

Harbinger

Swords into Plowshares Peace Center and Gallery

swordsintoplowssharedetroit.org
313-963-7575

33 East Adams
Detroit MI 48226

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Wendy Hamilton, Executive Director, Resigns

In a recent message to the Steering Committee, Wendy Hamilton, who has served as Executive Director for many years, has tendered her resignation, effective immediately, citing health challenges.

Wendy has been an invaluable leader in the Peace Center. She has put in countless hours each week, overseeing our finances, exhibits, gallery events, fundraising events and more. She has served without pay, making the Peace Center a totally volunteer-run organization (a rare thing these days). And she has done this without complaint, serving as a model for us all.

An ad hoc committee has been formed to envision new avenues for SIP to pursue. One of these is a plan for funding new staff. These are challenges for us all, but we are up to the task.

Wendy will be missed. But in the spirit of her tenure, we will put to use the myriad talents of our volunteers and continue our work of promoting peace through art. The Steering Committee is meeting often, to continue our exhibits and events, and keep the internal operations running smoothly. We will also continue to keep everyone well-informed of our progress.

Next Exhibit:

One of our most popular exhibits, Art4Detroit, is coming back with all new art and a few new artists. The exhibit, entitled Art4Detroit3, opens on Saturday, September 26 at 1:00 p.m. and is curated by Central Methodist's own George Covintree, whose own work is included in this exhibit.

The reason for its popularity is not hard to find. This show draws from some of the best of Detroit's art community, in oils, drawings, photography and mixed media. So it can't miss as an interesting, stimulating showing of Detroit's finest. If this reaches you too late for the opening on Sept. 26, do drop by and see for yourself. It runs through December 5.

New Kiosk

Our kiosk, that gets wheeled out to the sidewalk whenever we have an event or an exhibit, is worn out and is getting a facelift!

Actually, it's more than a

cont'd on p.3



Editorial

As we look around for ideals or role models in this confusing swirl of ideas coming to us through the media, through social media, through our friends - we find ourselves searching for role models. Human beings who have consistently shown, more through their actions than their words - to be people we can trust and whose example we can follow.

For me, one person seems to stand out: Noam Chomsky, modest intellectual, most quoted person in the English language, writer of over 100 books. Having read a few of those books, having listened to him over the years, I have found the reason, I believe, that he is so highly respected and beloved by thousands of us, and has become a role model for so many of us: he builds for himself a set of principles, for instance: the body of international law, the Geneva Convention and the International Criminal Court have agreed that one country does not invade another. This is considered an aggressive act and cannot be tolerated.

Then he applies those principles equally to *all* countries. Russia does not invade Ukraine. Israel does not occupy Palestine. And more to our point - the U.S. does not invade Afghanistan or Iraq. Chomsky tolerates no debate about this. It is part of his set of ethics and he lives by those ethics.

So for many of us, Chomsky is our ideal: we consciously build for ourselves a set of principles, built on our value system, e.g., we believe that other nations have a right to self-determination, ergo, we do not invade them. When *any* country - including the US - ignores that law or that belief, we are obligated to condemn that country's action. If powerful nations, such as ours, were to adhere to international law, to the Geneva Convention, we would not have wars. We would have peace. That's why they were put in place.

This is critical thinking; this is criticism of our own nation; this is healthy. Without it, we become part of the very ones who have created so much horror and misery in the world, and we become part of the problem.

Suzanne Antisdell

Our Volunteers Come Up with Ideas for The Future

At the SIP Volunteer Appreciation Day Dinner, volunteers were asked to describe what they would like to see at the Gallery. Some of their suggestions:

- Black Lives Matter
- food justice
- street art
- horrors of war, drones, torture, PTSD, etc.

Suggested artists:

- prisoners
- Cubans
- Native Americans
- Africans and African Americans

Suggested events at the Gallery:

- spoken word, poetry slams
- forums on race and justice
- art therapy for children who have lost loved ones,
- or have parents in jail
- presentations by authors

groups that the gallery might reach out to:

- Wayne County Jail
- Con Vida
- Hospitals
- Veteran Groups
- Women in Black
- Downtown Housing where young folks live

We would like to add your thoughts to these ideas from our volunteers. Please email us at swordsintoplowshares313@gmail.com.

The Masons are Leaving us

After 16 years with the Peace Center and uncountable hours of helpful work, Ron and Joyce Mason (the names are as one) have announced their retirement.

The Masons served a short time on the very first board with founder Jim Bristah in 1986, returning in 1999 to their current roles. Joyce has run the Gift Shop for as long as anyone remembers; Ron recruits, assembles, organizes and oversees the volunteers who staff the Gallery and are put to work wherever they are needed. He also oversees maintenance of the physical plant, which involves more items than can be included here.

They work quietly and unobtrusively, so much of their work has never been identified. Who is it who takes out the recycle after a Gallery event? Who proofreads this newsletter? Who is found in the Peace Center more often than the mice who live here? Ron and Joyce are the only ones who can answer those questions.

We are all saddened and bereft at their leaving, but we wish them well. Wherever they go, they are conscientious and competent, and best of all, they spread human goodness by their models.

Shop for a Cause Holiday Mart

One of SIP's most popular events, Shop for a Cause, or the Holiday Mart, returns on November 14. With all non-profits as vendors displaying their very best wares, this mini-market, held in both main-floor spaces of the Peace Center, provides all of us with guilt-free shopping. And what's even better, we support artisans in Guatemala, Nicaragua, and other oppressed countries. What better gifts to give, all year-round?

Treasure Sale: Saturday, Oct. 24th

Our annual Treasure Sale is around the corner...close enough for every one of you to start saving pieces you no longer need and would like to donate. We can't take clothing or large items, but any other usable household items are welcome. Everyone wins: you'll have more space and your former items will find a good home, and a buyer will take home a treasure.

So please save the date for the Treasure Sale: Saturday October 24, 11 am to 4 pm. And save your treasures to donate. You can drop them off any time the Gallery is open - Thursdays and Saturdays, noon - 4 pm. Or you can call Jack Chase if you have questions, or for an appointment: (313) 342-8143.

Audrey and Jack Chase

New Kiosk... *cont'd from page 1*

facelift; we've engaged a talented artist, Brittany Nasser, to design a brand new kiosk, and from the preliminary drawing (see p.1), it will be gorgeous.

The current kiosk was never meant to be a well-designed piece of art. It was basically functional, to let passersby know that the Gallery was open and incidentally to promote upcoming events and exhibits. The proposed new one will be far more than that.

Beyond promoting our events, the kiosk itself will carry our brand, including bright new colors and a logo that identify us immediately, and its well-designed shape will stand as a sculpture that tells everyone how we promote peace through art.

Central United Methodist Church
23 E Adams
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New and Old Posters

The Exhibit Committee decided that it was time to mix things up a bit on the first floor of the Peace Center, so we went to work revitalizing the area near the Gift Shop. Our treasure hunt took us into our own permanent collection of art. The pieces that make up that collection have been donated or purchased by the Peace Center over the last 30 years.

From this wonderful treasure trove, the Committee selected a dozen posters and hung them on the walls. These pieces celebrated the 50th year anniversary of the formation of the United Nations, an event that took place in 1995.

When the gallery re-opens at the end of summer, we hope you will come to see this wonderful artwork outlining our history and gracing our walls.

Marti Alston

The Peace of Wild Things

When despair for the world grows in me
and I awake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's lives
may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great
heron feeds.

I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

Wendell Berry

*Editor Suzanne Antisdell
Layout Tashon McDuffie
Contributions this issue from Marti Alston, Jack
and Audrey Chase*