**Helena SERPAJ News: May 22, 2013**

**Helena Service for Peace and Justice/SERPAJ**

… We, the people of the Helena Service for Peace and Justice, are a community of persons committed to working nonviolently for peace, justice and ecological responsibility. Because we are people with hope, we have organized ourselves as a grassroots community of peace and justice workers. Our hope is grounded in the truth that peace, justice and nonviolent living are possible … (from the Helena SERPAJ statement of purpose, on–line at <https://www.facebook.com/HelenaSERPAJ> and <http://forusa.org/groups/affiliate-groups/helena-service-for-peace-justice>



* **Helena SERPAJ is on-line:**
  + **Helena SERPAJ has set up an On-line Discussion Group** -- to allow members and friends of Helena SERPAJ to send and receive e-mails in a common democratic forum -- to discuss important issues, to share links to valuable articles and websites, to post meeting announcements for SERPAJ as a whole and for SERPAJ committees, and for other communications that further SERPAJ goals. See <https://groups.google.com/d/forum/helena-serpaj>, where you can find information to join the group. Invitations to join the group will also be sent to all persons who have asked (at a SERPAJ event or in some other way) to be placed on SERPAJ’s e-mail list.
  + **Helena SERPAJ also has a Facebook page** that can be used for announcements and comments -- <https://www.facebook.com/HelenaSERPAJ>
  + Helena SERPAJ, a local affiliate of the FOR (Fellowship of Reconciliation) since 1994 has a**n FOR website**: <http://forusa.org/groups/affiliate-groups/helena-service-for-peace-justice>
* If you would like to be removed from the Helena SERPAJ Mailing list, all you need to do is send a brief e-mail with “remove” in the Subject heading to [HelenaSERPAJ@gmail.com](mailto:HelenaSERPAJ@gmail.com)
* **Monday, May 20: Helena SERPAJ showed the Palestinian film *5 BROKEN CAMERAS* by Palestinian Emad Burnat and Israeli Guy Davidi.** Academy Award Best Documentary nominee and Sundance Film Festival-- a first-hand account of non-violent resistance in Bil'in, a West Bank village threatened by encroaching illegal Israeli settlements and by the Israeli military's occupying troops. At the Lewis and Clark Library, 7pm.
  + *5 BROKEN CAMERAS* was a very moving and powerful portrait of the courage and persistent nonviolence of Emad Burnat and the other Palestinian villagers of Bil'in and of dangers of resistance to the brutal Israeli military occupation of the area.
  + About 45 people attended this event in Helena, sponsored by the Helena SERPAJ, our local affiliate of the FOR, Fellowship of Reconciliation, <http://forusa.org/groups/affiliate-groups/helena-service-for-peace-justice>, where our Helena SERPAJ Statement of Purpose can be found.
  + If you attended the event and/or have seen ***5 BROKEN CAMERAS***, you can send your comments to Emad Burnat via his Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/EmadBurnat?fref=ts>
* **Helena SERPAJ member Will Boland (who has visited Palestine/Israel three times) published an op-ed article in Helena's *Independent Record* newspaper on May 20**: **"Rethinking U.S. foreign policy in Israel"**

<http://helenair.com/news/opinion/readers_alley/rethinking-u-s-foreign-policy-in-israel/article_9b853664-bf4b-11e2-97e2-0019bb2963f4.html>

* **Helena SERPAJ recently organized a Montana speaking tour (April 25 - May 1) about the deficiencies of Palestine-Israeli news coverage by Alison Weir of *If Americans Knew*** -- Billings: April 25 -- Helena: April 26 -- Missoula: April 27 -- Hamilton: April 28 -- Polson: April 30th -- Kalispell: Monday, April 29 -- Butte: May 1.
  + *If Americans Knew*: <http://ifamericansknew.org/>
  + Watch Alison Weir being interviewed by Don Dunwell of Helena's Beartooth NBC Dunwell Report, arranged by Helena SERPAJ: <http://www.beartoothnbc.com/about/our-people/thedunwellreport/34816-alison-weir.html>
  + Weir was also interviewed by *The Helena Vigilante* newspaper in Helena (<http://helenavigilante.com/>). See the May issue (hard copy edition).
* **May and June: Helena Service for Peace and Justice Billboards: *"Tell Congress: Spend our money at home, not on the Israeli military."*** 
  + **We have begun an exciting billboard campaign in Helena calling on the United States to end $30 billion in military aid to Israel until Israel complies with international law and human rights law.**
  + **Helena SERPAJ’s billboards are going up in Helena (first one went up May 20 and a second will be up on May 27).**
  + We are working with the *Coalition to Stop $30 Billion to Israel*, an organization which has placed these billboards all over the country. These billboards cost approximately $760 each and the *Coalition to Stop $30 Billion to Israe*l is willing to pay half the cost. Please check their website -- <http://stop30billion.org/>.
  + **If you are interested in helping to pay for the billboards, you can make a donation via a check payable to Helena Service for Peace and Justice,** 1207 Hauser Blvd, Helena MT 59601. Donations to SERPAJ are tax deductible, thanks to the fact that Helena SERPAJ is an affiliate of the national FOR, Fellowship of Reconciliation.
* **July 7-14: Helena SERPAJ will arrange workshops across Montana on *Militarism and Youth in America* -- featuring Rev. Sam Smith, Chair of the FOR (Fellowship of Reconciliation) Chicago Chapter and an FOR Freeman Fellow.** 
  + The Spring 2013 issue of FOR’s *WITNESS* magazine features a lead article by Sam Smith of FOR’s Chicago Chapter on this topic. The article (“The Militarization of our Youth and the FOR’S *I WILL NOT KILL* campaign”) can be found at <http://forusa.org/multimedia/witness> and <https://www.facebook.com/IWILLNOTKILL>
* **July 16-27: Helena SERPA will arrange workshops across Montana by Johnny Barber of the Voices for Creative Nonviolence on the conditions in Gaza, Palestine.**
  + Johnny Barber is a peace and justice activist from Montana who works with ***Voices for Creative Nonviolence*** (<http://vcnv.org>). Barber has traveled to try to make peace in wars zones such as Palestine (the West Bank and Gaza), Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan — going as he said, “to bear witness and document the suffering of people who are affected by war. I advocate for reconciliation and nonviolent strategies in the face of violence and oppression.” <http://vcnv.org/speakers-bureau>
  + Barber will share a photo presentation as well as some videos about Gaza. Barber’s latest article from Gaza -- <http://vcnv.org/tonight-i-am-confused>
  + You can find some of Barber’s work at <http://vcnv.org/category/writings-by-johnny-barber> and [www.oneBrightpearl.com](http://www.oneBrightpearl.com) and [www.oneBrightpearl-jb.blogspot.com](http://www.oneBrightpearl-jb.blogspot.com) and at his Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/johnny.barber.391>
  + Another member of ***Voices for Creative Nonviolence***, Kathy Kelly, toured Montana in 2005 and was awarded the 2005 Peace Seeker of the Year Award by the Montana Peace Seekers Network (of which Helena SERPAJ is a member), <http://www.montanapeaceseekers.org/common/documents/KathyKelly-PeaceSeekersAward.pdf>
* ***HELENA SERPAJ STATEMENT OF PURPOSE, adopted October1990:***

We, the people of the Helena Service for Peace and Justice, are a community of persons committed to working nonviolently for peace, justice and ecological responsibility.

Because we are people with hope, we have organized ourselves as a grassroots community of peace and justice workers. Our hope is grounded in the truth that peace, justice and nonviolent living are possible.

Our actions flow from our belief that real peace is the fruit of social and economic justice, democratic empowerment of people and ecological responsibility.

We come together out of love for each other, for our children, for our sisters and brothers all across the earth, and for our planet and its precious variety of living beings. Therefore, out of love for our country, for justice and for democratic values, we commit ourselves to community service for changes that will build democratic structures which will help to put an end to the use of war and repression as methods of resolving human conflict.

Reclaiming our right and ability to live nonviolently as individuals, we reclaim our right to work democratically and nonviolently to create a society that lives nonviolently as well. We commit ourselves to actions to bring about peace, justice and creative change in our individual hearts and lives, in our communities, in the system and in the world.

Our work as members of Helena SERPAJ is urgent. The current system in our country and abroad is still fundamentally characterized by involvement in wars and preparation for wars, by foreign policies of our nation and others that override democratic values and processes, and by massive social and economic and ecological injustice. This situation is not an accident. It is the logical outcome of a way of life that must be understood and then changed by the service of persons who love justice, democratic processes and ecological stewardship if peace is ever to be achieved.

Helena SERPAJ members are people committed to realizing a vision of a new and just world order which includes:

* A new U.S. foreign policy that is compassionate, democratically-controlled, noninterventionist and based on a respect for human rights, economic justice and international law.
* A new foreign policy in which relations between nations are based on reconciliation, generosity and respect for international law rather than on geopolitical greed and threats of military intervention.
* A new U.S. domestic policy that is economically and socially just and converts unnecessary military, nuclear and other weapons facilities and industries into ones which meet peaceful, civilian, human needs and promote ecological stewardship.

As a democratically-controlled membership organization and grassroots community, all our projects and policies are determined and shaped by the members of the Helena Service for Peace and Justice. Valuing the contributions of each and every individual SERPAJ member, we work to empower each member of our community for the sustained, nonviolent, democratic action needed to achieve our goals of peace with justice and democracy and love of the earth. ~~ October 1990

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* Helena SERPAJ chose its name to honor the nonviolent peace and justice action groups **“Servicio Paz y Justicia”(“SERPAJ”)** all across Latin America, <http://www.serpajamericalatina.org/home.htm>. Latin American SERPAJ groups are affiliates of the **International FOR (IFOR),** <http://www.ifor.org/>, which has branches, affiliates and groups in over 40 countries around the world. In 1994 Helena SERPAJ became a local affiliate of the FOR, the **Fellowship of Reconciliation**, <http://forusa.org/about/sop>.