



Report on the ICS/PIET Retreat of May 2-3, 2008

Meeting at the idyllic Narrow Ridge Retreat, members of the Institute for Christian Spirituality

(ICS) Board and the Planning Committee of Peace-building Institute of East Tennessee (PIET) plotted a future course for the organization. Focusing on the work of PIET, and looking toward the eventual separation of the peace work into a more independent interfaith organization, the group envisioned an expansion of its work into six specific areas.

1. Development of a “Peace Center,” a physical location providing a peace and cross-cultural resource library and meeting space for workshops, catering to the needs of a number of peace groups in the area — a sort of operations center for area peacebuilding.
2. PIET franchises in other locations around the country and overseas, beginning with a “Peacebuilding Institute of Central Georgia” located in Atlanta, GA, under the direction of Paula Larke. Overseas contacts may also lead to the franchising of established



programs in a number of other countries.

3. Youth Peace Groups providing programs and resources for church youth groups, after school programs, and camps.
4. Peace Community Building including a variety of means to acknowledge and support our interdependence as people of peace.
5. Poverty banks, providing low or no-interest loans to help meet the needs of the very poor and to encourage participation in educational and support processes.
6. Nonviolent Communication, providing workshops and resources to disseminate a process that leads to peace rather than conflict in interpersonal relationships. This program is already being initiated through the training of its future facilitators. An Introductory session will be offered May 26. See “Mark Your Calendar” on last page.

The initial leadership for all of these initiatives is in place and we anticipate that, in time, each will become an established part of the PIET organization and program.



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Summer Peacebuilding Institute 2008

Knoxville's annual Summer Peacebuilding Institute (SPI) is scheduled for May 2008. We expect that approximately 20 peacebuilders from around the world, most from Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, will join us for three days of programs designed to make us aware of needs and opportunities for cooperative peacebuilding. Our international guests will arrive about 10:00 PM on Friday, May 23rd. They will meet their host families at [Church of the Savior](#), 934 Weisgarber Rd., and join them for a brief time of Taizé prayer before going to their homes.

Saturday, May 24, 10:00 AM: Orientation and sharing of peacebuilding concerns, at [Church of the Good Shepherd](#), 5337 Jacksboro Pike, Knoxville.

Saturday, May 24, 6:30-9:00 PM: Issues Night (Small group discussions with international peacebuilders, at [Church of the Good Shepherd](#)).

Sunday, May 25, AM: International guests will share their stories with a number of local congregations.

Sunday, May 25, 1:30- 4:30 PM: Recreation and picnic with international guests, at [Ijams Nature Center](#).

Sunday, May 25, 7:00 PM: Cultural Night, a celebration of cultural traditions and arts, at [Church of the Savior](#).

Monday, May 26, 9:30 AM-noon: Introductory session on nonviolent communication for both local and international peacebuilders, at Concord Mennonite Church, I-40 and Lovell Road.

Anyone with an interest in world peace is encouraged to participate in this time of stimulating conversations with peacebuilders from around the world and to make connections that will last a lifetime.



Introducing WCI (World Citizenship Institute)

WCI is a program entity of ICS and is an Institute focused on networking with peacebuilders worldwide. Most of the participants in the network have at some point in the past ten years participated in the Knoxville Summer Peacebuilding Institute, held annually in May or June (next date, May 23-26, 2008). Participants have represented 70 or more countries from Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and the Caribbean. They form the core constituency of a peace network that has engaged in every conceivable peacebuilding initiative, including such activities as restorative justice, rehabilitation of child soldiers in Rwanda, organization of youth peace clubs in Nigerian schools, promotion of women's rights in Iraq and Zimbabwe, Israeli/Palestinian reconciliation, community building in Haiti, reconciliation in East Timor, peace activism in Myanmar, Vietnam, and Argentina, psychological counseling for tsunami survivors in India, and work with refugees in Tanzania.

Many of these peacebuilders have received financial assistance through WCI's Mustard Seed Project, a fund-raising program designed specifically to support programs like those mentioned above. WCI maintains contact with the network by way of email exchanges and, where possible, participation in their projects.



ICS Job Openings:

ICS is currently looking for qualified applicants for a number of volunteer positions. These include:

- Director, Institute for Spiritual Direction
- Director, Institute for Interfaith Relationships
- Director, Institute for Sacred Psychology
- Director, Mustard Seed Project

If you have an interest in any of the above positions, please contact the [editor of ICS Peace Memo](#) for job descriptions and additional information.



JOB DESCRIPTION FOR THE POSITION OF MUSTARD SEED PROJECT (MSP) DIRECTOR

The Mustard Seed Project (MSP) is a program of the World Citizenship Institute, begun in 2005. The mission of the program is to raise funds for specific peacebuilding projects worldwide, with emphasis on developing nations. The WCI Mustard Seed Project Committee chooses projects to fund after accumulation of as much data as possible about each individual proposal.

Projects must meet four criteria:

- (1) Projects must be locally initiated and locally administered. Who can better know the needs of a given area or situation than the people who live and work within the area and who, in many instances, are personally affected by the needs they are addressing?
- (2) Recipients must provide detailed reports on how the grants are used, first by providing WCI with a detailed account of the needs of their proposal, and later, by providing detailed financial accounting for how the provided funds were spent. Where possible, WCI also seeks additional verification from independent witnesses and from firsthand observation of the projects supported.
- (3) Projects and activities must contribute in some significant way to issues of peace and justice and the eradication of the roots of violence in the targeted areas. They may include educational projects, humanitarian relief, rehabilitation for refugees and other displaced persons, restorative justice projects, projects promoting economic

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and gender equity, and reconciliation activities.

(4) Priority consideration is given to projects, individuals, or ministries that do not have a sophisticated fund raising program already in place.

The MSP Director:

1. Serves as a director on the governing board of the parent organization, Institutes for Christian Spirituality (ICS);
2. Must subscribe personally to the, World Citizenship Creed, the foundational document underlying all of the work of the organization;
3. Is immediately responsible to the Director of the World Citizenship Institute and works in close collaboration with him or her;
4. Is responsible for administering the grant making process, including chairing the selection committee which chooses which proposals to honor;
5. Implements fundraising projects and promotes the work of MSP recipients as opportunities permit;
6. Maintains regular communication with both donors and recipients.
7. The MSP Director does not have responsibility for financial accounting, a function which is the province of the parent organization, ICS.

This is a volunteer position until such time as grant funding designated specifically for the MSP Director position becomes available.



WORLD CITIZENSHIP CREED

As a citizen of the world...

I BELIEVE in the dignity of all humanity, that each person is a being of supreme worth.

I BELIEVE in the wholeness of the human race, undivided by economic, cultural, racial, sexual or national differences.

I BELIEVE in the stewardship of life and resources to the end that all may mutually benefit from the earth's bounty and that no person may have to go without food or shelter.

I BELIEVE in the primacy of human relationships as a person committed and responsible to other persons, regardless of their economic status, race, creed or nationality.

I BELIEVE in the global community, interdependent and mutually responsible for our physical and social environments.

I BELIEVE that we are One World and affirm that I am a citizen of this world. My allegiance to it and its people, my brothers and sisters, is primary over all other political entities.

I AM, therefore, committed to the promotion and care of the whole of humanity without partiality or prejudice and with such resources as I have

at my command, both within and without.

I HEREWITH AFFIRM that I wish, as much as I possibly can, to base my actions on my beliefs and thus contribute to a world where justice and compassion rule and where greed and hatred are diminished.



All photographs in this issue were taken by Dan Robinson at the ICS/PIET Retreat, and he holds copyright to them. Please do not reproduce without his permission. For permission, contact the editor: peacememo@yahoo.com

THE SPARROW SINGS

A collection of comments, quotes, facts and Tamaras Notes written and collated by Roberta Thurston and Don Timmerman, published in collaboration with PEACEBUILDING INSTITUTE OF EAST TENNESSEE.

A recent survey found that Denmark, not the US, has the happiest people in the world. The main reason for this seems to be that the Danes feel very secure, have less stress and less worry. Perhaps this is because they have free schooling for long as you like, free healthcare with doctors who actually go to your home, free child care, free elder care, six week vacations from work whether it is part-time or full-time, 6 month vacation time after the birth of your child, among other benefits. Denmark is also one of the countries that are in the lead in using alternative energy sources like wind energy, solar energy and biomass energy. Therefore, there is less pollution of the atmosphere and healthier people. The Danes go to school not just to get a job but to learn, and the jobs they seem to choose are those that they enjoy. As the adage goes, if you enjoy your job you will not work a day in your life. It is true that taxes for them are very high. In fact, 50% of their wage is taken for taxes. However, they do not mind paying taxes because they receive so many benefits from the government. Rather than spending their tax money on weapons, invasions, and occupations of other countries, they spend it on domestic programs that help their citizens. Because they are content there are hardly any violent crimes committed with guns in the country. With less stress and less poverty there is less violence. Another factor contributing to their happiness is that they keep good family ties and relationships. In the US, we have less and less family ties; and everyone is told right from childhood that everyone should be for oneself. Others are your friends only if they help you to become richer. Otherwise, they should be ignored or seen as enemies and be destroyed. The Danes have discovered that wealth is not needed for happiness. In the US wealth is

seen as a necessary component for being happy. The Danes have less drug use than we have in the United States. It makes sense since they have less stress and feel more secure. They also have more realistic expectations. US citizens have many unreasonable expectations of themselves.

Christ told us to do what the Danes are doing. He told us to take care of one another, even our enemies. He told us to love and respect all people. He told us not to fear because God will take care of you. He told us not to look for wealth but rather to share what we have with others. He told us to love all and never harm anyone for any reason. Not all Danes are Christian, but they seem to be doing what Christ told us to do, and they are the happiest people in the world for doing it. We must learn to learn from others. This Lent would be a good time to do this. -Don Timmerman

QUOTES

"The bourgeois capitalist believes in rugged individualism....The bourgeois capitalist tries to keep what he has and tries to get what the other fellow has.... A personalist is a go-giver, not a go-getter. He tries to give what he has, and does not try to get what the other fellow has....The world would be better off if people tried to become better. And people would become better if they stopped trying to become better off. For when everybody tries to become better off, nobody is better off. But when everybody tries to become better, everybody is better off. Everybody would be rich if nobody tried to become richer. And nobody would be poor if everybody tried to be poorer. And everybody would be what he ought to be if everybody tried to be what he wants the other fellow to be." - Peter Maurin

"In European countries the government fears its people. In the US people fear their government." - Michael Moore

"The US is the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today.....Then the government spent more in a month in Southeast Asia than it did in a year to fight poverty in the US." - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (We are

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now doing the same in Iraq and Afghanistan.
– Don)

INTERESTING FACTS

Congress is now considering President Bush's request for an additional \$102.5 billion in supplemental spending for the Iraq and Afghanistan occupations. Congress has already appropriated \$86.8 billion for the occupations for FY2008. Pres. Bush has already included a \$70 billion "placeholder" in his budget for FY2009 for the continued occupations. – *Associated Press*

The US invasion of Afghanistan led to 6.6 million unnecessary deaths. - *Liaquat Ali Khan of Washburn University and UNESCO*

Some 70 oil companies have registered to compete for new oil contracts to help develop Iraq's oil reserves. Royal Dutch Shell and Shell are among them. - *Democracy Now, 2-20-08*

President Bush wants \$500 million to hire 2,200 new Border Patrol agents and \$2 billion over two years for the fencing along the US-Mexico border. - *CNN*

There are plans for a toxic waste dump to be built near the Sonora-Arizona border known as Cimari that will hold up to 3,381,948 cubic meters of toxic waste with an estimated 45,000 tons of the hazardous substances expected to be processed each year by US companies in Mexico. It will be built near sacred indigenous land close to earthquake-prone zones in an area where mammoth fossils have been found. A leak from a future toxic waste facility could even affect the Sea of Cortez and groundwater. - *FNS News and La Jornada, 2-18-08*

Raytheon Missile Systems of Raytheon Co. has won a \$1 billion Missile Defense Agency contract boost to make 102 missiles for the Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense System, of which 27 will be sold to Japan. - *Financial News of A.P., 2-15-08*

Alarm companies make lots of money off the taxpayers. Taxpayers pay the police to abort alarms, 99% of which are false. The alarm

companies do not abort them. In 2000, there were 38 million alarms aborted by police at a cost to taxpayers of \$1.9 billion. The alarm companies made \$1.9 billion that year. One out of five people have alarms. There are 9,000 homicides in the US each year, but only 70% or 7 in 10 of the killers are ever caught. Police are out checking false alarms! - *"Free Lunch" by David Cay Johnston*

Some 90% of Americans in 1973 made an average of \$33,000 a year. By 2005, the average was \$29,000. Of each dollar earned by the average worker in 2005, the top 10% of the population got 48.5% more. Rich corporations receive more subsidies of tax money than do the poor. Congress got \$14,108 a month up to last election, and now gave themselves a raise of \$4,100. This does not include all the perks like free health care. -- *"Free Lunch" by David Cay Johnston*

The average lobbyist in D.C. makes \$300,000 a year plus perks trying to get tax money for their corporations. Some 60% of US corporations pay no income tax. - *"Free Lunch" by David Cay Johnston*

An estimated 200,000 young people in the US do not go to college due to a lack of money. Many more do not finish college due to the cost. Two-thirds of students graduate in debt. Lenders of student loans operate under no risk since the government guarantees the loan. Most students end up paying the lenders like Sallie Mae for the rest of their lives because of the excessive interest charged on what is owed. - *"Free Lunch" by David Cay Johnston*

The Military Commissions Act of 2006, rammed through Congress just before the 2006 midterm elections, allows for the indefinite imprisonment of anyone who donates money to a charity that turns up on a list of "terrorist" organizations or who speaks out against the government's policies. The law calls for secret trials for citizens and non-citizens alike. - *San Francisco Chronicle, 2-4-08*

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There are 26,000 Iraqis in prison. There are 2.1 million prisoners in the United States. – *CNN*

President Bush proposed in the FY2009 \$3.1 trillion budget a 40% cut in Amtrak funding limiting it to only \$800 million. - *Environmental News Network, 2-12-08*

Since 2005 the price of food worldwide rose by 77%. - *The Economist*

The estimated total value of mortgages on which US borrowers will default this year is \$316,000,000,000. - *Harper's Index*

There are no accountability mechanisms under US law for private military contractors. A private security contractor makes \$33,000 a month, nearly \$400,000 a year while an Army private makes \$37,000 a year. - *Wisconsin Network for Peace and Justice*

The US has 740 military bases in the world. As of 2001, the US had 254,799 military personnel in 153 nations of the world. - *Democracy Now, 2-12-08*

The US government froze Venezuelan foreign assets and bank accounts when oil giant Exxon Mobil won a court order to recoup an investment in Venezuelan oil project nationalized last year. More than \$12 billion in assets were frozen even though Exxon's investment was valued at between \$2-4 billion. Venezuela may now cut off US oil exports until the freeze is lifted. - *CNN*

The US Department of Energy plans to spend \$152 billion to build 125 new nuclear weapons per year for the next 25 years. Bush's last budget request includes \$1.4 billion to promote new nuclear power plants, \$9.1 billion to safeguard the nation's

nuclear weapons arsenal and \$1.1 billion to research technology that reduces greenhouse gas emissions from coal-fired plants.- *The Las Vegas Sun, 2-6-08* (See report of hearings at Oak Ridge National Laboratory above. *Editor*)

NOTES FROM TAMARACK COTTAGE

On February 28, Don and I spoke at St. Norbert's College in DePere, Wisconsin on nonviolence and the Catholic Worker. Then on Tuesday, March 4th, we go on trial for our sit-in at Congressman Obey's office in Wausau, Wisconsin. We had asked him, as leader of the Appropriations Committee, to stop funding the Iraq war. The trial has been delayed many times. As I pondered what to share at St. Norbert's College and at the trial, I remembered the many people before us who lived a life of nonviolent resistance. I thought of our present friends who live out lives of nonviolent resistance to those things that do not promote life. Especially I thought of our friend, Fr. Jerry Zawada, a humble, gentle man who nonviolently speaks truth to lies. It was Don's and my hope to share the wisdom of our gentle friend at St. Norbert's College and in the courtroom. In "The Way of Peace," Shannon McManimon defined nonviolence with these words, "Nonviolence is positive action for true good for all of God's creation, motivated by love, using only means that help and do not harm." May we all work by the unique gifts given to each of us toward that positive action.

Peace, Roberta

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

When	Who	What	Where	Details
May 23-26	PIET	Summer Peacebuilding Institute (SPI)	Various venues	Building International Peace
May 23, 10 PM	PIET	SPI	Church of the Savior 934 Weisgarber Rd. Knoxville	International guests arrive; Taizé prayer
May 24, 10 AM	PIET	SPI Leadership Discussion	Concord Mennonite Ch. Lovell Road at I-40	International guests & PIET leadership
May 24, 6:30PM	PIET	Potluck supper	Church of the Good Shepherd 5337 Jacksboro Pike	Everybody invited to bring a dish and participate.
May 24, 7:30PM	PIET	International Peace Issues Night	Church of the Good Shepherd 5337 Jacksboro Pike	All invited to participate in small group discussions
May 25, AM	PIET	International guests speaking in local congregations	Various churches and Bahá'i Center	Call 573-4089 for list of participating churches
May 25, 1:30PM	PIET	International picnic and non-competitive recreation	Ijams Nature Center 2915, Island Home Ave.	Bring baked or black beans, or salad or bread, etc.
May 25, 7:00PM	PIET	International Cultural Night	Church of the Savior 934 Weisgarber Rd. Knoxville	An evening of fun and cultural enrichment
May 26, 9 AM	PIET	Breakfast with International guests	Concord Mennonite Ch. Lovell Road at I-40	Contributions welcomed
May 26, 9:45AM	PIET	Introduction to Nonviolent Communication	Concord Mennonite Ch. Lovell Road at I-40	Everybody invited to participate
June 3, 8:30AM	American Red Cross	Class on International Humanitarian Law	6921 Middlebrook Pike	Free but pre-registration required
June 7 1:00-3:00 PM	Peace Coalition of East Tenn.	Planning meeting	TVUUC 2931 Kingston Pike Knoxville	Mutual support and joint ventures
July 12 9:30 AM	PIET	Planning Meeting	Panera Bread N. Peters Rd. Knoxville	Planning for Fall Peacemakers Conf.
Oct. 25-26 and November 1-2	PIET	Fall Peacemakers Conference	TBA	Exploring Nonviolent Living