

2017-18: The year of the child

WILPF Cape Cod

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE
FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM
August 2017

Part 3 of our annual planning process:

Hawk's Nest Retreat

Part 1: Friday, August 18th

6:00-8:30 p.m.

Part 2: Saturday, August 26th

9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

See page 3 for details!



Step 2: Dreaming our work for the new year: RECLAIMING

Seven women and two children gathered on a rainy evening at the home of Dorothy Carver, our branch herstorian, in July for our Midsummer Night’s Dreaming meeting. This is the second part of our three-part evaluation/planning process for the coming year. Alycia’s guitar and songs greeted us as we arrived. Although the rain kept us out of the pool, the conversation over dinner was rich, deepening our connections as we shared delicious food. The voices of Irina’s children kept us company in the background as they made full use of Dorothy’s child-oriented living room! Because we were a small group, we held our meeting around the dining table.

Before dinner, everyone had been invited to post on a “dream board” their ideas for the coming year. These were based in part on the considerations raised at the June evaluation and in part on our limitless imaginations, guided by our hearts. Colorful notes appeared:

Go back to PROGRAMS at meetings... Focus on children and parents and grandparents... Be more public! -- I agree!... Work toward 1-3 Pillar events... Peaceful camps for families and children... International Women’s Day... Membership: each one bring one... Reach beyond the choir... Make ourselves more known in the community... Down with Patriarchy, Violence, Oppression...

We spent a few moments in quiet thinking about these ideas, along with the June concerns. *How would we frame the coming year so it can be both inspirational/effective and manageable?*

Then followed a discussion of ideas and options. **Alycia Davis** reflected that we didn’t seem to have a strong focus last year and as a result, our meetings felt disorganized and the working groups didn’t do what they’d hoped to accomplish. With no outside focus, she felt the branch was weaker.

Paula Schnepf said that the planning meetings for International Women’s Day and the event itself were good, but wondered what our follow-through is? We need to be more strategic, she said, noting that this is an especially interesting time for women to organize. How is WILPF at all levels connecting with that energy? How can we be relevant to people?

Mary Zepernick urged that we return to appearing in the community often, with signs and actions and activities. She wants us to have a real focus for the coming year.

Dorothy Carver mentioned her membership in Grandmothers Against Gun Violence (GAG), which does lots of outreach and holds a regular vigil at the Airport Rotary each week. Members sign up to be there, making a commitment to appear. Alycia observed that we do show up at other groups’ events but we need to do that AS WILPF! Dorothy said GAG has a business card with local information that all members can carry and hand out.

Irina Kosterina has potential new members and asked about bringing them to meetings, which we certainly encouraged. She is doing Instagram postings about WILPF and is also monitoring WILPF US and the International websites as well. She wants to do photos and interviews with members and put them on “trading cards” we can share.

We talked about the One WILPF phone calls. Cape Cod should have a presence on these calls and **Elenita Muñiz** suggested maybe we should gather and do the call together.

Jan Hively advocated for a Peace Camp, pointing out that many exist already so we don’t need to re-invent the wheel. She suggested doing

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Hawk's Nest Planning Retreat

REIMAGINE!

We have declared that 2017-18 will be *the year of the child* (see page 2 ff). Please join us as we now focus our goals and work on plans to implement them.

A Two-part Hawk's Nest Retreat!

Please come to at least one meeting, if you can't make both.

- **Part 1: Friday, August 18th:**

- 4:00-6:00 p.m.: *Optional swimming and friendly talk.*
- 6:00 p.m.: *Potluck supper*
- 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.: *Focusing our plan*

- **Part 2: Saturday, August 26th:**

- 9:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m.: *Implementing our plan*
Meeting with break for lunch & swimming

* *Bring bathing suits, towels, potluck food, imagination!*

* *Children are welcome; please bring something to entertain them peacefully during the meeting*

At Hawk's Nest Pond in Harwich, Laurie Gates's family cabin.

Directions: Take Route 6 to exit 11, Route 137.

Turn left onto 137, then take first right onto Spruce Road.

Travel about 3/4 mile -- take first DIRT ROAD on the left.

Laurie's camp is the first driveway on the right.

RECLAIMING

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them for parents and children.

Dorothy felt that **Chris Morin's** proposal (see page 5) felt very meaningful to her. She advocates for a single issue, this one, of reaching out and focusing on children. Alycia also agreed that we should focus on a single theme. She cited the Peace Pilgrim and said we should use the right effort to achieve our goals. She has written hundreds of short stories for teaching peace -- and she read us one! They would make a great medium for peaceable discussions.

We talked about having programs prepared that we could take to other organizations. Paula described her son's encounter of an abusive situation at a local pond, and his not knowing how to respond. She suggested we should work with adults. Dorothy's daughter has just written a book on Parent Engagement: perhaps she would be willing to be part of a program. Paula said not knowing how to parent leads to abuse and Irina mentioned that Please and Thank You do work -- it just needs teaching.

- **We agreed to make 2017-18 for WILPF Cape Cod the Year of the Child!**
- **We also agreed to invite Chris Morin to do the "Enough Abuse" training for the September meeting program.**

Having reached this decision, our discussion turned to ideas for implementing it. Here a wide variety of suggestions came forward. Jan suggested that we look at every dimension of peace, from families to nuclear weapons. Dorothy suggested focusing on parenting skills. Alycia urged that we focus on children.

Mary pointed out the connections between Chris's proposal and our "Roots of Violence, Seeds of Change" syllabus. Jan mentioned the intergenerational Model UN program and volunteered to be liaison with international efforts at the UN. Elenita remembered that Betty Burkes, former WILPF US president and Cape Cod branch member, had done peace educational work around the world for the UN.

Irina said we need to decide what age group we are working with, as the work will be different. A discussion followed on whether we will address children or address parents. We didn't reach consensus on this however -- a topic for Hawk's Nest! So we ended this discussion with a couple of questions that need further conversation and some decisions. [See sidebar at right.]

We next turned to the business of Midsummer Night's Dreaming: functionaries and donations.

- **We agreed** to ask Laurie Gates, our convenor, if she would poll the current functionaries and find out where we have openings.

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• Brainstorms for our work:

§ Peace Fair in the spring, building a relationship with other organizations working with children.

§ Connect all forms of violence: *What's the visual art form for showing that roots of violence are all the same?*

§ How can we help parents who don't know how to parent?

§ Plant a Peace Tree.

§ Borrow from our "Roots of Violence, Seeds of Change" syllabus

§ Host a Model UN on Peace Education.

§ Connect with Betty Burkes re:education for peace.

• Questions for Hawk's Nest retreat:

§ Are we going to focus on children or on adults?

§ How do we stay in touch with Racial Justice, Gun Sense, Environmental Justice?

§ What are the focus and format of our meetings?

§ What event(s) do we want to take on?

§ When will we hold our monthly meetings?

Chris Morin's proposal to look at children and violence

[Chris was away the week of July 24th but mailed us a proposal for consideration. We reprint it here for your reference as we go on to our Hawk's Nest planning retreat. - ed.]

Proposal: That we really look at the roots of violence. The roots of violence run deep and basically, violence happens because people choose violence. In most cases, adults who grow up and are violent, do so because of experiencing childhood trauma. My proposal is to look at ways that we can affect the positive outcomes in the lives of children.

Discussion: WILPF and other social justice organizations have been working for decades to end violence, which comes in many forms. We really haven't progressed very far and as part of the progressive movement, I feel that the best I can do is be part of "putting out fires." The present political leadership aside, we have responded to the injustices of the world for decades by demonstrating, holding vigils, writing letters, organizing rallies, attending conferences, etc. and year after year, we have not changed the political power structure.

Nothing will change until the people in power make decisions that address equity and justice for all citizens. We need to raise children with different messages about femininity, masculinity, respect, consent, etc. We can create a curriculum that is language appropriate for all ages, addressing patriarchy, unequal power, racism, the media etc. We need to plant the seeds for a generation that will grow up, not choosing violence to solve conflict, not choosing discrimination to feel better about themselves.

My opinion is that when one feels good about themselves, one doesn't act or speak in ways that harm others. When one feels good about themselves, and makes a mistake or hurts someone with words, they own up to it and apologize and know not to do it again.

We have seen over and over again, that a society led primarily by white men is not a

healthy way to live in this world. The ACE study (Adverse Childhood Experiences) is evidence-based research on children who experience any form of abuse (and many experience several forms of abuse) and if not treated for the abuse, grow up in trauma, basically feeling bad about themselves and making unhealthy choices. Many children who have been abused go on to abuse others, because that is the only behavior they know and since abuse is about power and control, abusing another is a person's only way to control their lives.

We need to plant the seeds for a generation that will grow up, not choosing violence to solve conflict, not choosing discrimination to feel better about themselves.

I googled the childhood experiences of Ted Bundy, Charles Manson and Jeffrey Dahmer and they each experienced child abuse of some kind, had no support system or nurturing adult in their life. I don't have the source, at the moment, but another study showed that out of 100 prisoners, over 75% had been sexually abused as children. Not all abused children go on to be mass murderers or even outright violent, but they do grow up without confidence and feeling badly about themselves and walk around with chips on their shoulders, depressed, anxious, stressed and may display negative behaviors. In many cases, they are then labeled "bad kids."

We certainly need to keep doing what we are doing because demonstrations, letters, events make decision makers accountable. Getting to the real roots of violence is a long term strategy. **My working theory is that we need to pay attention to our children, really pay attention.** How do we address the systems that prevent children from being

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RECLAIMING (continued from page 4)

• **We also agreed** to donate \$500 to WILPF US as our annual gift.

We also talked briefly about our **monthly meeting date**. Monday evenings are very difficult for our treasurer, Donna Pihl, and others, so we want to look at other options. Dorothy and Jan suggested a Thursday meeting. Paula can't do 2nd or 4th Thursdays, so **we are considering either the first Thursday or the third Thursday of the month**. Please see query box on page 8!!!

Finally, we heard from Paula about her campaign for election to the Barnstable Town Council. This is a non-party affiliated position. Among the challenges facing the Town of Barnstable are affordable housing, impacts of the opioid crisis, and maintaining a safe, healthy water supply. Paula faces a primary with two opponents on Tuesday, September 19. If you would like to help her out, please contact her at pkschnepp@aol.com!



Chris's proposal (continued from page 4)

heard or nurtured? What does "no child left behind" mean? When does the voice of a 12 year old who is being emotionally abused, override a parent who is the abuser? What policies are in place in youth serving organizations that protect children?

What can WILPF do in our communities to address the needs of children? *Peace Camps?* *Promote Jane Addams books?* *work with Day Care Centers?* *Who do we collaborate with?* *Create an interactive "peace curriculum"?* *Organize "Children and Youth for Peace" group, with planned activities?* *Create a newsletter?* *Hold a "Peace Fair" in the spring to kick it off?*

Independence House is part of the Enough Abuse Campaign, a campaign to educate adults about the epidemic of child sexual abuse: why it is a public health problem, what keeps it silent and how can we be part of the solution in preventing child sexual abuse. I could present a training segment at one of our monthly meetings, as a starting point. www.enoughabuse.org



I conceive that the sordid coarseness and brutality of Jonas [Chuzzlewit] would be unnatural, if there had been nothing in his early education, and in the precept and example always before him, to engender and develop the vices that make him odious. But so born and so bred; admired for that which made him hateful, and justified from his cradle in cunning, treachery, and avarice; I claim him as the legitimate issue of the father upon whom those vices are seen to recoil...What is substantially true of families in this respect, is true of a whole commonwealth. As we sow, we reap. Let the reader go into the children's side of any prison in England, or, I grieve to add, of many workhouses, and judge whether those are monsters who disgrace our streets, people our hulks and penitentiaries, and overcrowd our penal colonies, or are creatures whom we have deliberately suffered to be bred for misery and ruin.

Charles Dickens,
writing in the Preface to Martin Chuzzlewit, 1849

WILPF launches toolkit: Weapons, War and Women in the Middle East/North Africa (MENA) Region

Geneva, June 22, 2017... “The impact of the use of arms on women continues to be noticeably absent from the discussion on conflict. These arms have been produced and exported by profiteering states and suppliers who need to be held accountable for the suffering and devastation resulting from them. This toolkit aims to bring this element into the discussion and support our partners with credible resources on where these arms come from, how they impact the lives of women and what can be done about them,” says Laila Alodaat, WILPF Crisis Response Programme Manager.

Why create this toolkit?

The excessive flow of weapons into MENA region has been fueling and exacerbating the deadly conflicts in countries such as Syria, Iraq, Libya and Yemen. The use of these weapons has led to the destruction of essential infrastructures. Women often suffer disproportionately from the use of explosive weapons in populated area, as well as the use of smaller arms and guns, particularly when the latter are brought home and aggravate domestic violence.

What is its purpose? *WILPF monitors and analyses the impact of international arms trade that fuels conflict in the MENA region on civilian population, particularly women and girls. We track the origin of the flow of weapons, the individuals and groups using these weapons, the casualties caused by the arms and the way they change the lives of women and girls. WILPF advocates to stop the transfer of arms on the national and international levels and expose those profiteering from violence in the MENA.*

This toolkit is aimed at:

- Raising overall awareness about the arms transfers into the MENA region and more importantly the disproportionate impact they have on women
- Helping WILPF partners to integrate gender perspectives into arms transfers and militarization by providing the resources in the local language (Arabic)
- Highlighting the relationships between gender, wars and arms transfers, particularly how different types of weapons impact women dis-

proportionately during conflict

- Providing the foundation for local and international activists and NGOs to conduct advocacy around the use and transfer of arms in the MENA region and raise awareness around the rarely discussed gendered impacts of militarisation.

The toolkit includes a webinar in Arabic examining arms transfers to governments and armed actors in the MENA region; an infographic in Arabic and English that exposes arms transfers to Iraq, Libya, Syria and Yemen, and their devastating effects in terms; and a video in Arabic with English subtitles on the gendered impacts of arms transfers.

For more information please contact: Sarah Boukhary, WILPF Crisis Response Programme Associate: sboukhary@wilpf.ch 

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WILPF Cape Cod
www.wilpfcapecod.org

A branch of
**Women's
International League
for Peace & Freedom**

*We are a group of women and men
who work to create justice and peace locally,
nationally, and internationally.*

*WILPF envisions a transformed world
at peace, where there is racial, social and
economic justice for all people everywhere
-- a world in which the interconnecting web
of life is acknowledged and celebrated, and
human societies are designed and orga-
nized for self-governance and sustainable
existence.*

*In pursuit of these goals we educate
ourselves and others, take action against
injustice, and nourish one another.*

*The newsletter of WILPF Cape Cod
is published monthly. We welcome your
comments, addressed to elenita@cape.com*

WILPF U.S. Section
www.wilpfus.org • email: wilpf@wilpf.org

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a Reality for All -- join WILPF or renew TODAY!***

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THANK YOU!

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Cape Cod Branch
c/o Laurie Gates
38 Dusty Miller Lane
South Chatham, MA 02659

Please respond!!!

We are considering changing the date of our monthly meetings as Monday doesn't work for all.

Please email Elenita at elenita@meganet.net -- which of these dates works for you?

- the first Thursday of the month
- the third Thursday of the month
- neither of these works for me!

Thank you!