

# The Peace Memo

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March, 2012

## THE ONLY CONSTANT IS CHANGE

Big doings at the Peacebuilding Institute this month. Our founder and long-time president, Jim Foster has retired. After many years of dedication he is going to enjoy his retirement and travel, but he will remain active among us. We welcome Carrie Mayes San Angelo as the new Director. We anticipate a smooth transition and look forward to continued growth, locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.

This news has pre-empted our planned issue of Agricultural Justice, which will be rescheduled. However, this is the season to sign up for CSAs. In a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) community, members pay a farmer an annual membership fee, which covers farm production costs. In return, members receive a weekly share of the harvest. This arrangement guarantees the farmer financial support and enables many family and organic farms to remain in business. There are cost savings, assurance of a variety of produce, and the knowledge that members are supporting their local economies. For more information, search the Internet or, if you are in the Knoxville area, contact [Three Rivers Market](http://www.threeriversmarket.com) (865-525-2069).

## JIM FOSTER TO RETIRE

February 13, 2012

Dear People of Peace;

This is a letter I have anticipated writing for the last two or three years, and for some of you it will not come as a surprise. For a variety of reasons, the time has come for me to retire from my roles as director of *Peacebuilding Institute of East Tennessee* and as president of the larger networking organization, the *Peacebuilding Institute*. It has been a long and satisfying dozen years.

Two things in particular have converged to make this a particularly appropriate moment to step down:

(1) The loss of our 501-c-3 status on June 13, 2011, necessitated a major reorganization of the organization as a taxable voluntary association. That reorganization has been completed, and most of our services and programs continue as before. The only major casualty of the new order has been the Mustard Seed Project which is not viable as a taxable entity.

(2) For the past three years, I have been searching for my replacement, a person with a passion for peace, preferably young and energetic, and with the computer, writing, and other communication skills required for effective peace activism. It also had to be someone who could work for the same salary—nothing. That someone has recently surfaced in the person of Carrie Mayes San Angelo. Her biography follows this letter. Carrie is a bundle of energy, and is already forming a vision of what she hopes will be a vibrant and effective association of peacebuilders both locally and worldwide. I urge all of you who have participated with me, in whatever way, in our peacebuilding endeavors to redouble your commitment to peace and to join with Carrie in the work going forward.

I, personally, will continue as a resource person for Carrie. My focus in my retirement will be writing for and editing the online journal *En Christo: A Journal for a New Christianity*, the latest issue of which should be online by early March 2012. You will be able to read it at [www.christianspirituality.org](http://www.christianspirituality.org). I hope, also, to contribute more regularly to the *Peace Memo*, long edited by my co-conspirator in peace building, Victoria Medaglia. You can find that archived at

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[www.peacebuildinginstitute.org](http://www.peacebuildinginstitute.org) and receive it by email if you request it.

I cannot begin to name all the beautiful people who have shared this journey of peace with me, but thank you, one and all for your love and support along the way!

Shalom,  
Jim Foster

## MEET CARRIE MAYES SAN ANGELO



Carrie Mayes San Angelo came to Knoxville by way of Rogersville and Johnson City, Tennessee. After graduating from high school in Rogersville, she attended Milligan College, in Johnson City, where she received a B.A. in both Math and English, in May 2005. She then went on to pursue a year of graduate level seminary study at Emmanuel School of Religion, also in Johnson City, before moving to Knoxville in 2006. Carrie currently works for a local engineering consulting firm as a researcher and technical writer. She is happily married to her husband, Daniel San Angelo, and they reside in North Knoxville with Daniel's youngest brother, Shiloh, and their dog, Moose. Carrie's commitment to faith in action has brought her to the Peacebuilding Institute of East Tennessee (PIET), and her energetic and vigorous approach to organizing and networking makes her an ideal candidate

for her new role as the Director of the Peacebuilding Institute and its local affiliate, PIET.

"It is with gratitude that I accept this volunteer position as the Director of the Peacebuilding Institute and its local affiliate, the Peacebuilding Institute of East Tennessee. I am overjoyed and grateful for this opportunity to grow personally and serve my community. My goal for PIET is to show a commitment to building peace in the Knoxville-Metro area by serving as a facilitator for networking like-minded individuals and by educating myself and others in all the ways to incorporate peace into one's daily life. I hope to bring a new dynamic to Knoxville's peacebuilding efforts, which considers the contribution of all faith groups in addition to the contribution of people committed to peace who may not be affiliated with any particular faith group. My personal goals for peace are rooted primarily in education. As such, I would like to learn with others and to teach others both how to live with more internal peace and how to become active agents of external peace in our local community. With that being said, my primary and most important goal is to generate as much interest as possible. Please expect emails and correspondence from me, personally, as well as updates in *The Peace Memo*, for meetings and announcements. I would definitely appreciate your support and encouragement as I take on this new role, but more than anything else, I would appreciate your renewed commitment to actively participating in PIET. "

Carrie can be contacted in writing by email at [c.mayes.sanangelo@gmail.com](mailto:c.mayes.sanangelo@gmail.com) or by letter at 510 Tiger Way, Apt 201, Knoxville, TN 37918. She also writes a blog, [Carrie's Cultural Commentary](#).



## HUMAN RIGHTS ALERTS

Organizations around the world work tirelessly to insure basic rights for all people. As abuses continue in Nepal, Syria, Somalia, and too many other countries to name, peacebuilders have opportunities to choose campaigns and focus their efforts. Web sites that provide information include the following. This list is not exhaustive.

[The Asian Human Rights Commission](#) (AHRC) was founded in 1986 by a prominent group of jurists and human rights activists in Asia. It is an independent, non-governmental body, which seeks to promote greater awareness and realization of human rights in Asia, and to mobilize public opinion to obtain relief and redress for the victims of human rights violations. AHRC promotes civil and political rights, as well as economic, social and cultural rights.

[The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights](#) was established by the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, which came into force on 21 October 1986. It is charged with ensuring the promotion and protection of Human and Peoples' Rights throughout the African Continent. For almost two decades after the creation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in May 1963, its focus was on decolonization and eradication of apartheid. In spite of the Organisation's endorsement of the principles of the [Universal Declaration on Human Rights of 1948](#) in the preamble of the OAU Charter, the promotion and protection of human rights within member states was not a priority. Rather, it concentrated on political and economic independence, non-discrimination and the liberation of Africa the continent and apartheid

in Southern Africa, at the expense of individual liberty.

The European Human Rights System consists of many organizations founded to bring peace and stability to Europe following the devastation of World War II. Each was established with a different purpose.

- The [Council of Europe](#) promotes the rule of law, human rights, and democracy.
- The [European Union](#) was devised as an institution for promoting trade and economic stability for its members.
- The [Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe](#) (OSCE) was founded to maintain peace and military security within Europe.

Today, these organizations have evolved to address many overlapping issues, all dealing to some extent with human rights, though the Council of Europe remains the most involved.

The [Australian Human Rights Commission](#) is the new name of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. The Commission was established in 1986 by an act of the federal Parliament. It is an independent statutory organization and reports to the federal Parliament through the Attorney-General.

The [Inter-American Commission on human Rights](#) is a principal and autonomous organ of the Organization of American States (OAS) whose mission is to promote and protect human rights in the American hemisphere. It is composed of seven independent members who serve in a personal capacity. Created by the OAS in 1959, the Commission has its headquarters in Washington, D.C. Together with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (“the Court” or “the I/A Court H.R.”), installed in 1979, the Commission is one of the institutions within the



inter-American system for the protection of human rights (“IAHRS”).

There are many sites covering human rights in North America and American protectorates. And don’t overlook the [United Nations](#) Human Rights page.



## WORKSHOPS, EVENTS, ETC.

US—Oak Ridge, TN

### Date Change—Second Annual Conference on Violence in Knoxville

The Second Annual Conference on Violence in Knoxville, previously scheduled for April 20-21, has been moved UP a week to April 13-14. The original date conflicted with other events.

### Jim Hightower Ranks Cooperatives Over Corporations

“Co-op businesses do everything that a corporation can do, but with a democratic structure, an equitable sharing of income and a commitment to the common good of the community and future generations. ... They function in every sector of our economy — manufacturing, health care, transportation, banking, farming and food, media, massage, child care, funeral services, interpreting and translating services, advertising, home building, high tech, engineering, energy ... and even a strip club in San Francisco.

Cooperatives can (and do) provide a deeply democratic, locally controlled, highly productive, efficient percolate up capitalism.”

## OCCUPY UPDATE

There are far too many Occupy actions to document them all here. The web site, [Occupy Together](#) collects contributions from movements worldwide. In New York City, Journalist Matt Taibbi joined Occupy Wall Street. [The Village Voice](#) reports:

*Occupy Wall Street protesters held their biggest march so far this year today as part of a nationwide "[Shut Down the Corporations](#)" day of action.*

*Several hundred occupiers gathered in Bryant Park this morning before marching east on 42nd Street to the global headquarters of Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, targeted because the company is a member of the American Legislative Exchange Council.*

*When the marchers returned to Bryant Park, Rolling Stone writer [Matt Taibbi](#) delivered a lecture explaining the origins of the mortgage crisis and the role played by Bank of America.*

As spring progresses, look for actions to continue and, perhaps, increase. Any readers who have participated in Occupy are encouraged to send us a report.



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## THE SPARROW SINGS

February, 2012

It is possible that the U.S. will engage in another attack on yet another country to make sure it gets its oil. ([Truthout](#), 2/15/12) Already there have been attacks by the U.S. and Israel. There have been explosions at military and nuclear facilities in Iran, and five Iranian nuclear scientists have been assassinated since 2007. Of course, the reason for the attack will not be given as a desire for oil. As always, we will be told that the attacks were to protect American safety and freedom. However, there are a few facts that should be known about Iran to dispute this rationale. Iran, unlike the U.S. and Israel, does not have a nuclear weapon. Iran has the right, according to international law, to develop nuclear energy for civilian use. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has yet to find any evidence of an Iranian plan to build a nuclear weapon. The U.S. and Israel have never allowed the IAEA to examine their nuclear stockpiles. The U.S. has spent \$7 trillion on nuclear weapons and is the only country to have used them on another country. The U.S. military budget for 2012 is almost equal to Iran's entire Gross National Product. Iran, unlike Israel, has signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Iran, unlike the U.S., has never invaded another nation. The C.I.A. overthrew the democratically elected government of Iran, led by Dr. Mohammad Mosaddegh, in 1953 and replaced him with the brutal Shah Palavi Rezi who denationalized Iranian oil and returned it to the ownership of British and U.S. companies. The Shah executed and tortured thousands of Iranians during his twenty-six year reign, that ended in 1979 when the people revolted. The new economic sanctions on Iran include a ban on the import, sale and trade of Iranian oil, which constitutes half of Iran's Gross National Prod-

uct. This is meant to make the people of Iran suffer so much that they will revolt against their President and remove him from office. These sanctions constitute a blockade or an act of war against Iran, even though Iran poses no threat to the people of the U.S. or Europe. In the event that the sanctions do not work, the U.S. may attack. Iran has more oil than Iraq and is second only to Saudi Arabia in the Middle East. Again, we will resist. No blood for oil.--Don Timmerman

Dictators are never as strong as they tell you they are. People are never as weak as they think they are. --Gene Sharp

Nonviolence is not a garment to be put on and off at will. Its seat is in the heart, and it must be an inseparable part of our being. ... Nonviolence, which is a quality of the heart, cannot come by an appeal to the brain.--M. Gandhi

## INTERESTING FACTS

The least expensive seats for the Super Bowl were \$2,100. Individual ticket prices had gone up to \$15,000, and field-level luxury suite seating cost \$550,000. Fans spent \$11 billion on parking and food. Each of the seventy 30-second commercials cost \$3.5 million. The four military jets that flew over the stadium in just 23 seconds cost taxpayers about \$450,000.--[CounterPunch](#), 2/5/12

People who wanted to participate in a "policy roundtable" in Washington D.C. had to pay \$10,000 as a fundraiser for Mitt Romney. You needed to pay \$25,000 to have your picture taken with Mitt. People paid \$1,000 to attend the reception.--[Public Citizen](#), 2/10/12

As many as 1.6 billion people in the world have no access to an electricity grid.--[Human Development Report 2010](#).

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One quarter of the children in the world are malnourished. As many as 300 of these children die each hour of the day.--[UK Independent](#), 2/15/12

Americans spend more on health care than patients anywhere else. In 2009, Americans spent \$7,960 per person, twice as much as France, which is known for providing very good health services. Moreover, France, Germany, Italy, England, Canada, Belgium, Sweden and all other western countries, plus Japan and Taiwan, cover almost all their citizens, unlike the U.S. where 50,000,000 people are uninsured. According to Professor Malcolm Sparrow of Harvard, fully 10% of all health care expenditures are the result of computerized billing fraud and abuse. That is \$270 billion a year.--[CounterPunch](#), 2/5/12

U.S. demand for oil and refined products, including gas, is down sharply from last year, so much that the U.S. has actually become a net exporter of gas, unable to consume all that it makes. ----[McClatchy Newspapers](#), 2/22/12 It takes approximately 6,000 gallons of fuel for a NASCAR race, not to mention all the fuel consumed by those who attend the races. It takes 8,000 gallons of fuel to fly an airplane across the country.--[FFToday Forums](#)

The U.S. now has 450 military bases in Afghanistan with plans for more prisons and drone strikes.--[Alternet](#), 2/12/12

Some 62% of Americans agree with re-establishing diplomatic relations with Cuba while 23% disagree. Some 57% feel it is time to lift the travel ban to the island. More than half of Americans would agree to lift the trade embargo on Cuba.--[Angus Reid Public Opinion Poll](#)

Americans spend less on food than any other country. Europeans spend 10% of their income on food while people in Kenya spend 45% of their income on food.--[Mother Jones](#), 2/1/12

Monsanto, the creators of Agent Orange used in the Vietnam war, is ready to sell genetically modified (GM) crops and weed-killing chemicals to farmers in Vietnam. Agent Orange killed an estimated 400,000 Vietnamese and deformed 500,000 and sickened another 3 million.--[Common Dreams](#)

ACE Hardware, Best Western Hotels, Organic Valley, REI and True Value Hardware are organized as cooperatives rather than as corporations. ---[Creators.com](#), 2/22/12

NOTES FROM 21ST STREET: The temperature has been in the 40's on this 29th day of February. Wind, rain, clouds, blue skies and sunshine were all part of this day. I suppose that since this day comes along only every four years, our mother earth wanted to bless this day with variety. A purple green tulip leaf is poking through the earth in my garden. I love the tenacity of the plants which are ready to sprout up with the least encouragement. The temperature will most likely plummet soon, and the tender shoots will suffer. I pray that the Creator gives me the strength to have the tenacity to work toward a just and peaceful world. May we have the tenacity to sprout the spirit of peace and justice, even when we are treated coldly.

Peace, Roberta

THE SPARROW SINGS  
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## **MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

When	Who	What	Where	Details
2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month	<a href="#">PIET</a>	Planning meeting	<a href="#">Church of the Savior</a> 934 Weisgarber Rd. Knoxville, TN	
Weds. in Lent 4-5 PM		Vigil against hosting, the U.S. military on Marquette campus	Marquette University campus	For location contact Don at 342-0158 or Bob at <a href="#">414-379-4162</a> .
Mar. 15 12-1 PM		Anti-gun vigil	Badger Guns 43 <sup>rd</sup> & Lincoln Ave. Milwaukee	
Mar. 27 3:30-4:30 PM	Madison Pledge of Resistance	Vigil protesting drone warfare	Volk Field, NW of Mauston, WI	Contact Joy First, <a href="#">608-239-4327</a> . More info at <a href="#">Madison.com</a>
<b>April 13-14</b>	<b>PIET</b>	<b>Annual Conference on Violence in Knoxville</b>	<b><a href="#">Church of the Savior</a></b> <b>934 Weisgarber Rd.</b> <b>Knoxville, TN</b>	<b>THIS IS A DATE CHANGE!</b>

We are always looking for news of events from all over. Not only does it inform readers of nearby opportunities, it provides tremendous support by letting us know what our colleagues are doing. So please send stories and calendar items to the [editor](#).

Please consider supporting our work in ways that are appropriate to your location and means. We would love to have more willing hands. Check the calendar for meetings and events in Knoxville. If you buy books online, please consider ordering, through [our portal](#), from Powell's, an independent bookseller in Portland, Oregon whose prices and service are competitive with Amazon's. We get a small percentage of sales completed through this link.

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