

Minutes of USNPCA Annual Chapters Retreat October 8th - 11th 2009

Attendees: Dorothy Werner, Bob Edgerton, Terri Shofner, Judy King, Ann Werner, Jeanne Schaller, Linda Burkett, Amary Taylor, Carol Miller, Faith Edman, Debby Park, Joan Bernstein, David Berrian, Rosy Betz-Zall, Dee Knapp, Bavid Hartsough, Mel Duncan, and Rita Webb.

Hosts: Western Washington and Oregon Chapters

Location: Dumas Bay Conference Center in Federal Way, WA.

Purpose of Gathering:

Reports from chapters and committees.

Election of new Coordinating Committee.

Report from IGC.

Report from training - new materials.

Develop tools for new chapters.

Connection and Community.

Chapter Goals and Expectations (Terri Shofner)

The previous year the Coordinating Committee has worked on a document that helps to define goals and expectations for new and existing chapters. In this session Terri presented that document to the attendees and we continued to edit that document to meet the needs of our growing community of chapters. Download the final approved document [here](#).

Many suggestions were provided for a resource packet that will be provided to someone interested in starting a new chapter, including a financial guide both for fundraising and for hosting a training. Terri Shofner and Joan Bernstein with help from MN will work on the financial document this coming year.

Other suggestions to include in new member resource include the messaging framework, discussion of nonpartisanship and a link to the [Long Term Plan](#).

The IGC Update (Faith Edman)

Faith provided an overview of the work of the IGC including the challenges of multi-cultural meetings covering multiple time zones with technical inequalities. Regardless of the hurdles the IGC is continuing its hard work toward reaching the long term goals of NP. The IGC is made up

of several committees including Mission Fulfillment which oversees projects from beginning to end and also works on capacity building strategies. There's also a Finance and Executive Committee. There is a need for more fundraising and financial expertise.

The IGC met in Barcelona last April. On June 20th Faith held a conference call with all interested members of USNPCA to discuss her experience from that conference. You can access a pdf of those notes [here](#).

From that discussion Faith mentions the following as important for us, as members of the USNPCA, to focus on.

What are the three top things for USNPCA to focus on?

Faith understands the challenges of being a national organization operating with volunteer coordinators and no budget. But some thoughts to focus on (maybe at conference):

- Being clear about responsibilities of a member organization, and create strategy on fulfilling its own responsibilities.
- Have clarity on how to describe NP, the right messaging for what NP does.
- Be familiar with NP's Long Range Plan

Also, in advance of the USNPCA conference, members should be familiar with the current NP bylaws because there is a possibility MOs will be asked to approve some revisions.

North American Regional Work (Joan Bernstein) - notes below come from Joan's handout and include audience comment.

Nonviolence Conflict Intervention (NCI) One-day Workshops - This will be covered in more depth during a later section.

North American MOs linking with NP's work - special role here for USNPCA - more in the section on community outreach.

Recruiting Supporting Organizations - special role here for USNPCA - more in the section on community outreach.

NP Advocacy with US Congress - HR 3081 (Foreign Operations Appropriations bill) - recommends funding of NP's work. Continue work to develop consistent relationships with key Congress members and groupings of Congress members for future direct and indirect funding (time frame: ongoing, long term); build support for inclusion of funding the work of conflict prevention INGOs in restructuring of US foreign aid (time frame: 3mos. to 1yr).

Support of Local Peace Team Development, Especially Training - Resources are 10-module, 6 day training curriculum; new Local Peace Team Organizing Manual; Mentoring of trainers

available. Minnesota Peace Team and other groups have used pieces; UC Riverside class may be first to use entire new curriculum.

This training is meant for use in dealing with episodic violence around an event. There are projects in the works that are exploring endemic violence, such as gang violence. There are regional partnerships that are forming in this work as discussed next.

Longer-Term Exploration in Process - “Listening Project” needs assessment of inner-city street violence intervention organizations - Within NP’s mandate, would building of a grass-roots network (in partnership with other organizations) support an increase in the effectiveness, sustainability and extent of local unarmed civilian peacekeeping in North America? What activities would be of highest value? Exploration is complete in LA, Oakland, Richmond CA, will be replicated in around 8 other cities.

Expanded NP Visibility at Sub-Regional and National Conferences and Meetings - in USNPCA chapter areas, NP’s need is for chapters to learn about such conferences and meetings taking place in your area far in advance (often 5-6 months); apply to present NP workshops in timely fashion; apply for tabling space (with lowest feasible fee) and organize and staff information tables. May work in conjunction with Mel or other NP staff, IGC members or speakers bureau members giving talks at major events.

US Fundraising Board (Linda Burkett)

The US Fundraising Board is a separate MO from the USNPCA, yet we share many members. Often members have to choose between attending one or the other annual meeting. Linda suggests we share our annual meeting space, and overlap where appropriate.

This appeal was adopted by the group by unanimous vote. Linda will be the Fundraising Board’s liaison to the coordinating committee for next year’s meeting planning.

Tips for Making Phone Calls for NP (Linda Burkett)

October 2009

Many people feel ill-at-ease when faced with the task of making phone calls to people they don’t know, whether to seek support for a chapter event, ask for financial support for NP, or whatever. Becoming comfortable making calls requires getting enough experience to find your own voice: what you like to say that comes naturally and is in keeping with your personality. I’ve become more at ease making calls, and I’m listing here a number of things that I feel comfortable saying, and that often seem to work pretty well for me. Feel free to try them on for size as you find your own NP phone-caller “voice”.

* *"Hello, John, I'm Linda Burkett calling for Nonviolent Peaceforce. You remember that*

organization?" You want to be having a dialogue, not delivering a script, so you want your respondent to speak up as early in the call as possible. The answer to this question will go a long way to shape the call. If answer is "Oh, yes, of course" and maybe something about their involvement, you're already having a dialogue so you're off to a good start. And a "yes set," an affirmative mood and response habit, is already developing, OR the respondent might say, "Actually, I give to so many organizations, I really can't recall which one that is." Now you can give a 2 or 3 sentence mission statement, and say, *Does that ring a bell?"* Perhaps now your respondent can answer yes. OR (my favorite) the person might say, "Aren't you the people who put volunteers in war zones to mediate conflict?" or some other description that combines a recognition of the organization with some misunderstanding of the work. Now you can say, *Yes, that's right, except that.....(our teams are career professionals, they create the safety and connections for local people to do their own peace work, etc.)* This is excellent because we all learn best when we already know something, and the information we're receiving is tailor-made for what we need to know next. The more people get clarified, accurate information about NP, the more impressed they are with the organization, don't you think?

* *"I'm a volunteer, do you have a moment to talk with me?"* There are 3 points here:
volunteer: implies 'I'm not being paid; I'm contributing my time, just to help out'; and then asks them to join me by contributing their willingness to converse.
moment: a vague and undefined amount of time. The length of the call will be determined by their interest and response, and I don't want to set an expectation, so I choose a vague word.
with : conveys that I'm seeking a dialogue, not aiming to talk to them.

If "yes", that strengthens the "yes set" and now you have specific permission to address the reason for your call. OR the respondent may say, "no, I can't talk now because.....my grandchildren are visiting me, and they're chasing my cat" or whatever. I always respond, *"Is there another time that might be better?"* Now she might suggest a better time, and I'll end by saying, *"May I call you back then, some day next week after 7:00p.m.?"* or whenever she just said. I consider this an appointment, and make every effort to be sure to call, when I can say, *"When we talked last week, you thought this might be a more convenient time to talk a moment about NP. Is this better?"* If it's not, I will continue to ask about a better time, and to repeat the process, again (and again) until they tell me, no, there would not be a better time, please don't call again. I don't mind repeated calls, because I get to know something about them I can chat about (Did your cat survive your grandchildren's visit?).

OR your respondent may say right off, "No, I prefer not to receive phone calls, I'd rather get something in the mail." I do 2 things with that: I send a handwritten note making whatever request I would have made on the phone, and I put in the Database that he doesn't want phone calls. Next time I want to contact him, I can start with the mail (or email), pointing out that I know he doesn't want phone calls, so I'm writing instead.

Message machines: *This is Linda Burkett, and here's my phone number: 612. 812. 9395. I'm a volunteer calling for Nonviolent Peaceforce.(rest of my message). I'm a volunteer so I'm not on office hours; call any time. And I'll give you another call tomorrow.* Putting my phone

number up front does 2 things: if they want to call me, they don't have to listen to the whole message again to get the number, and it's a personal gesture that differentiates this call from NP from most calls they get from organizations. I do wish they'd call me, and occasionally someone does, but I don't expect it. I've pointed out to them that I'll persist in calling them. (3 calls with messages is the rule-of-thumb for enough.)

Maybe I don't know enough to answer people's questions: This is a common concern, because NP's work is complex, subtle and unusual, so it's hard to grasp and explain. If someone asks you a question you can't answer, that's excellent, because (at least) 2 good things will result. When you seek out the answer, you'll learn something develops your understanding about NP, and after you call your respondent back to discuss it, you'll have created a stronger connection than if he hadn't asked that hard question. You convey that NP values all donors enough to keep track of them and get back to them.

Maybe I'm annoying people with repeated calls: I used to feel like I was pestering people by calling again and again, but I've changed my view on that. More than once, I've persisted longer than seemed normal, only to end up with a rewarding and productive result, and people have thanked me for continuing to try, not giving up on them. If I've called 4 or 5 times or more in an effort to nail down an appointment or just find a convenient time for a phone chat, and I'm feeling uncomfortable, I'll start my next call, "*This is Linda Burkett. I'm trying to be persistent for Nonviolent Peaceforce without being a pest. Will you tell me if I cross that line?*" Almost everyone will say "yes, I'll tell you, it's OK," and typically people respond trying to be accommodating and thanking me for my work for NP.

Free Web Technologies to Market, Build and Grow your Chapter (Terri Shofner)

Terri presented an overview of some Free web technologies that can help chapters to organize.

DimDim - This is a web meeting space that allows the sharing of documents and also has a record feature and free bridge line. The current limitation is that not all participants can speak. This is likely why they offer the free bridge. Terri plans to use this software to prepare some tutorials for the members of USNPCA.

Google Calendar - Members of your chapter can share a calendar to schedule events. This calendar is portable into blogs and websites.

Google Groups - Provides a discussion forum/list serv for your group. You can also store files here to share.

Websites: There are two choices for setting up a free and simple website that will be compatible with all you Google tools. The first is **Sites** and the other is **Blogger**. Both are available through the Google website under the "more" menu.

Google Forms - This allows you to set up a webform to take registration info for an event, for example, and will generate a spreadsheet from the forms as they are entered that can then be

exported to Excel or other formats for your use. To use this function it helps to have some experience with spreadsheets. As with all Google documents, this spreadsheet can also be shared with others who are involved with organizing the event, eliminating the need for a lot of emails.

Once all your web tools are up and running, you can increase your visibility even more by exploring Twitter and Facebook. Peaceforce Oregon and the new LA Chapter are using Facebook to spread the news of local events of interest.

More on this will be upcoming. Be sure you're on the Yahoo listserve for the USNPCA to learn more as it's available. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/USNPCA/>

Invited Speaker Rita Webb

On Friday evening Rita shared her amazing journey with us. Even she was in for a bit of a surprise when David Berrian presented his video of an interview he had conducted with Rita in Sri Lanka, shortly after her arrival. Rita had the rare experience of introducing herself.

Her talk spanned the five year experience on the ground as a peace team member in Sri Lanka. It was filled with humor and grace. The audience was speechless at its conclusion. We all thank Rita for her courage, determination and great love for the Sri Lankan people.

NCI Training and Community Outreach (Joan Bernstein and Rosy Betz-Zall)

This past year has seen the completion of a revised NCI facilitators manual, NCI participants manual and a new manual called Audience Recruitment. The Audience Recruitment manual is a resource that benefits chapters trying to organize training or other events. To download this valuable document in pdf, click [here](#). The participants handbook contains a lot of NP information and information on nonviolence in general. It is also a very useful manual to have on hand and can be downloaded [here](#).

Eight training sessions have been done to train facilitators, plus one phone training. Very few new facilitators have held subsequent trainings. Several reasons have been given such as curriculum was too long, amount of work to set up, no staff support. The new manuals address some of these issues. There is also now a monthly phone conference for facilitators to help support one another's work.

Rosy Betz-Zall gave an overview of the changes to the NCI curriculum per the three sections. There is now a section to help bridge from the one to one nonviolent communication/intervention to third party nonviolent intervention. This has been an area where participants have struggled to make connections in past workshops. The new curriculum has much more flexibility by offering

multiple exercises for each section that can be catered to the audience. It also allows for greater flexibility in timing, if the curriculum needs to be broken into shorter days.

Chapter Reports and Community Outreach Discussion (Dorothy)

Several chapters reported on strategies that have worked and those that have not worked so well.

MN Chapter had arts community for a Potters and Poems fundraiser, did a theater evening with a Howard Zinn “canned event” – new audience and successful evening, and house parties – Anne Warner and Linda Burkett

OR has Adventures in Nonviolence- Terri Shofner schedules a talk every month- 2 hours at UU church – all talks not specifically NP but she does promote NP at this outreach. This year’s Adventures use Coleman McCarthy’s Class of Nonviolence (See Susan Ives’ Facilitator’s Manual for the Class of Nonviolence).

AZ - Faith Edman says everyone knows about NP – her job reaches NP and IGC.

Philadelphia / Bucks County : Carol Miller: coordinated with speaker and training. Got article in newspaper and got 700 responses, got funding from Quakers to go to Nairobi – house party most successful.

San Diego – Debby Park: couple of trainings using Epis. Church, UU and Friends. Chapter members come form trainings (one at community college.) Need fund raising ideas. They practice CLARA at end of meetings.

Eugene, OR: Amary Taylor – would like to do training in High Schools and colleges – needs help. Try Educators for Nonviolence as resource for High School curriculum.

Boston – Judy King Just completed two trainings, using young Haitian American as assistant leader. One High School is interested and trying to find date.

This summer had a privilege of having two NP peacekeepers come and talk with us Oli Oolo and Ali Pahl – peacekeepers in Sri Lanka and Mindanao. We need more active members to do outreach.

There were questions regarding the sales of Peace Bonds at this time. If you are interested in selling peace bonds please call or email Terri (tshofner@gmail.com) and she can help you get started with that.

Communications Report (Faith Edman in place of Marcia Carlton and Paul Christian)

Communications manages the website, monitors and directs incoming email and collects, edits and distributes the newsletter.

Due to health issues Paul will be handing off the website and email duties to a new webmaster. Amary will check with her husband to see if he's interested.

Follow-up: Alden, Amary's husband was interested. He will work as he's able with Terri in re-designing a new interactive site.

Terri is taking over email and general webmaster duties.

Mentoring Committee (Carol Miller)

This committee consists of Nancy Wrenn (Chair), Carol Miller, Clarkson Palmer and Terri Shofner. Nancy Wrenn has decided to step down as Chair for this coming year.

The committee is hoping someone will step up to work with the West Coast chapters, particularly those in the California area.

The committee is working closely with the Coordinating Committee in preparing resources to distribute to newly forming chapters. Below is the current working list of chapters and newly forming chapters. This is a pivotal committee for seeing the successful growth of the USNPCA from coast to coast. Please consider joining the committee, if not this year, next.

USNPCA Chapters, Contacts and Potential Chapters,* as of 12/09 (West to East)

STATE	City/Area	Name	Email	Phone
WA	Western Wa	Bob Edgerton	bobcello@aol.com	206-325-0757
OR	Portland +	Terri Shofner	tshofner@gmail.com	503-816-4826
CA	Bay Area	Marcia Carlton	mjcarlton@pcumail.com	510-704-1383
	*LA, Santa Monica	Gary Davidson	garybear9@roadrunner.com	310-923-6533
	*LA, Manhattan Beach	Daniel Levin	Daniel@P5Y.org	310-227-2207

STATE	City/Area	Name	Email	Phone
	San Diego	Debby Park	rayanddeb@gmail.com	
AZ	Tucson	Faith Edman, IGC	edman@email.arizona.edu	520-795-9321
	Tucson	Paul Christian	psc1@cox.net	
TX	Big Bend	*Eve Trook	evetrook@sbcglobal.net	432-837-3780
MN	Twin Cities	Ann Warner	annandales@earthlink.net	612-871-0005
	Duluth	Donna Howard, IGC		218-724-0169
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		Rick Davis		847-682-2632
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		*Robert Fischer	Robert@smokejumperit.com	651-398-8010
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		*Jim Barton	jzbarton@gmail.com	828-318-7418
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	Haverford	Alice Hoffman	delcohoffman@comcast.net	610-896-6614
		Howard Alver		610-896-9297
	Scranton	*Aggie Raeven	ARaeven@ptd.net	570-228-1764
	Bucks County	*Carol Miller, mentor	camil888@comcast.net	443-964-4160

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		Betsy Crofts	betsycrofts@georgeschool.org	215-322-5984
MA	Boston	Sherry Zitter	sherry@sherryzitter.org	617-610-2763
		Nancy Wrenn	ncwrenn@aol.com	617-969-2758
		Judy King	jrk1956@comcast.net	617-876-5485
ME		*Sarah Morehead	s_newc@yahoo.com	

Updates from the Field (Mel Duncan)

Since the crushing use of force on the Tamil people in Sri Lanka, NP has been there to help in whatever capacity we can. We are supporting human rights defenders in the North as they work to assess the living conditions of the people imprisoned there.

Mindinao is moving towards a cease fire however there are 300,000 IDPs as of this year. NP may play an official role in the peace agreement (update on this since our retreat, please see note from Mel on the website, to the effect that we are indeed playing an official role in the peace process). Ambassadors are consulting with Atif regarding conditions on the ground.

The number of IDPs has doubled this year with 3 new IDP camps bringing the total to 52 both national and international. This is twice as many as in Sri Lanka.

NP had prepared a best practices guide to follow in the case of an abduction. This plan of action was unfortunately put to the test with Jaleel's abduction on February 13th, 2009. He was held for a total of 111 days. More regarding his story can be found on the website. It was a very difficult experience for him and all involved in the work leading to his release. This experience has seasoned NP and strengthened our dedication to nonviolence.

South Sudan will be our next project. In 2005 So Sudan entered a Peace Agreement. There must be a referendum of cessation by 2011 which could be another flash point for violence. So Sudan is certain to vote for its independence. If this goes badly, the horrors of Darfur will seem trivial by comparison. We need to raise \$10k for this with another \$5k matching already guaranteed. (update - these funds have been successfully raised, the Sudan is a certain project). We plan to be on the ground in April. We are developing all women's units as part of this project as well.

We are also evaluating a project in Georgia. The exploratory team is waiting for funding to begin its work.

There is a great deal of energy being put to capacity building - including mission preparedness training, and recruiting applicants. Currently there are 153 applicants from 44 countries.

The IGC has been occupied with finding a new Executive Director. (update, the search is over and Tim Wallis is NP's new Executive Director).

If all works perfectly this coming year we hope to see 590+ peacekeepers in the field, 212 International and 378 Nationals.

Nominations and Election of Coordinating Committee

Bob Edgerton satisfied his year commitment on the coordinating committee and opted to step down, leaving a vacancy to fill.

Debby Park was nominated and elected in.

The Coordinating Committee consists of: Debby Park, Dorothy Warner, Judy King, Terri Shofner and our liaison to the US Fundraising Board and the MN NP Staff is Linda Burkett.

David and Mel Reunion (David Hartsough and Mel Duncan)

David and Mel capped off our weekend together by sharing the story we've all longed to here. We got to hear first hand the life experiences leading both these men to embrace Gandhi's idea of the Shanti Sena, how they first met and the struggles they endured to "hold the focus" of the NP vision.

Special thanks to David Berrian and his two lovely volunteers for capturing this magical evening on video so that we will be able to relive it over the years and share it with new members of our growing family.

Thank You all! See you next year in Boston.