



# Desert Voices



The Newsletter of Nevada Desert Experience • Volume 24, Number 4 • Winter 2011  
ISSN 1539-9869

## No Defense for Drones

Nevada Desert Experience has been a leading force in organized opposition to the rise of unmanned combat air vehicles (UCAV, also UAV, RPA or “drones”) for use in war. Since the air force’s Predator and Reaper drone squadrons are headquartered at Creech Air Force Base in Indian Springs, Nevada, NDE decided that we couldn’t walk past Creech to protest at the Nevada Test Site without trying to stop the growing number of missile and bomb strikes being controlled by crews at Creech. Three years ago we saw drones as a Pandora’s box in need of a reclosed lid. Sadly, their deadly use has multiplied significantly under the Obama presidency despite growing civilian casualties. No due process can justify assassination, much less with a total lack of judicial oversight. The public is being denied information needed to decide what is right. Civilian casualties are not being treated or counted according to international law.

A drones arms race has begun which, like the nuclear race, is led by the United States, which leads the way in development, use and marketing of new military technologies. NDE co-founder Fr. Louis Vitale has long warned of the development of nuclear armed drones and of increasingly autonomous systems that will fire weapons without any human oversight at all. Other nations are responding with their own drone programs too.

**Hope is not lost though**, as an increasingly robust movement is taking up this issue with startling effect. Legally, in the United States, two cases of civil resistance actions against drones have caused judges to ponder seriously whether or not demonstrators’ actions were justified in trying to stop the crime of killing by drone. Local courts have been moved to weigh the necessity defense because of the undeniable difference between jaywalking or trespass on one hand, and killing of civilians on the other. “What is the real crime?” ask the defendants. The court process in the “Creech 14” and the “Hancock 38” cases strengthens our resolve to continue to try to talk to drone crews at bases, to talk to our President and members of Congress to shift to a more humane foreign policy and **to seek nonviolent ways to prevent drone crews from potentially committing war crimes.**

The Creech 14 received sentences of “time served.” On December 1, the Hancock defendants received varying sentences from zero to fifteen days, some fines and probation. The first court appearances for the Creech 18, arrested during the Catholic Worker gathering in Las Vegas in October, were not on the court’s docket, but the DA office has a year to change their minds. In October, several activists were pepper sprayed as they demonstrated inside the Smithsonian’s Air & Space Museum display of UAV’s. John Heid received essentially a one year probation for trespassing at Raytheon’s Tucson, Arizona plant. Resistance to drones is on the rise in Britain, Pakistan and elsewhere too!

**NDE will keep you updated, and check our “Resistance to Drone Warfare”** webpage for articles, research and action alerts. **Invite us to speak at a school, church or other venue.** Together people power can stop the “hellfire” unleashed by drones. ✱

## We Run on Love

### *Fueled by Our “Friends of the Desert”*

Blessings to our readers as we move into 2012. All facets of NDE work are connected by a common thread. We have a deep yearning for peace and a dedication to turning back the rise in drone warfare, the ongoing development of nuclear weapons and the seeming acceptance of torture, indefinite detention and other instruments of oppression. We’re asking for your financial help.

This year we deepened working connections locally, nationally and abroad. We support travel for staff and emerging leaders.



*NDE's Anderson & Haber, very “on-message” at Occupy Las Vegas.*

Hospitality for activist journalists and others remains an important role for NDE. Local events like the Dia de los Muertos altar exhibit and the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. parade increase visibility of our issues, but creating altars and floats takes money. Economic justice demonstrations

require materials to clarify connections between spending on nuclear (and other) weapons instead of on people and the land. Staffing costs are fairly stable, but it would be great to be able to pay or give a stipend to a worker or intern (especially since Sr. Megan moved to New York). Major non-staff expenses are fuel costs for getting to and from the Test Site and Creech, printing the newsletter and our basic, modest office.

Our operating budget is only a mere \$65,000 per year. We are grateful for grants from religious societies like Methodist Boards of Church & Society, and our Franciscan roots continue to feed us. Foundations rarely fund activist groups like ours. **Our fundraising goal for this appeal and the coming year is to see small increases in all our funding categories:** Donations from more readers of *Desert Voices*; small donors giving \$10 more than before; medium donors giving \$50 more; large donors increasing their gifts by an extra \$100 or more. **One of the most important categories we want to grow is our Friends of the Desert sustainer program;** we want at least 20 or more new monthly or quarterly donors which will make a huge difference in slow months.

We’re good at carrying on, but there is so much to do and be part of. A growing community of peacemakers inspires us to act. **Can you increase your gift to NDE, even \$10? Will you become a Friend of the Desert and help us meet the challenges we face?** Our whole is so much greater than the sum of our parts. Many thanks for your ongoing faith and support. ✱

## Jeju Island: Still a Wonder, Still Threatened

Dear friends of Jeju Island,

Thank you so much for your efforts of solidarity with the villagers of Gangjeong! We did it! We stopped the blast of Gureombi—at least for the time being. We've been informed that the Jeju police have turned down the companies' request for blasting Gureombi for three reasons: insufficient documents, safety concerns, and lack of go-ahead from Jeju Governor Woo.

We believe that the outpouring of international support directed to Governor Woo helped at least delay the blast, but we also remain vigilant knowing that the Navy may proceed without consulting Governor Woo, as it did on October 6th when it conducted a "test blast."

Our best insurance against the Navy proceeding unilaterally is ongoing international pressure. Please take one minute and send the sample email to Governor Woo <lmw2828@jeju.go.kr> and to South Korean Defense Minister Kim Kwan-Jin <defenattache@yahoo.com>. **See NDE website for sample letters.**

With gratitude,

The Global Campaign to Save Jeju Island  
<[www.savejejuisland.org](http://www.savejejuisland.org)>

**[The impending destruction scheduled for Nov. 18 was delayed at the last minute! The threat continues though and could come at any time. Please stay tuned, and sign the petition linked from NDE's Jeju Island webpage. -Jim] \***

## Stop Testing Missiles Already!

A Minuteman III Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) with dummy hydrogen warheads will be test-launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base & Space Command (VAFB) on February 25, probably in the early morning. The target is the Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands. There will be a ~~pro~~anti-test called by United for Peace and Justice and its member organizations at midnight at the front gate of the base, near Lompoc, California. **For details email MacGregor Eddy <macgregoreddy@gmail.com>.** Some travel assistance may be available.

**A petition to President Obama has been launched to try to stop this test-launch. Please sign it to register your opposition to the planned test. A link to the petition is on the NDE home page.** The last test-launch, fired in July, was a unique failure, and we believe that our previous petition effort helped lead to the cancellation/delay of the subsequent test-launch that was originally planned – paradoxically – for the International Day of Peace, September 21, 2011.

We will submit this petition to the White House three days before the scheduled launch or every time we gather 1000 signers. Thank you to the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation <wagingpeace.org> for hosting the petition.

**Also at Vandenberg (and in Santa Barbara): Gathering of the Pacific Life Community, March 9 to 12.** The annual meeting commemorates the tragedy of the first H-bomb test and ends in an anti-nuclear demonstration at a nearby nuclear weapons facility, in this case VAFB. **For details e-mail Dennis Apel <jdapel@yahoo.com>.** \*

## Dia de los Muertos Remembering All Victims of War



**Dia de los Muertos** is a Mexican holiday every November 2 for remembering our beloved dead. NDE constructed an "Ofrenda" (memorial altar) as part of the 11th annual celebration at the Winchester Cultural Center. It was in memory of victims of war and included traditional ofrenda elements of painted skulls and marigold flowers. NDE also used panels from a set of prints created by a Japanese atomic bomb survivors association, the boots and shoes of the Eyes Wide Open exhibit and blue scarves from the Afghan Youth Peace Volunteers. Special thanks to Mary Lou, Henry, Bill, Mark, April and Kenna for all their help. \*

## Occupy Nevada Desert Experience

by Ming Richard Lai, NDE Council Co-chair

Nonviolence is more than the absence of violence. The Occupy Movement is full of great energy and new activists. At the end of November, Jim Haber facilitated a nonviolence training for the Occupy Las Vegas movement. It began with introductions. The participants expressed hopes to learn some skills for better meetings, to feel safer in conflict situations and to better understand legal possibilities of political arrest actions.

By the third round of the "active listening" exercise, people were clearly hearing each other more effectively. The discussion about the history, philosophy, strategy, and tactics of nonviolence in organizing included Peter Ediger, of Pace e Bene who covered Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s **Six Principles of Nonviolence** and Pace e Bene's **Decalogue For A Spirituality of Nonviolence**. One of the resources, **Handbook for Nonviolent Action** published by the War Resisters League, was used throughout the afternoon. We covered how Affinity Groups and Spokes Councils can function before we diverted from the agenda to help participants talk about some issues that were more immediate to the Occupy Las Vegas movement and how nonviolence could be a tool to help work on some of the currently pressing problems. Because of the November 17 Occupy Las Vegas street blockade, we covered some legal follow-up questions and then had a review and closing.

I was glad I went and participated. I appreciated how the workshop was allowed to go with the flow of where the participants took it. I noticed some rigidity of shoulders and posture that softened an hour into the training. The group seemed more relaxed, visibly, as a sense of connection grew. This training was a "quintessentially NDE" way to help Occupy Las Vegas and share the strength and vision of nonviolent organizing. \*



Join Nevada Desert Experience in one of our nonviolent direct actions or invite us to make a presentation or prayer-offering to your community or congregation. We are grateful for your prayers and financial contributions too! Most of our income is from individuals.



## Nevada Desert Experience

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<NevadaDesertExperience.org>

NDE does not share our list; nor do we send lots of e-mail. E-mail is very helpful for our work though —saving money, resources, and speeding the distribution of time-sensitive news.

*Nevada Desert Experience is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Donations are tax deductible. Ask us for a receipt if you need one.*

## Alliance for Nuclear Accountability in Las Vegas

The Alliance for Nuclear Accountability (ANA<[ananuclear.org](http://ananuclear.org)>), a network of anti-nuclear groups based near national weapons labs held their Fall meeting in Las Vegas. NDE Coordinator, Jim Haber joined NDE Councilmember and Timbisha Chief Joe Kennedy and long-time Shoshone activist Ian Zabarte on a panel that connected local issues with a national agenda.

ANA attendees also toured the Nevada Test Site (NTS or NNSS). Some of them were active there in the 1980s and had stories to share, to the dismay of the tour leader, a former NTS employee. NDE Councilmember Mary Lou Anderson noted how odd it was that Hiroshima and Nagasaki could be rebuilt, but the horrid landscape, nuclear waste trenches and numerous warning signs show that Frenchman Flat is treated as a wasteland instead. The touristy, pro-Cold War presentation of the technological feat of nuclear weapons testing was devoid of ethical or historical reflection.



Nov. 22: "Team NDE" volunteers set to greet Test Site Tourists before they departed by bus from Las Vegas to Mercury and the Nevada Test Site. We asked people to submit comments on the draft Site-Wide Environmental Impact Statement for the NNSS and to use the H-O-M-E study guide as a basis for questions during the tour. NDE plans to continue this outreach (see announcement on page 4). As NDE Council member, Anderson noted, "Everyone was grateful for the materials we gave and the questions we raised." \*

☞ Check here to become a NDE **Friend of the Desert** pledging monthly or quarterly. We'll get in touch. THANK YOU!

### Enclosed is my contribution of:

☞ \$500 ☞ \$125 ☞ \$75 ☞ \$50 ☞ \$35 ☞ other \_\_\_\_\_

### Want us to contact you about something specific?

☞ Sacred Peace Walk ☞ August Desert Witness ☞ Nukes

☞ Immersion or Internship ☞ Unmanned Aerial Vehicles

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

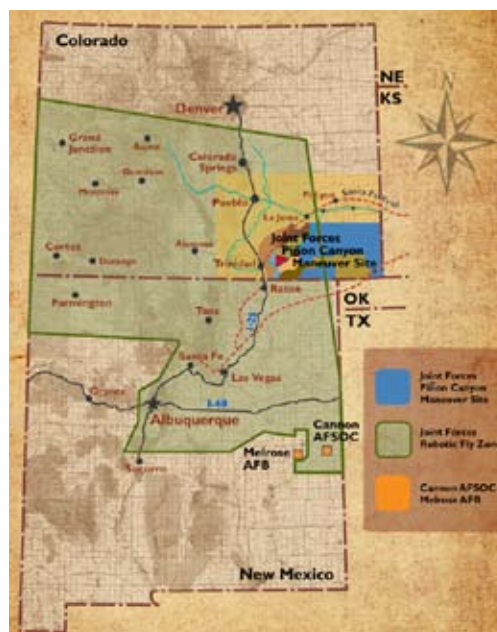
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☞ Check here if you don't want physical mailings from NDE.

## Not One More Acre!



The Pentagon and its contractors have joined with the Air Force to propose a massive expansion of military activity throughout the entire region of southern Colorado and northern New Mexico.

The proposal is part of a plan to establish the largest Joint Forces Future Combat Systems training site in the world by expanding Joint Forces Special Operations

Command air space for robotic warfare development, low altitude flights and testing of high-tech lethal weaponry.

[Excerpted from <[not1moreacre.net](http://not1moreacre.net)>. See also their sister org at <[grasslandtrust.org](http://grasslandtrust.org)> for more information.] \*

## What's in a Name Update NDE or NDPW?

In the Summer edition of Desert Voices, readers were asked to help NDE decide on whether or not to change names. Some people want "peace" to be more explicit in our name, while other people feel the existing name is important to keep as is for the sake of historical consistency and to be easy to find as always.

The poll evenly favored two of the proposed names above the other ideas: **Nevada Desert Experience** (no change) or **Nevada Desert Peace Witness**. **It's a runoff!** The final decision will be made by NDE's Council at its next meeting in April. **Until then, contact us with your choice. Many thanks to people who voted; we'll be checking in with you.** \*



*"Blessed is the season which engages the whole world  
in a conspiracy of love!" -Hamilton Wright Mabie*

*"The highest wisdom is loving kindness." -The Talmud*

*"Even a small star shines in the darkness." -Finnish Proverb*

*May you recognize many wondrous blessings in the coming year.  
NDE offers up prayers for peace in all lands and in all hearts.*



## Special Holiday Thanks

...to the Bobbs (and Jeremiah) for welcoming us to Newe Sogobia and journeying far to be with us. Peter for mentorship, active prayerfulness and compassion. Mario Sr. for delectable baked goods. Mario Jr. for keeping our technology alive. Megan for spreading the Good News of NDE far and wide. Willie for smudging our spirits. Midgene for always coming out on a moment's notice. Dennis for being a consistent vigiler. Candace for cakes and hospitality. Bill for trucking and towing us around. Klaryta for your stories. Henry for holding down the fort (and kitty & doggy love). Mark for cooking and good humor. April, Kenna and family for adding to the mix. Ming for your presence and support. Robbie for your youthful enthusiasm. John, Katie & the Catholic Worker for grounding our activism in the prayer of service to the poor. Our donors for your generosity. NDE Council members for your guidance. And to all not mentioned here, may we move forward together with grateful hearts into the new year with hopefulness and a strong passion for peace.

*-Jim Haber and Mary Lou Anderson for NDE ✨*

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## Jan. 16, 2012 Martin L. King, Jr. Day Parade

*Join the Peace People  
contingent in one of the  
largest parades anywhere  
celebrating this prophet of  
peace. We handout and  
broadcast MLK excerpts as  
we go. A joy to participate in.*

**Contact NDE for details.**

<unitedforpeace.org>

## Test Site Tourist Outreach

Dec. 15 Jan. 24 Feb. 15

Greet nuclear tourists before they embark by bus, bound for the Nevada National Security Site on one of their monthly public tours. We provide historical context and pose ethical questions for people to consider, as a supplement to the matter-of-fact, technological focus of the standard tour. 7 to 7:30 a.m. Atomic Testing Museum parking lot, Las Vegas. **Contact NDE for details.**

**Desert Voices is produced by NDE Coordinator Jim Haber.**  
**Uncredited photos by Jim Haber or Mary Lou Anderson.**  
**Editorial assistance by Mary Lou, Mario and Judith.**  
**We like to hear from readers.**  
**Contact Jim at <jim@NevadaDesertExperience.org>**  
**or at the office, (702)646-4814.**



**A Communal Pilgrimage to  
America's Nuclear Sacrifice Zone**

## Sacred Peace Walk

Las Vegas to the  
Nevada National  
Security Site

April 1 to 6, 2012

A 65-mile journey. Part-time "Pilgrims" welcome, and there is vehicular support. This is a walking meditation, a desert healing, a political act of solidarity. It's also an opportunity for civil resistance to the development, testing and use of new weapons systems at Creech AFB and at the NNSS, formerly the Nevada Test Site.

Sponsor a low-income walker, register to join us. Pledge forms are on the NDE website. Schedule includes: 3/31 Orientation; 4/1 Palm Sunday Service & Walk through Las Vegas; Sojourn at the Temple to Goddess Spirituality; 4/4 Vigils at Creech; Western Shoshone Sunrise Ceremonies; 4/6 Good Friday Civil Resistance at the NNSS.

Walk with us as we transform fears into compassion  
and apathy into action!

**ALSO: Peace Camp Reunion, April 7 to 11 at the Peace Camp Site**  
**Contact "Peace Camp - Nevada" or Rich Sickler on Facebook**