PJC Celebrates 40 Years of Vital Activism & Public Education

By Wendy Coe, PJC Founder & Gene Bergman, former Board Chair

Organizations as dynamic as the Peace & Justice Center activate many people, year after year. Quite often, people involved now know nothing of what happened before their time. History that relates the past to the present with an eye to the future can empower us with the hope, indeed the certainty, that we can meet whatever challenges arise.

January 29, 2019 will mark the 40th birthday of the PJC! Very few organizations dedicated to building a more just, peaceful, and equitable world, globally and locally, live to 40; even fewer have been as vital to the health of their home locality and state over their life as the PJC. Yet here we are.

On January 29, 1979, the world faced a nuclear arms race: deployment of “usable” neutron bombs (that destroy people but leave buildings), short range “tactical” nuclear weapons to be used on European battlefields, mega-missiles launched from hundreds to thousands of miles away with the force of thousands of Hiroshima bombs. We were on the brink of global annihilation.

In addition, Central America was on fire. Death squad-linked governments – actively armed, trained, and funded by the US government – terrorized their people in Guatemala and El Salvador. In Burlington itself, the General Electric plant on Lakeside Avenue produced Gatling guns that were used in El Salvador against people rising up against the repression. At the same time, US-funded Contras used Honduras as a base to attack Nicaragua. Seeds of the current refugee crisis at our southern border were planted and grown with support from our government.

As journalist Jonathan Schell wrote, “The Fate of the Earth” was in our hands.

Over 2,000 Vermonters marched in NYC on June 12, 1982. The sign reads “177 out of 195 Vermont Towns Voted for the Nuclear Arms Freeze.”

Photo by Rob Swanson
New PJC Programs in the Works

By Kina Thorpe, Program Coordinator

At the beginning of 2018, the Peace & Justice Center began working with a consultant to create a strategic plan. While creating the plan we noticed that there were gaps in our programming that we needed to address.

The first was that we were lacking racial justice programs for people of color. This was due in part to our location. Being in a predominantly white state with a mostly white staff, our racial justice programming mainly focused on teaching white people to recognize their own racism and privilege and stop perpetuating those harmful systems. Despite that work being necessary and meaningful, we knew that we needed to do better, and create programs that would give people of color space to learn and process amongst each other. One of the first new programs was the People of Color (POC) in VT Affinity Group. This group meets every third Thursday of the month and is a space for people of color to gather and bond over shared experiences.

Zymora Davinchi and Joelyn Mensah were brought in to help create an educational program for people of color. Their work resulted in the Black Beauty presentation. This program hopes to help black folks understand the complicated and controversial history of black beauty, and how these beauty standards have evolved over time in the hands of colonization, slavery, and Jim Crow. More importantly, it aims to encourage black folks to embrace our beauty and be proud of being black. This program will be held exclusively for people of color and was developed with the hope that youth would attend. [Stay tuned for a first run in April.]

What I have learned this semester – about racism, militarism, and global trade – has taught me so much about the intersectionality of oppressive systems, and I look forward to how this program develops in the future.

Of course, no program is going to be a catch-all. There’s no way that we could create one event that is going to touch on every single aspect of these issues in a meaningful way. We hope that these programs will help people understand why these issues are important to look at in an intersectional way. Be sure to keep an eye out on our website, social media, and bi-weekly e-news to find out when these programs are going to be held. We’re excited to bring these new programs to you all and hear what you have to say.
**My Mom is White and My Dad is Black**

*By Sarah Brown, Loving Day VT*

Loving Day is a global network of celebrations that honor the US Supreme Court decision, Loving vs West Virginia, that legalized interracial marriage in 1967. The mission of Loving Day is to fight racial prejudice through education and build multicultural community.

At a recent Loving Day Vermont Community Potluck, *The Case for Loving: The Fight for Interracial Marriage*, by Selina Alko, was read to kids. They were attentive and asked lots of questions. Among them:

“But why weren’t they allowed to get married?”

“Why did they have to move away from their families?”

“In the past, my parents couldn’t have been together?”

“That’s crazy-town, right?” said Sandy who was reading the story.

Upon hearing all of this, my 3-year old daughter exclaimed: “My mom is white and my dad is black.” This was the first time I had heard her acknowledge this. Another child then echoed her statement and said, “My mom is white and my dad is black, too.” I nodded and said, “Yes, you’re right,” to both of them and went back to listening to the story. It struck me, though. We have read this book together before, as well as several others that address mixed race identity, but this was the first time that it seemed to click with her and I was really happy that it happened in the presence of someone else who could say “me too.” That’s one of the reasons I think our Loving Day Vermont gatherings are so important.

As they say, representation is important. I don’t often have to think about this as a white person, but for my daughter, in such a white place as Vermont, it’s not uncommon to go long stretches of time without seeing anyone else who looks like her. These events started out as a way for my husband and I to find community for ourselves as an interracial couple when we were new to the state and has grown into a way for us to find community for our family.

While I originally thought of Loving Day as being for interracial couples and individuals with multiracial identities, I’ve come to realize that there are so many more identities that intersect and relate to Loving Day in a myriad of ways. Because of that, I often struggle to articulate what Loving Day is. It can mean one thing to me and something different to others, but we all agree on the desire for community. If you follow us on social media, you’ll see that we often share personal narratives of community members, in an effort to give voice to the many ways that people relate to Loving Day in Vermont. What does Loving Day mean to you? We invite you to share with us at lovingdayvt@gmail.com.

We started the Vermont chapter of Loving Day in 2014. We initially held only annual events but have expanded in the past year. In 2018, we saw four successful Loving Day Vermont events: two in June (a concert at UVM and a mingler at Zero Gravity Brewery) and two in the fall: an apple picking social and a community potluck. We’re looking forward to creating more spaces for our community to gather in 2019!

Please follow us on Facebook (facebook.com/lovingdayvermont) and Instagram (@lovingdayvermont) for the latest Loving Day Vermont event news.

You can also sign up for our newsletter at bit.ly/LDVTnews. We always welcome new volunteers and planning committee members as well. If you are interested in getting involved, please contact lovingdayvt@gmail.com.

Loving Day Vermont is so grateful to be receiving the 2019 Ed Everts Social Justice Award and we hope you’ll join us in celebrating our beautiful Loving Day Vermont community on March 28.

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**2019 Ed Everts Activist Award Celebration**

**Thursday, March 28, 6-9:30, ECHO Center, Burlington**

Save the date to honor these two awardees:

- Robin Lloyd for eight decades of work for peace and women’s rights.
- Loving Day Vermont which celebrates the legalization of interracial marriage, community, and diversity.

Chili dinner, cash bar, silent auction, and dance party with DJ Craig Mitchell!

Tickets available soon. Suggested donation $25.00. No one turned away.
Give with Love, Source with Justice

By Amy Crosswhite, Fair Trade Program and Store Manager

Valentine’s Day. A day we celebrate our love for one another. There are many ways that human beings express our love but this particular holiday is associated with flowers, heart-shaped cards, jewelry, and loads of chocolate. People most often think of the people they are buying the gift for and what it will imply. But what if these tokens of our love have a bigger impact than we think? We may associate chocolate gifts with love, indulgence, power, and even sex appeal. However, for millions of people in the cocoa industry, the production of chocolate means social upheaval, violence, and human trafficking.

Right now, there are over 2 million children working in the cocoa industry. Because of fluctuating market prices and pressure from corporations such as Hershey’s, Mars/M&M, and Nestlé, small farmers utilize children as a workforce. In West Africa, where 70% of the world’s cocoa is produced, it does not take much to find those who have been forced into the worst forms of child labor.

The average age of children working on these farms is 12-16 years old. They toil between 12-14 hour per day carrying 100 pound sacks of cocoa pods causing health and developmental issues. Some are beaten if they aren’t working fast enough. Wielding chainsaws or machetes without proper safety and equipment training can lead to injuries, but there is no access to medical care. These children face food and water insecurities, exposure to hazardous agrochemicals, and sometimes physical violence if they try to leave the farm. There are few opportunities to change vocation, much less attend school, and many children have been reclassified as Forced Adult Laborers because this issue has been going on for so long. Many children are trafficked into the Ivory Coast from surrounding countries, such as Mali and Burkina Faso, and are promised work to help support their families, but are then paid little to nothing for their work. Some may never see their families again.

But how have all these horrendous labor practices been kept secret? The simple answer is marketing. This holiday and others associated with chocolate have been commercialized for many years. The marketing presented to us around Valentine’s Day says that we need to receive gifts to feel valued and give gifts to show that we care. In addition, these themes always tell us what our relationship is with their final product and how we should feel about it, instead of showing us the origin, the real stories of artisans and growers, or the larger system of oppression that brings us our cocoa products.

So what’s the good news? We have options! Ethical options. The Fair Trade movement helps artisans and growers in the Global South (known to some as developing countries) sell their goods on the global market and seeks to correct conventional industries that are known for exploitation and human rights abuses. Fair trade is not a charity, it simply works toward a just and equitable trade system that provides people with their basic human rights. Supply chains are ensured to be free of child and forced adult labor. Workers have safe and empowering working conditions where they have a voice in decisions that affect them. Workers are paid fair wages and funds are allocated to community development programs. Smallholder farmers are thus able to break the cycle of poverty and exploitation that has been forced upon many for generations.

Check out some of my favorite fair trade companies, suppliers for the Peace & Justice Store, who bring us the full story of their artisans and growers:
Human Rights: Do they apply to everyone?

By Robin Lloyd

A must see exhibit chronicles Vermonters responses in recognition of the 70th anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Burlington Chapter of the Women’s International League of Peace and Freedom (WILPF), with the assistance of the Peace & Justice Center, has mounted an exhibit of human rights posters in the Fletcher Free Library that will be up until the end of January. It is worth seeing.

The show features posters, artwork, and articles chronicling the activities of Vermonters involved in women’s rights, environmental actions, labor rights, and anti-war protests from the Vietnam war days to the wars in the Middle East. More recent struggles by local groups include 350VT, Stop the F-35, Black Lives Matter, Rights and Democracy, the Workers Center, and Change the Story.

The timing of the show coincides with the 70th anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). This document was a major achievement of Eleanor Roosevelt whose brilliant diplomacy resulted in the passage of the UDHR on December 10, 1948 in Paris, France.

The exhibit is dedicated to the late Judith Joseph of North Hero. Judith was a dedicated activist and long-term member of WILPF. She was a prime organizer of an exhibit on women’s rights back in 2008 which took place in this same room. Her husband, Hon. Judge Ben Joseph, presented a photo of her for the exhibit at the opening.

Charlotte Dennett, a Vermont attorney and human rights activist, and a member of WILPF, explained at the opening that “the exhibit captures the spirit of activism in Vermont. Of course, we could not cover everything that has occurred since the Declaration was signed in 1948, but we did our best to make it representative of the different groups and individuals who have helped make Vermont a beacon for human rights.”

But have human rights been available to everyone? Eleanor Roosevelt’s idealism and the UDHR itself have been criticized recently by Ajamu Baraka of the Black Agenda Report. He says, “The post-WWII promise of human rights was a compact meant for white people only. Instead of recognizing the inherent dignity and worth of individuals and collectives, the post-war period has been an era of human depravity. It is estimated that direct and indirect state and non-state violence has resulted in over 30 million dead, whole nations destroyed, the normalization of torture, rape as a weapon of war, millions displaced, and once again the rise of neo-fascist movements across Europe and the United States.”

Back in 1948, the black scholar and activist W.E.B. DuBois brought up many of the issues now stressed by the Black Agenda. He questioned how a government determined to lead the free world could turn a blind eye to daily acts of racist terror. He argued that segregation—a practice taken for granted by most white Americans—led to a gross violation of the human rights of African Americans.

Does our humble show rereflect this controversy? We have posted the Black Agenda perspective alongside the Black Lives Matter poster. We invite your feedback. We have placed sticky notes on the mantelpiece, and hope you will take one, place it where you’d like, and express your opinion.

Warm thanks to Dana Heffern and her students from Champlain College for helping us hang the show; Lesley Becker, Charlotte Dennett, Betsy Nolan, and Zoe Bishop; and Librarian Barbara Shatara for general advice and encouragement. Inquire at the front desk for the key if the Fletcher Room is locked. For more information, contact Robin at 802-355-3256.
Thankfully, the PJC was a leader in the resistance against this insanity and violence.

As part of a Vermont-wide movement, we employed an innovative strategy focused on engaging people in the towns they live in and using a forum they have access to: Town Meeting. In 1981, 18 cities and towns voted for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze; in 1982, over 150 new towns followed suit. Town Meeting continues to be a place for Vermonters to engage on the most important issues of our time.

Popular education has always been a strategy we’ve used, knowing that to connect people and change minds, hearts, and policy, the stories of those affected as well as the facts of an issue must be widely shared. We provided educational materials to help people in their communities convince their neighbors to support a nuclear freeze. Our newsletter, critical during a pre-internet era, was regularly distributed monthly to over 1,000 people. Throughout the 1980s, thousands attended PJC events: forums of US House and Senate candidates on peace and national security issues; cultural exchanges with people from Russia, Japan, and Central America; and authors and experts on nuclear issues, the Central American wars, and even the economic conversion to peaceful uses of Burlington GE’s Gatling Gun plant. The Peace & Justice Store was opened in 1983, exposing even more people to the facts of an issue must be widely shared.

As part of a Vermont-wide movement, we employed an innovative strategy focused on engaging people in the towns they live in and using a forum they have access to: Town Meeting. In 1981, 18 cities and towns voted for a Nuclear Weapons Freeze; in 1982, over 150 new towns followed suit. Town Meeting continues to be a place for Vermonters to engage on the most important issues of our time.

Participation in national days of action has also been a strategy the PJC has used from its earliest days to amplify Vermonters’ voices and join us to wider movements. On June 12, 1982, nearly 2,000 Vermonters attended the No Nukes Rally in NYC with over 1 million people, the highest per capita state in attendance. The PJC coordinated Burlington’s six buses, six vans, and many car pools. Coordinating travel to national demonstrations continues to be a key role the PJC plays in the movement. We also held local rallies and marches at the same time as others were held throughout the nation, showing the breadth and strength of the coordinated movement for peace and justice.

Following the examples of Gandhi and MLK, another strategic focus from the beginning was involvement in, and support of, civil disobedience. This included the 1984 Winooski 44 sit-in that took place in Senator Stafford’s office over US involvement in Central America and civil disobedience trainings and non-violent actions at the GE Firing Range in Underhill and its plant in Burlington.

Creative engagement, public education, participation in state and national actions, civil disobedience support work, and being a clearinghouse and hub for action and education throughout Vermont: these strategies have been central to the PJC’s success. But added to these has been a dynamic flexibility and adaptability with regard to issues and activities, all of which has allowed us to remain relevant.

The publication of the Vermont Grassroots Directory (in the 1990s) let people know who they could contact and how (again, pre-internet), reinforcing the PJC’s role as a vital center for movement work in Vermont. New issues were added to the Center’s focus on peace. A conference on Ecological Security was held in Burlington’s City Hall in 1989, attended by over 400 people, followed by a year-long campaign in support of the Cree of Quebec in their fight against the massive flooding of their lands by Hydro Quebec (HQ). Public education against the HQ project helped lead voters in Burlington to reject the purchase of HQ power in 1992.

In the 1990’s, the fight against racism was added as well, reflected in our Racial Justice & Equity Project which conducted scores of anti-racism trainings, reviewed anti-harassment policies in Chittenden County schools, and worked with the

US Civil Rights Commission on racial harassment in Vermont schools. The PJC’s support of the Cree and the Abenaki of Vermont’s struggles to protect their heritage was also part of this anti-racism focus.

Fair trade and workers’ rights became a focus, through purchasing policy and educational activities of the Peace & Justice Store, and through the Vermont Job Gap Study and Livable Wage Campaign, which led to legislative successes and raises in Vermont’s minimum wage. To oppose the right wing Contract On America, during the 1995 National Governor’s Convention being held in Burlington, we provided crucial staff support, facilities, volunteer coordination, and resources that helped make the People’s Conference for Economic Democracy a huge success. Attended by over 2,500 people, the day was filled with speakers, a parade led by Bread & Puppet, voter registration, and music.

The PJC continues to be a leader in the movement for justice and against militarism in Vermont, engaging in the critical issues of our time with a dynamic, adaptive approach. Together with other groups and people throughout the state, we are helping Vermonters achieve shared prosperity and self-sufficiency, working to achieve a just and peaceful world by working on the interconnected issues of peace, human rights, and economic, social, and racial justice through education, advocacy, training, nonviolent activism, community organizing, and collaboration.

Thank you for being a part of our last 40 years, showing the power and impact that people can have when we join and act together for the common good.
PJC, continued...

*By Rachel Siegel*

Following the great recession of 2007-2009, the PJC almost folded. Membership had slowed, store sales dwindled, and grants dried up. During a community gathering in 2011, attendees committed to keeping the PJC afloat. There was no director for over two years. Staff and board tension was high. When I was hired five years ago, the organization was strained but was starting to regain its footing.

Together, we have improved our peace work with a truly intersectional lens, clarified and further developed the fair trade program and store, and developed new educational racial justice workshops. We have picked up on things that the organization has always stood for and built on them. Our Allied Group program has been useful for an increasing number of groups allowing us to share our infrastructure with newer and smaller projects. We are a clearinghouse and resource for many. We actively engage young people through our internships and volunteer opportunities—people whose leadership and creativity enriches our work and who leave the PJC with tools and motivation to carry our mission with them far beyond our doors.

We have also done internal and structural work to clarify our policies and practices and improve our systems. We changed our by-laws so that we must maintain minimum 50% people of color on the board of directors. We have a paid Racial Justice Advisory Committee that meets quarterly. We have developed a cohort of facilitators around the state and continue to refine how we support those facilitators to enable them to continue to do the emotionally draining anti-oppression work they do. We created a purchasing policy, our own educational program catalog, and have restructured our bi-weekly enews which now goes to over 6,000 people. And, very important but perhaps less exciting, we got new computers, new phones, a new point of sale system, and a new data base.

Lots has changed in 40 years. We are grateful to those who came before and we are grateful to continue the mission to make a peaceful and just world. And we do so with you.

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**Women’s March, Montpelier**

In the wake of the 2018 midterms that propelled an unprecedented wave of women to Congress, Women’s March Vermont announces the Montpelier event in coordination with sister marches in cities and communities across the globe.

“On January 19, we will unite with people in Washington, DC and across the nation, to make our voices heard,” said organizer Kristen Vrancken. “We’ve been organizing locally to advocate for the policies that matter to us and impact women’s lives. We will flood the streets in solidarity with our sisters in DC to remind the country that Vermont resists.”

Two years after the historic 2017 Women’s March – the largest single-day protest in US history – women, femmes, and allies will march in towns, cities, and communities from Montpelier to Los Angeles as part of a nationwide #WomensWave.

“The 2017 Women’s March galvanized this country and birthed a new wave of the women’s rights movement,” said organizer Grace Meyer. “That wave is taking to the streets, here in Montpelier and nationwide, and we’re coming with an agenda.”

Join us January 19, 2019, at 10am on the Statehouse lawn in Montpelier. Confirmed speakers include:

- Governor Madeleine Kunin
- Melody Brook, former chair, VT Commission on Native American Affairs
- Brenda Churchill, LGBTQIA Alliance of VT
- Kiah Morris, former State Representative
- Dr. Mariko Silver, President, Bennington College
- Amanda Garces, VT Coalition for Ethnic and Social Equity in Schools
- Sarah Laudenville, Vermont Center for Independent Living
- Beverly Little Thunder, Kunsi Keya Tamakoce and Peace & Justice Center

For more information visit www.womensmarchvermont.com or follow us on all social media @womensmarchvt.

**Washington, DC**

The Peace & Justice Center is renting buses to go to Washington, DC for the Women’s March on January 19, 2019. The buses will depart from the Burlington-area at 10pm on Friday night. We will return at about 4am on Sunday, January 20.

Tickets are on sale now and cost $125. High school students are not expected to contribute financially but if you are able to make a donation, feel free! If full or partial scholarship is needed, you will be able to request that on the form.

The online ticket registration can be found on the home page of our website: pjcvt.org. If you have any questions, please contact Wendy (wcoe@pjcvt.org) or Rachel (rachel@pjcvt.org). 🌍

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#WOMENSWAVE 1-19-19

JOIN US IN MONTPELIER VERMONT

IT’S TIME TO MARCH AGAIN

© WOMEN’S MARCH VERMONT OFFICIAL CHAPTER
The Weight of Awareness

By McKenzie Imhoff

I was doing yoga in my basement while home for Thanksgiving break when I noticed the American Girl Dolls that I played with as a child sitting on a shelf. I was shocked. How had I never before noticed that they were all white? They all represented different facets of my identity – the hard-working student, the athletic soccer player, the Girls that I liked to dress up once in a while – but never served to remind me of my skin color. Likewise, they never reminded me of the dolls that were missing from my collection. These dolls highlighted my lack of education and exposure to people of color while growing up. This was the first time I’d returned home to Wisconsin since beginning my internship at the Peace & Justice Center, so this moment made me realize that much of my perception of myself has changed during my time at the Center.

Part of my racial justice internship with the Peace & Justice Center included attending racial justice programs. Building Empathy and Addressing Racial Oppression, Talking to Kids About Racism, and Disrupting Racism Role Playing were just some of the workshops that I participated in. During these workshops, I learned about the true history of the United States and was introduced to concepts of white fragility, white privilege, and institutional racism. These activities and conversations made me, perhaps for the first time in my life, truly reflect on my own racial identity.

While I am ashamed to admit it, before this internship I did not consciously consider race to be something I possessed. I could identify race in others, but my whiteness was “normal.” When I sat down to write my racial autobiography as a homework assignment for a workshop, what shocked me most was not what I remembered about my racial identity, but what I didn’t remember. Thinking about the neighborhood I grew up in, the school I attended, the sports teams I played on, race was never something I actively thought of as an integral part of who I was. I could recognize acts of racism and systemic racial injustices, but I could only see race as something that affected other people, not me. Like my American Girl Dolls, my whiteness went unnoticed – blending into the background on the shelves of my life.

This internship has awoken me from this naivety, encouraged me to embrace the discomfort and challenges of seeing whiteness, and taught me how to confront this aspect of my identity in all of its history and privileges. Books such as Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates and movies like Twelve Years a Slave, helped me feel the burden and consequences of my whiteness for the first time. I am now consistently asking myself how this is my history. How can lynching, redlining, segregation, slaveholding, and police brutality be at the core of my skin color? More importantly, how can I begin to make reparations for the horrific injustices my people have committed and that benefit from?

Often, I find myself relieved when I leave the PJC, feeling grateful for a break from thinking about race, and realize that this is exactly what my white privilege affords me. It’s difficult to wake up, stay awake, and begin to try to take responsibility for my race, but this discomfort is what I have appreciated most about my internship. My whiteness has become a weight I have never experienced before.

At the end of the PJC workshops, it is a tradition to make action plans for how participants are going to continue doing this work. One important thing that I’ve learned from these action plans is that racial justice is a journey, not a solution to be found and experienced once. What I’ve come to understand is that racial justice is not solely about advocating for people of color, but also about encouraging myself and other white people to recognize our whiteness and claim its consequences; it is about continuing to find more moments to pause, reflect, and change the things that paint whiteness as a false normalcy or an absence of race. I will continue to face the discomfort of my whiteness and recognize the white dolls hiding in the background of who I am.

NOFA Conference: Food Traditions

Leah Penniman and Melody Walker Brook will keynote Northeast Organic Farmers’ Association-VT’s 37th annual Winter Conference, February 16-18, 2019 at UVM in Burlington, addressing the conference theme of Food Traditions: Celebrating Our Agricultural Roots.

Leah Penniman is a Black Kreyol educator, farmer, author, and food justice activist who has been organizing for an anti-racist food system for fifteen years.

Melody Walker Brook is is an educator, activist, artist and citizen of the Elnu Abenaki Band.

Members of Peace & Justice Center can attend this year’s NOFA-VT Winter Conference at member rate! Contact the NOFA-VT office at 802-434-4122 or info@nofavt.org for a discount code. Visit nofavt.org/conference for more details and to register!
Vermont Reads at Richmond Library

By Wendy de Forest, Richmond Free Library

The Richmond Free Library aims to help people become better members of the community through life-enhancing programs and services. One of the best ways to accomplish this is through collaboration with other organizations. Such partnerships help the library move beyond its historical purpose of information storehouse to a more active and participatory learning space.

One of the partnerships that has had wide community impact is the library’s participation in the Vermont Reads program of the Vermont Humanities Council (VHC). Each year a book is chosen for its relevance to important current issues and its appeal to a broad reading demographic. The VHC then offers copies of the book for free to local libraries or organizations who agree to promote the Vermont Reads program and create community-building experiences around the themes in the book.

The 2019 book is March by civil rights icon John Lewis. This graphic novel is the first in a trilogy by John Lewis in collaboration with co-writer Andrew Ayden and graphic artist Nate Powell. It tells the story of Lewis’s coming of age in rural Alabama and early life of civic activism. Lewis, who was greatly inspired and influenced by Martin Luther King, Jr., is considered one of the big six leaders of the civil rights movement along with Asa Philip Randolph, James Farmer Jr., Whitney Young, Jr., and Roy Wilkins, and an early adopter of the nonviolent protest tactics that were instrumental in the desegregation of the South. Lewis has served in the US Congress since 1987.

The Richmond Free Library is thrilled to be working with the Peace & Justice Center to bring three dynamic programs to the Richmond community, each of them designed to explore the themes in March and increase participants’ working knowledge of nonviolent movement-building. These programs are free, open to the public, and take place at the Richmond Free Library.

Learning Nonviolence: The Children’s March. Friday March 15, 5:30-7:30pm. Enjoy a One Pot Meal followed by a program for the whole family; ideal for age 8 and older. Appropriate for people of all ages as long as they are with family and/or friends who can continue the conversation. Participants will watch and discuss excerpts from Mighty Times: The Children’s March, a film about the 1963 actions in Birmingham to learn about Kingian Nonviolence and the power of working together to take on big problems as a whole community.

Learning Nonviolence: Lunch Counter Sit-In. Thursday, April 11, 7-8pm. This interactive theater presentation is from the National Museum of American History, where a piece of the actual lunch counter from the protest is on display. The year is 1960. An African American college student (a fictional composite character) is conducting a training session for people interested in joining a student sit-in to protest racial segregation at a local lunch counter. The student speaks about the recent protests in Greensboro, North Carolina, and coaches members of the audience in the philosophy and tactics of nonviolent direct action.

Learning Nonviolence: Activism 101. Tuesday, May 7, 7-9pm. Learn aspects of Kingian Nonviolence, build knowledge of successful nonviolent campaigns, explore how our own identities impact this activism, and engage in role play. Designed to help unlock ways to work towards social justice and peace without perpetuating cycles of violence.

Leave a Lasting Legacy

You can ensure that your investment in making change in the world lives on by making a bequest or planned gift to the Peace & Justice Center. What’s a planned gift? Put simply, it’s a contribution that is arranged now and pays out at a future date. Commonly donated through a will or trust, planned gifts are most often granted once the donor has passed away. There are many types of planned gifts, including some that pay an income to the donor during their lifetime, with the remainder going to the non-profit when they pass.

We look forward to helping you make these plans as personally gratifying as possible. Contact Rachel Siegel at rachel@pjcvt.org if you’d like to discuss ways to make a lasting impact.

If you have included the Peace & Justice Center in your estate plans, you’re a member of our Legacy Society.
January 9, Wednesday
12 noon-1pm, Toxic Whiteness Discussion Group, PJC. This monthly event is held specifically to process how white supremacy culture is toxic to white people. By joining this discussion, we hope white people will be better able to allow the needs of people of color to take priority in multi-racial spaces. Free. Also February 13 and March 13.

January 10, Thursday
5:30pm, Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom monthly meeting at PJC. Also February 14 and March 14. WILPF-Burlington is an Allied Group of the PJC.

January 14, Monday
6:30pm, Vermonters for a Justice in Palestine monthly meeting at PJC. Also February 11 and March 11. VTJP is an Allied Group of the PJC.

January 17, Thursday
6-8pm, POC in VT Affinity Group, PJC. This is a monthly gathering for People Of Color to come together to share their experiences and explore their identities. January’s meeting will include information on mental health for POC in VT. You do not have had to attend previous meetings in order to come. Free. Also on February 21 and March 21. Monthly topics vary.

January 19, Saturday
10am-12noon, Will Miller Green Mountain Veterans For Peace, monthly meeting at Hunger Mountain Co-op, Montpelier. Veterans and others interested are welcome. For more information contact: Richard Czapinski (rczapinski@madriver.com). Also February 16 and March 16.

6-8pm, Jeffersonville Racial Justice Study Circle, Second Congregational UCC, Jeffersonville. Facilitators from the PJC will offer a brave space to explore what racism is, why it is often difficult for white communities and individuals to see it, and racial justice within the Jeffersonville community. This program was developed for predominantly white audiences because efforts to end racism do not fall solely on those oppressed. Free.

January 20, Sunday
3-5:30pm Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Remembrance. First Unitarian Universalist Society, Burlington. More info: GBMRC.org The Greater Burlington Multicultural Resource Center

January 21, Monday
10:30-11:30am, Participatory Cesar Chavez Activity, ECHO, Leahy Center for Lake Champlain, Burlington. Celebrate MLK Day by learning and telling the story of Cesar Chavez, a leader who, like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., used the strategy of nonviolence in action to organize and build power with oppressed people. A simplified and fun play of Cesar Chavez will be shared by children who attend the full hour event. They will make signs, and/or per-form the story. There are roles for kids with different skill sets and of different ages. This activity is part of ECHO’s MLK Day Celebration from 10am-5pm. There is no ECHO admission cost on this day. Visit their website for more info: www.echovermont.org.

January 23, Wednesday
6-8pm, Bakersfield Racial Justice Study Circle, United Church of Bakersfield & Fairfield, Bakersfield. Facilitators from the Peace & Justice Center will offer a brave space to explore what racism is, why it is often difficult for white communities (and individuals) to see it, and racial justice within the Bakersfield community. This program was developed for predominantly white audiences because efforts to end racism do not fall solely on those oppressed. Free.

January 26, Saturday
2-3pm, Fair Trade Labels, PJC. This presentation breaks down the differences between FT Certifications, FT Membership Organizations, and Direct Trade to help us better understand the Fair Trade Movement. Free. People are encouraged to arrive at 1:30pm to participate in a PJC New Volunteer Orientation.

January 29, February 5, 12, & 19, Tuesdays
6:30-8:30pm, Privilege & Accountability for Aspiring Allies, at Saint Michael’s College, Colchester. This workshop is designed for participants to increase their skills in effectively building support with colleagues, neighbors, and other community members to address racial oppression. Participants will explore their own identities and practice take action in addressing micro-aggressions and interrupting oppression in real time. Facilitated by Hal Colston and Marianne Hunkin. This program is supported by Civil Rights Alliance through the MOVE Office at St. Mike’s. Free for anyone under 25, fees vary for others, and no one will be turned away for lack of funds. Space is limited. Sign-up online or call 863-2345 x6.

February 10, Sunday
6pm, Screening of You Can’t Be Neutral on a Moving Train, Savoy Theater, 26 Main St, Montpelier, VT. This acclaimed film looks at the amazing life of the renowned historian, activist, and author, Howard Zinn. Following his early days as a shipyard labor organizer and bombardier in World War II, Zinn became an academic rebel and leader of civil disobedience fighting against institutional racism and war. His influential writings shine light on and bring voice to factory workers, immigrant laborers, African Americans, Native Americans, and the working poor. Featuring rare archival materials and interviews with Zinn and colleagues such as Noam Chomsky, You Can’t Be Neutral on a Moving Train captures the essence of this extraordinary man who was a catalyst for progressive change for more than 60 years. Narrated by Matt Damon and featuring music by Pearl Jam, Woody Guthrie & Billy Bragg, Q&A with filmmakers Deb Ellis and Denis Mueller after the film. Find out about tickets at pjcvt.org or call 863-2345 x9.
CALENDAR

February 16 & 17, Saturday & Sunday
NOFA Conference with speakers Leah Penniman and Melody Walker Brook. See Page 9.

February 23, Saturday
2-3pm, Fair Trade 101: Global Trade & Racism, PJC. This presentation provides background on global trade and how trade has historically come with a cost: the marginalization of people in the Global South. We will examine the Fair Trade Movement as an alternative trading system that ensures small producers are given access to the global market, and are also provided with basic human rights. Free. People are encouraged to arrive at 1:30pm to participate in a PJC New Volunteer Orientation.

March 15, Friday
5:30-7:30pm, Learning Nonviolence: The Children’s March, Richmond Free Library. Also: Learning Nonviolence: Lunch Counter Sit-In on April 11 and Learning Nonviolence: Activism 101 on May 7. For more info, see page 9.

March 20, 27, April 3, Wednesdays
6:30-8:30pm, Talking with Kids About Racism, Lund Family Center, 50 Joy Drive, South Burlington. Facilitated by Hal Colston and Marianne Hunkin. This three-part discussion group addresses the impact of racism and white privilege on our children. It is designed to help white people address these issues with children in a meaningful and age-appropriate way. It includes resources, discussion, and role playing. Talking about race and racism can be difficult -- especially with children. But that does not mean we shouldn’t have these conversations. Free for anyone under 25. Fees vary for others. No one will be turned away for lack of funds. Sign-up online or call 863-2345 x9.

March 23, Saturday
2-3pm, Fair Trade vs Free Trade, PJC. Learn the basic information about globalization and how policies & practices have paved the way for huge companies to profit at the expense of people and the planet. Shows how the Fair Trade movement & principles seek to, at a minimum, counterbalance these atrocities. Free. People are encouraged to arrive at 1:30pm to participate in a PJC New Volunteer Orientation.

March 28, Thursday

New PJC Facilitator

■ Marianne Hunkin
“I am committed to liberation for all. I know that no person is free until all people are free. I believe that white folks need to be active in dismantling oppression, in which we are all complicit and can always do better. I want to be a part of building the world we need now. I am driven by the words of Reverend Angel Kyodo Williams: Love and justice are not two. Without inner change, there can be no outer change; without collective change, no change matters.”

New PJC Board Member

■ Weiwei Wang
Weiwei was born in Beijing, China and moved to Vermont at age five. Since then, she has lived across the US and China. Currently, she is a research specialist at the Center for Rural Studies at UVM where she researches food access, consumer and producer behavior, community development and more. “Since moving back to VT in 2014, I have been impressed with the various community organizations focusing on racial justice and POC community-building, but there is clearly more work to be done. I am excited to be part of the PJC board to forward its trifold mission, and hope to bring greater focus on the issues related to race in all PJC projects.”

Weiwei holds a BA in International Relations and East Asian Studies from Connecticut College, and is completing her MS in Community Development and Applied Economics at UVM.

Used Calendars Wanted

The PJC will reuse your calendars by making origami boxes out of the beautiful pictures. A little writing on the back of the pictures doesn’t matter. These boxes are offered to shoppers for their treasures.
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