

DESERT VOICES

The Newsletter of the Nevada Desert Experience -- December 1992



Countdown '93

Don't be fooled, the U.S. still plans to test nuclear weapons in the future. The so-called "Moratorium" ends July 1, 1993, then testing may resume - unless we can stop it. That is what NDE's "Countdown '93" is all about. As part of the Countdown '93 Campaign, NDE is issuing a call to the faithful to take action now by sending the world a message that **NUCLEAR TESTING MUST STOP!!!**

We have much to do by July 1, 1993, when the moratorium ends and testing resumes. On October 9, President Boris Yeltsin extended Russia's test ban to July 1993. France is expected to announce a continuation of its moratorium this December. Great Britain, which tests in Nevada, has a de facto moratorium as a result of the U.S. moratorium. This leaves China the renegade in this scenario. China last tested a nuclear bomb on September 25, 1992, and is expected to test another one in the early Spring of 1993.

- *Send a message* to President-elect Bill Clinton, Vice-President Al Gore and the new National Security Advisor to:

Issue a public declaration that the U.S. will never resume nuclear testing.

Back a Comprehensive Test Ban, starting with a call to resume testing talks between France, Russia, China, the United Kingdom and the U.S.

- *Telephone, write and petition* the Chinese Embassy and the Chinese Consulate closest to where you live asking them to join the moratorium and to sit down to testing talks.
- *Pray* for an end to nuclear testing, for continued perseverance and persistence by people around the world, and for courage of heart and conviction from our world leaders.

NEVADA DESERT EXPERIENCE IS JOINING WITH OTHER NATIONAL PEACEMAKING GROUPS TO SEND 100,000 MESSAGES TO CLINTON/GORE BEFORE THE INAUGURATION ON JANUARY 20, 1993. TODAY IS THE DAY TO SEND YOUR MESSAGE TO STOP NUCLEAR TESTING NOW!!!

We need your support to

END NUCLEAR TESTING!

While we are grateful for the nine month moratorium, there is still much work to do, and **we need your financial support to get the work done.**

During this season of sharing, will you give to achieve the ultimate victory?

Your donation at this time is crucial.

Please use the enclosed return envelope and send a donation today. Know that you are in our prayers of gratitude during this Christmas Season and;

Thank You for Your Support!

The Chinese Embassy

Washington, D.C.
(202) 328-2500

Chinese Consulates:

San Francisco
(415) 563-1708
Los Angeles
(213) 380-3105
New York
(212) 868-7752

Healing Global Wounds

The 500th Anniversary of Columbus' arrival sparked an epic event in the witness against nuclear testing. From October 2 to 12, groups from all over the world assembled in Las Vegas for "Healing Global Wounds."

Participants came from the Global Anti-Nuclear Movement and Nevada Desert Experience, but the event spotlighted Native peoples, especially the Western Shoshone, as evidenced by the fine Indigenous Peoples' Forum which featured a diverse array of speakers representing the views, feelings and insights of many Native peoples.

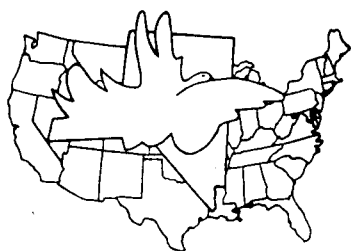
Scientific and medical experts presented evidence of the devastating impacts of worldwide nuclear testing, which may have affected up to 18 million people. The scientific reports and reports from the Indigenous Forum were presented to the Department of Energy's office in Las Vegas.

All welcomed the European Peace Pilgrimage and the Walk Across America, which were completing their walks to the Nevada Test Site. The Europeans, inspired by Western Shoshone Elder Pauline Esteves, planned the walk to "apologize to the Native Americans for what our European ancestry has done to them and to a once pristine continent, and to plead for a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty."

A walk to the test site with several hundred participants followed. When the walk reached the test site, some crossed into the site, others camped across the road for the remaining days. On Sunday there was a rally with about 2,000 people at the site followed by a large action, and a few hundred arrests.

The following day, Columbus Day, was marked by an Elders' Forum with speakers from various Native nations. Many felt this event was one of the most significant and moving in the history of witness at the Test Site because of the active leadership and participation by Native people.





A Pause for Celebration

We are closer to peace than we have ever been before!

Thank you to everyone who helped move us toward the dream of a nuclear-free world!

After many months of citizen pressure, hard work - with a sprinkling of legislative shenanigans - on October 2, President Bush signed into law a nine-month moratorium on U.S. nuclear testing. After July 1, 1993, the bill will allow five tests per year for the next three years. The goal of the bill is to have a Comprehensive Test Ban in place in September of 1996. Our goal is to end testing now, to make the last test of 1992 - the last test in history.

This brief pause gives us time to rethink our country's nuclear policies and move with conviction and purpose to achieve a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

Long Time Staffer Peter Ediger Leaves NDE

NDE Director Peter Ediger resigned his position as NDE's main staffer in August after six years of service to the organization. Peter's inspired poetry and prose were well known by regular Desert Voices readers. Those who attended Las Vegas events were also acquainted with Peter's peaceful sense of humor and great singing voice.

Peter was the spiritual philosopher among the NDE staff and board, always reminding us that while lobbying may be the world's way of attaining peace and justice, steadfast faith and prayer was our most important strategy. We will miss his leadership.

Peter will continue to live in the Las Vegas area and is currently spending time at St. John the Baptist Catholic Worker House. Thank you Peter for your inspired desert voice. Pamela Meidell has assumed the directorship of NDE in addition to her field activities.

Peace Pilgrimage Organizer Frits ter Kuile Becomes NDE's Las Vegas Coordinator

On November 2nd, European Peace Pilgrimage organizer Frits ter Kuile joined the NDE staff. He will be taking care of day to day business in Las Vegas and organizing Lenten Desert Experience XII. He is a native Hollander, and longtime peace activist. We met him and heard of his work and commitment during the "Healing Global Wounds" Conference.

In the Netherlands, he helped establish a Peace Camp next to a base that planned to deploy cruise missiles. He has spent time in what he calls, "Her Majesty's dungeons" on several occasions for civil disobedience. We hope many of you will have the chance to meet Frits this spring during the twelfth Lenten Desert Experience.

Stop Testing Campaign Update

NDE Director Pamela Meidell met with national peace group representatives in Washington, D.C. at the beginning of November to discuss the campaign to end nuclear testing in light of the post-election changes.

Pamela will be in D.C. again with representatives from all the national and international peace and environmental organizations, from December 14 through 16, concerning the campaign for a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, among other peace concerns. The Field Director's coordination work with other mainstream groups should result in more efficient - and effective - work toward our common goals. Please be praying for this group as they work toward a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the elimination of weapons of mass destruction.

August 5, 1993 is the 30th anniversary of the Limited Test Ban Treaty of 1963, signed by John F. Kennedy and Nikita Khrushchev. We can make 1993 the year the world puts an end to nuclear testing.

Wanted:

Nevada Desert Experience Development Director

NDE is searching for a full-time Development Director.* The right person will have the NDE spiritual vision and experience in a major donor campaign, grant writing, direct mail appeals and fundraising event organization. Competitive salary.

For a complete job description, please contact: NDE Personnel Committee Chairman Ken Butigan at 723 Shrader St., San Francisco CA. 94117, (415) 752-6250.

*Current Development Director (and NDE Founder) Anne Symens-Bucher has resigned from the position to spend time with her growing family. She will return to the Board of Directors.

Desert Oasis for Peace

Genevieve Vaughn, a long time supporter of peacemaking, has purchased 22 acres of land at Cactus Springs, the closest private property to the test site (about 45 miles from Las Vegas). It is a beautiful oasis on the south side of the highway. Genevieve is interested in establishing a shrine to draw together the feminine and divine energy for healing the desert. Thus far, the shrine site is marked by a grotto of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The shrine itself will be built in the Spring. Genevieve is deeding 20 acres to the Western Shoshone Nation. The land was handed over during a ceremony held in the midst of the "Healing Global Wounds" walk to the test site.

A Veterans' Day highlight was the dedication of the Atomic Veteran's memorial next to the future shrine. Veterans erected this monument at the site in 1984, but it was confiscated by the government and only recently recovered. It now has a permanent home adjacent to the most bombed and desecrated area in the world.

Desert Voices : NDE's Quarterly Newsletter

Your letters, articles, announcements of coming events or poetry and are welcome. Send them to: Desert Voices, Box 4487, Las Vegas, NV 89127-0487. Phone (702)646-4814.

Newsletter Staff: Pamela Meidell, Frits ter Kuile, Jon and Leslie Klusmire.