

December 8, 2012



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Dear Friends,

We've had a busy year at the Voluntown Peace Trust, organizing workshops and events, showing films and creating four new spaces that enhance our ability to be a center that promotes nonviolence! People volunteered their time and talents to take care of buildings, gardens and the land, to serve on various committees, and to create the enclosed new brochure.

We are writing to let you know what is happening and ask for your financial support, which is crucial to our ability to fulfill our mission.

This year we celebrated the 50th anniversary of purchasing the farm for the Community for Nonviolent Action, representing fifty years of promoting nonviolent social change and sustainable living. Highlights of Voluntown Peace Trust's work in 2012 are on the back of this letter. Living on a warming planet where violence, inequality and oppression are all too prevalent, we are keenly aware that so much more needs to be accomplished.

Due to the pressure of raising money, it was difficult this year to organize all the workshops and trainings hoped for. We struggle financially because we are still paying off loans that covered rehab and renovations on building done in the 1990's, and now must attend to maintenance and repairs of aging buildings needing attention.

For the past 15 years I have brought young people to VPT for "Youth Peace Experiments" and this year initiated Community Peace Trainings. I know well the importance of having an affordable space for people to come together and explore nonviolent options.

In the coming year we look forward to providing more learning opportunities for youth, to developing a series of workshops on nonviolence and climate change, and continuing VPT's history of developing alternative community economics. Please help us to make this happen.

Peace,

Joanne Sheehan
Chair, Voluntown Peace Trust

P.S. We have been given a Matching Challenge Grant! We need to raise an additional \$10,000. An increase in your contribution counts toward this grant. Please consider giving more than you did last year to help us reach our goal.

An educational, resource and support center dedicated to nonviolent social change and sustainable living.

www.voluntownpeacetrust.org

VPT Highlights of 2012

Occupy Popular Ed workshops on “99% - 1%: How do we change this formula?”, “Poverty: Seeking solidarity and action”, and “Why nonviolence: Exploring nonviolent action and organizing structures”.

Community Peace Trainings – 4 workshops in New London, CT, culminating in weekend training at VPT for 35 middle and high school students by the Institute for the Study and Practice of Nonviolence.

Earth Day – Apple trees were planted, bluebird houses were made, and the labyrinth took shape.

The Labyrinth - Land Stewardship designed and outlined a labyrinth to be dedicated to our former board chair and peace pilgrim Fr. Emmett Jarrett this coming Fall on the 3rd anniversary of his death.

Summer Program – The Hartford Catholic Worker ran a summer program for urban youth at Ahimsa as they have most years since 1994. The summer started with a dedication of the Herbie Diaz Carasquillo Cabin in honor of a youth who had attended the program and was later killed in Hartford.

July 3 and 4th – With the Friends General Conference in Rhode Island, we organized a workday with 50 Young Friends on July 3. On the 4th of July Quakers joined VPT folks for an “Interdependence Day” event which was also a celebration of the 50th anniversary of purchasing the farm and Bayard Rustin's Centennial. A History Exhibit, which remains in the A.J. Muste Center, was created for the event.

First Annual Book Sale was an opportunity for folks to purchase good books and to improve our libraries.

Gandhi Reading Room was dedicated with Chuck Matthei's collection of books by and about Gandhi.

Walktober 2012 – The Peace Trust is, appropriately, within the East Coast's “Last Green Valley” of forest and farmland amidst urban sprawl. In the Fall, as one of the 150 guided hikes and events, VPT invited the public to learn about us and walk the woods.

Community Economics Program with sessions on: “Land Trusts – Concepts and applications”, “Debt and Sustainable Investment”, and “Reflection on VPT's Role in Community Economics”.

A yurt was donated by long-time members. It will be available for retreat rentals and for break-out sessions for groups renting the Muste Center.

See pictures and more details of our 2012 program work at www.voluntownpeacetrust.org.



I want to support the work of The Voluntown Peace Trust.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Enclosed is my check or money order for \$25 \$ Other _____

I wish to become a Sustaining Donor for \$100.00 or \$ _____ per month for 2013.

Make one-time and monthly donations online at www.voluntownpeacetrust.org. Click the "Donate" button on the home page.

Please apply the increase in my donation from last year to the 2012 Matching Grant Challenge.

Please send me information about Voluntown Peace Trust membership.

Thank you for your generous contribution and continuous support of the Voluntown Peace Trust's work.

Voluntown Peace Trust is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law as no goods or services are provided in exchange for your donation.