



VOLUNTOWN PEACE TRUST

Dear Friends,

This year we honored the history of the Committee of Nonviolent Action at VPT. The Committee, now called the Cooperative for Nonviolent Action, have actively opposed nuclear weapons, war and racial injustice, and campaigned for economic justice and a healthy environment for fifty years. Thank you to all of you who organized and participated in this reunion; it was a wonderful event. We here at VPT are committed to continuing this work and plan to offer Popular Education workshops in 2011. Popular Education workshops are a forum where people are encouraged to draw on their lived experience, analyze the structures of power that keep people oppressed, and strategize to build peaceful and socially-just alternatives to those structures of violence. We are reaching out to other organizations to partner with us in this work and already the Institute for the Study and Practice of Nonviolence and Hartbeat Ensemble have indicated they will collaborate with us.

2010 has been a year of transition. We are deeply saddened by the passing of our dear friend and former VPT Chair, Father Emmett Jarrett. Emmett, our comfort is your spiritual presence that remains with us as we continue to build this organization and work for peace in our lives. Fall has seen us host peace walkers, a Last Green Valley Walktober event, an outdoor Art Walk, and fundraisers such as the Friendly Arts Fair and a dinner for Gandhi's birthday. These gatherings have strengthened our community and commitment to peace. The Voluntown Peace Trust farm is looking more beautiful than ever, and that is due to the labor of a dedicated group of individuals who, with our facilities manager Robert Rothbard, have nurtured the land and maintained the buildings on the property. Robert and his family are moving on from VPT at Christmas time and currently we are seeking a temporary facilities manager to see us into the spring. I want to thank those of you who serve on our organizational and core program committees and labor in countless ways to build this organization – you breathe life into this beautiful place. And to those of you who already help fund our work, we offer heart-felt thanks.

The biggest obstacle to all our work – building a Popular Education Center, maintaining an organic community garden, and offering respite for urban youth – is the lack of *sustained* funding. We need your help to meet our financial obligations and protect the land and buildings that nourish our work. We offer several different ways to help; choose the one(s) that will suit you best. First, if you have fundraising skills and would like to help us organize fundraising projects or train others to do so, please contact me. Second, if you would like to become a sustaining donor and pledge \$100 each month to help pay the VPT mortgages (20 people doing this will meet our mortgage obligation), please do so through our website or send a monthly check to the address below. Third, you could make a year-end donation to our organization. Fourth, you could help us advertise the retreat space we have available for rent (please see our website for details). If there are other ways you would like to help, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Wishing you peace and solidarity in the holiday season,

Cybèle Locke

Voluntown Peace Trust Chair