, and teachers who graced the camp.



CAMP PEACEPRINTS 2015 (continued)

Activities included yoga; trust-building, communication, and conflict resolution exercises; exploring nonviolence, history, current events (particularly nuclear issues and human rights), and social change; submitting our ideas about our neighborhoods' needs to the Mayor; singing the "Peaceprints" song; creating lively drumming circles; and enjoying outdoor recreation in the sunshine.

We learned from the Peaceprints Prison Ministry how important it is to reach out for the help we need to heal from hurts and be our best selves, and we decorated bags for their Holiday Gift Bag Project.



Our Art Project was a tremendous experience all by itself, with children sharing themselves and their skills on pieces that became part of an intricate, unified mandala design; later put on blue fabric representing the one blue sky above us – a reminder of the peace we want under it – and surrounded by our peaceprints and expressions of our hopes, dreams, and deepest feelings for a better world for us all.

Field trips were:



◇ in and around the Tri-Main Center -- to the Brewster Street Urban Farm; the People's Park with storytelling from Karima Amin and crafts with Aspire (joining with people with developmental disabilities); Buffalo Arts Studio and their mural project, and found-objects artist and author Betty Leader; and a stop at Landies Candies where they kindly offered free samples to the whole camp!

◇ to the Erie Basin Marina and Canalside, where we enjoyed the new environment, shared lunch and ice cream, and got tours by the Buffalo History Museum and Buffalo State College's Maritime Center.



Jan Burns, who plans and delivers the wonderful art projects for Camp Peaceprints every year, was at Camp for our Community and Family Potluck Celebration on the night before the last day of Camp, and brought her elderly mother who helped with our finishing the mandala. The next day, Jan called to say her mother passed away that morning. It was very touching and a very real reminder – both of how beautiful and constant a life of service can be, and how quickly and unexpectedly our time here on this earth can end. This makes it even more obvious how we need to love each other and use our time well. The campers learned many great lessons about the gift of Unity in building our Beloved Community, as we all did.



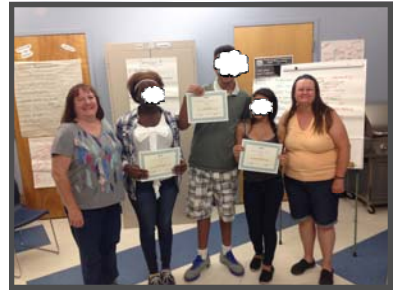
Alternatives to Violence Project News



The mission of the Alternatives to Violence Project is to empower people to lead nonviolent lives through affirmation, respect for all, community building, cooperation, and trust. Founded in and developed from the real life experiences of prisoners and others, and building on a spiritual base, AVP encourages every person's innate power to positively transform themselves and the world.

AVP at Compass House Resource Center

A second Level I AVP workshop was held in July and August at the Compass House Resource Center at 1451 Main Street in Buffalo. The Resource Center provides non-residential support to youth ages 14-24 years old who are homeless or at risk of being homeless. Facilitated by Kind Kirsten Reitan and Vibrant Vivian Waltz, the eight youth who participated were enthusiastic and committed to learning new ways to handle conflict in their lives. From light and lively activities to the more serious discussions, the youth willingly dedicated four afternoons of their summer vacation to be together as an AVP community.

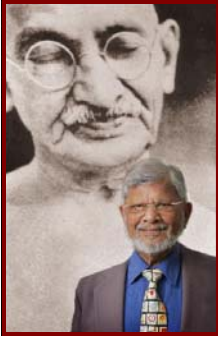


A Word from Inside the Walls: *"AVP is a life changer. It gives and keeps giving to me through its process of Transforming Power. The need for AVP within all facilities is great. It's a tool that builds and changes one's life, an important part in our rehabilitation efforts to have better lives for our family and community! Support AVP in all Correctional Facilities within the State."* (signed) Kind Kali, co-inside team coordinator at Wende CF.

Sisters of St. Joseph Embark on AVP Experience

A "Taste of AVP" was offered on June 30th and August 18th for Sisters of St. Joseph and Associates to experience a short workshop that would hopefully entice them to participate in a full Level I AVP workshop. Over 25 women from the congregation attended and strengthened their sense of community together. One exercise the participants found valuable explored blocks that hinder and bridges that help communication. Facilitators Audrey Mang and Vivian Waltz are looking forward to the full workshop at the Clarence Residence this month.





SAVE THE DATE!
Sunday, April 24, 2016

Arun Gandhi

Grandson of Mahatma Gandhi

****A special program for the 10th anniversary
of Sister Karen's journey to God****

Details TBA: sisterkarencenter.org

The Buffalo Peacemakers Program brings together six existing peacemaking groups to intervene in potentially violent situations with youth in or at risk of joining gangs. The Peacemakers also work with family and friends who have lost a loved one to violence, as well as protect the community at public events.



As a member of the Peacemakers Advisory Committee, Sister Karen Center Director Vivian Waltz receives monthly reports of the Peacemakers activities. The following statistics from January through September 2015 show what a difference the Peacemakers are making in Buffalo:

26 Emergency responses to shootings
31 Emergency responses to assaults
122 Follow-ups with victims of stabbings, shootings, and altercations
68 Deployed to "hot spots" of gang activity
61 Meetings with gang leaders
62 Meetings with gang members
32 Responses to Buffalo Police Department requests for assistance
20 Funerals where security was provided
88 Instances where retaliation was averted
67 Mediations/Conflict Resolution
315 Service requests from schools
181 Youth trained in nonviolent conflict resolution
1182 At-risk youth engaged in mentoring programs

The Peacemakers are currently seeking support from Erie County as well as increased funding from the City of Buffalo. Call the Sister Karen Center to find out how you can help.

Sister Karen Center Director Vivian Waltz has been invited to serve on Open Buffalo's Justice and Opportunity Community Policing Table. The goal of the table is to increase Community-Oriented Policing Practices in the city of Buffalo. Tapping into national awareness and debate regarding police practices toward minority youth, this campaign creates a tremendous opportunity to elevate and build a constituency around Community-Oriented Policing as a policy and practice citywide. Keep informed of our progress in future newsletters.

Sisters of St. Joseph
Sister Karen Klimczak
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Our Mission Statement



To carry on Sister Karen's vision of a world without violence, the **SSJ Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence** is committed to eliminate violence in ourselves, in our society, and in our world. We work to create a nonviolent community in our thinking, our acting, and our relationships.

***** Save the Center's resources for the work of nonviolence! *****
Request our newsletter electronically in an email to vivian@sisterkarencenter.org.