

Desert Voices

The Newsletter of Nevada Desert Experience Vol. 9 No. 2 Spring 1996

AT THE NEVADA TEST SITE:

First Underground Nuclear Weapons Test in Four Years this June 18

Note: There will be vigils on June 17 in Las Vegas and Livermore, please see the Calendar Section, page 3. Please call or write President Clinton to stop the scheduled underground nuclear test June 18. (202) 456-1111, 1600 Pennsylvania, Washington D.C. 20500

Since 1945, the world has lived under the cloud of over 2,000 nuclear tests. These tests have harmed human health and the environment, squandered economic resources and driven a dangerous arms race. The nations of the world can and must reach agreement this year on a Comprehensive Test Ban (CTB) Treaty that will ban all nuclear tests worldwide.

Responding to mounting grassroots pressure, President Bill Clinton has embraced the CTB. He has given negotiators at the test ban talks in Geneva specific instructions to secure this accord by the end of June 1996. Unfortunately, not everyone in the administration seems to have gotten the message.

The Department of Energy's (DOE) nuclear

weapons design laboratories, Lawrence Livermore and Los Alamos, plan to begin conducting underground weapons-related subcritical nuclear tests at the Nevada Test Site this June. The DOE says the experiments will not produce a self-sustaining nuclear chain reaction, hence the term "subcritical".

Various reports indicate each of these planned tests will detonate between 50 and 500 pounds of high explosive charge and involve undisclosed amounts of special nuclear material, including bomb-grade plutonium. The DOE says the first two underground blasts, scheduled for this year, will not utilize actual nuclear warheads, warhead prototypes or weapons configurations. However, DOE officials refused to rule out the possibility of using weapon configurations in the four tests already proposed for 1997. These six experiments will cost an estimated \$20 million each. The first test is scheduled for June 18, and the second for September 12, with four more to follow in 1997. Thus, at the very moment our negotiators will be trying to seal the deal on the CTB in Geneva, our weaponeers will be honing their deadly expertise at the Nevada Test Site. Some might say the DOE and the laboratories haven't carefully considered the potential implications these blasts could have on the final, delicate phase of the CTB negotiations. Others may suggest that the DOE has, indeed, chosen their start date with conscious deliberation. In either case, the impact on the CTB could prove fatal.

According to the DOE, these underground tests are part of its Stockpile Stewardship & Management (SS&M) program, along with above-ground nuclear weapons experiments on the National Ignition Facility (NIF) and other exotic, stadium-sized machines. The SS&M program is not a mere consolidation of existing nuclear weapons capabilities as the DOE claims, but is a real upgrade of the nuclear weapons complex. The DOE is planning at least \$2.6 billion in capital costs for sophisticated new or improved nuclear weapons facilities. The NIF will cost \$1.1 billion to construct, with an overall price of \$4.5 billion. NIF's stated goal is to create tiny, thermonuclear explosions above-ground in a reactor vessel. If tritium production is included, SS&M operating costs are likely to exceed \$25 billion within a decade and will create even more nuclear waste.

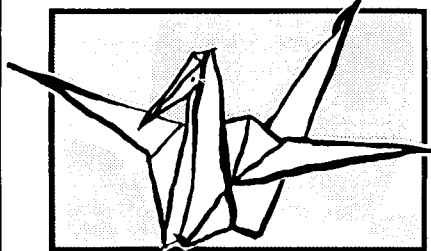
It is a sign of moral numbness that serious budgetary discussions continue among elected federal officials in Washington, DC that blame the poor, the imprisoned, and the sick in our society for unbalanced budgets. It is a crime against humanity that our nation's human, scientific and material resources continue to be squandered by such forces. The SS&M should not be used to upgrade nuclear weapons, but rather, should be used to eliminate, safely, the nuclear stockpiles and nuclear waste. The NIF should not be constructed! The subcritical tests should be stopped!

This article written by David Buer, OFM of Nevada Desert Experience, Marylia Kelley of Citizens Against a Radioactive Environment (Livermore, CA) and Bruce Hall of the CTB Clearinghouse. This article appeared in the New York Catholic Worker newspaper.

AUGUST DESERT WITNESS 1996

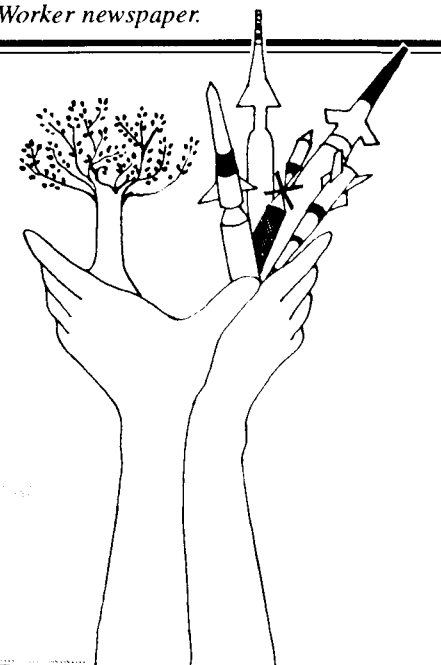
August 9-11, 1996

*This is our cry,
This is our prayer,*



*to Establish Peace
in Our World!*

(SEE POSTER CENTERFOLD)



I HAVE SET BEFORE YOU
LIFE AND DEATH
BLESSING AND CURSING...

DEUTERONOMY

Over the next 10 years:

U. S. PLANS TO SPEND \$40 BILLION ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS TESTING, DESIGN & RESEARCH

The Cold War is over, right?

Nuclear stockpiles in the U.S. and Russia will soon decline to 3,500 weapons each, and further declines are expected. A comprehensive test ban is imminent. The labs have stopped designing nuclear weapons and are converting to civilian and environmental research. The nuclear weapons budget is dropping, and the labs' weapons workforce is shrinking.

Dream On.

Yes, the Cold War is over. But none of the rest is true. And the nuclear mob that profited from the Cold War protection racket is now actually growing, untouched by the budget battles that threaten just about everything else in government.

We can be grateful that older weapons are being dismantled. But disarmament it ain't. Even if START II is ratified in Russia -- which is doubtful right now, due in large part of planned U.S. violations of the 1973 ABM Treaty -- the U.S. expects to keep roughly 8,500 nuclear bombs and warheads, about half ready to use and half in "reserve." Without START II, this number will be higher.

What's worse, some senators (with bomb plants in their states) have recently begun to call for more nuclear weapons. Candidate Dole is one of them. He believes it's time to modernize the arsenal with new kinds of warheads. He is far from alone.

A test ban? It is far from accomplished. Negotiations are now at a critical stage, and a treaty is by no means assured. For 40 years, Los Alamos and the other labs have fought a test ban. Behind the scenes, they still fight it.

No new weapons? That's another myth. Far from having stopped their Strangelovian pursuits, the nuclear labs continue to develop new weapon concepts. Like the high-powered radio frequency weapon, designed to use the earth's atmosphere as a powerful radio antenna in order to cripple a nation or an army by knocking out its electrical circuits in one stroke. Will it be deployed? The Earth-Penetrator will. It's made to break hardened bunkers with a powerful nuclear-explosive shock to the earth.

Declining weapons budgets? Don't we wish! Far from declining, the bomb-builder's budget line is now rising for the second year in a row. Although weapons spending at the labs is less than it was at the peak of Reagan's apocalyptic push towards Armageddon, it is still twice, in constant dollars, what it was in 1975. According to the Brookings Institution U.S. taxpayers have coughed up some \$4 trillion dollars for nuclear arms.

But these first 50 years are just the beginning,

according to the Department of Energy. That agency is about to embark on a multi-billion dollar long-term nuclear spending spree, centered around new "surrogate" testing devices at the labs. These machines are not necessary to maintain existing weapons. They are designed to provide the capability to design and certify new nuclear weapons, test ban or no. Politically, they are part of pork-barrel payoffs to the labs and their powerful protectors in return for support of a test ban.

One of these machines is the redundant and ill-advised DARHT facility at Los Alamos. Oinking at \$124 million, it will soon be pushed from the trough just a few years after it is finally finished by a successor machine costing 340 percent more. DARHT will explode mock warheads - some made

of real plutonium, using what everyone hopes will be leakproof steel tanks.

What's going on here? It's what is euphemistically called "science-based stockpile stewardship?" DOE's Assistant Secretary Victor Reis explains: "The stewards really are more important than the equipment . . . the purpose of the Stockpile Stewardship program is in fact to maintain the stewards, and the right type of experiments." Ah, yes, of course. In the final analysis, stockpile stewardship is not about scientists maintaining warheads; it's about warheads maintaining scientists.

Greg Mello is director of the Los Alamos Study Group in Los Alamos, New Mexico

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Become a Friend of the Desert

Over the next ten years our government is spending \$40 billion on nuclear weapons. We need to continue to proclaim the immorality of this policy. We can't do it without your help. To counter the \$40 billion spent on nuclear weapons, we appeal to you our support base. Donate \$40 monthly, quarterly or yearly and become a friend of the Desert. As a Friend of the Desert you will receive a 10% discount on all NDE events and merchandise and receive special bulletins periodically.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

— please sign me up as a Friend of the Desert. I will contribute \$40 (___ monthly, ___ quarterly or ___ annually)

— I cannot afford \$40, but here is \$_____ to help with mailing costs

— I cannot contribute, but please keep me on the mailing list

Please return to Nevada Desert Experience, P. O. Box 4487, Las Vegas, NV 89127

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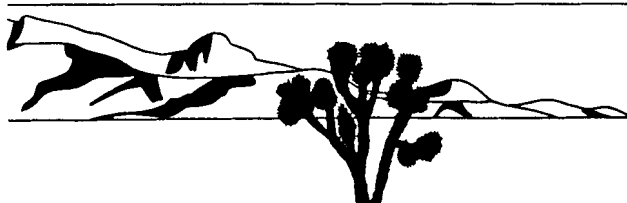


Ask President
Clinton to
stop the
Underground
Nuclear Test
scheduled for
June 18
(202) 456-1111
1600 Pennsylvania
Washington D.C. 20500

During a recent meeting of the Western Shoshone National Council the lands of the Western Shoshone Nation were declared a Nuclear Free Zone.

The Nevada Test Site occupies land belonging to the Western Shoshone Nation by virtue of the 1863 Treaty of Ruby Valley.

"We have to work together to stop this contamination of Mother Earth," says Corbin Harney, Shoshone Spiritual Leader (in photo).



your message of

peace

here!

IF YOU CAN'T JOIN US AT THE TEST SITE THIS AUGUST...

Be With Us in Spirit

Be a part of transforming the Test Site for a day,
and our lives forever!

To honor Sadako Sasaki we hope for 1,000 images of peace which we will hang on the barbed wire fence at the Test Site entrance. Use your creativity to make banners (or ?) with your friends and family (children, church groups, etc.). They can be whatever width, but less than 3 feet tall, and should hold up in a strong wind.

Please send banners to us by July 30. Send to Nevada Desert Experience, P. O. Box 4487, Las Vegas, NV 89127 (for UPS send to 500 West Van Buren Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89106)

"We have a map of the world showing how all nuclear tests have been conducted on the territory of Native Peoples."

-Raymond Yowell, Western Shoshone National Council, Las Vegas, NV, Oct. 21, 1988

1996 Calendar: Nevada Desert Experience Events

June 17: On June 18 is the first underground nuclear test in four years. Vigil with us from 4-7 p.m. in Livermore and Las Vegas. In Livermore, meet at the corner of East & Vasco, call (510) 443-7148 for details. In Las Vegas meet at Bechtel Test Site offices, 2621 Losee, near Cheyenne, call (702) 646-4814 for details.

June 18: first scheduled underground Nuclear Test in four years

June 21-23: "Violence Unveiled, The Gospel at Work in our World", a retreat with Gil Bailie & Richard Rohr, OFM in Oakland, CA. For more information: contact Northern California office, (510) 536-3772, Tu & Th days.

August 9-11: August Desert Witness XII, see poster inside this newsletter.

September 12: scheduled underground Nuclear Test, call for vigil information.

1997 Calendar: Nevada Desert Experience Events

Lent 1997: Lenten Desert Experience XVI, "40 Days of Prayer, Fasting and Reflection" see ad on back page of this newsletter.

March 31-April 4: Holy Week Walk

August 8-10: August Desert Witness 1997

November 9-11: Catholic Worker Gathering in Las Vegas, Celebrate Dorothy Day's 100th birthday at the Nuclear Test Site.

PLEASE UNFOLD, POSTER INSIDE

ACTION ALERT:

Call or write Rep. Ron Dellums (D-CA) and tell him to take a strong stand against building the National Ignition Facility (NIF). The Department of Energy is planning a massive reinvestment in the U.S. nuclear weapons complex. NIF will keep Livermore Labs fully functioning as a nuclear lab, thereby missing an historic opportunity to convert Livermore Labs to more peaceful pursuits. We are counting on his leadership in the National Security Committee to challenge this wasteful expenditure. Call Rep. Dellums at (202) 225-2661 or write him at the Rayburn House Office Building #2108, Washington, D.C. 20515.

HOLY WEEK WALKERS SAY THANKS

I would like to personally thank all those friends of NDE who supported our Holy Week Walk this Lent. We felt strongly, as we walked, the support of the hundreds of people who sent in a donation, hosted us along the walk route, or honked in support as they drove by our procession. It was good to connect with the Shundahai Network and the Healing Global Wounds event, where Corbin Harney led sweat lodge ceremonies. At the Peace Camp, 50 people joined our Good Friday Stations of

the Cross. Also we had an Easter Vigil Mass in a lantern and candle-lit tent. On Easter, we participated in an ecumenical Circle of Rebirth Ceremony at the Mercury Gate of the Nevada Test Site. Potential Walkers: Mark your calendars now, our walk next year will be during Easter Week, March 31 - April 4, 1996.

- David Buer, OFM

Nevada Desert Experience

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Las Vegas office: (702) 646-4814, fax (702) 631-5538. P. O. Box 4487, Las Vegas, NV 89127. The e-mail address is: nde@igc.apc.org.

Northern California office: contact Anne Symens-Bucher at the Franciscan Justice and Peace office (510) 536-3772 on Tuesdays and Thursdays. 1500 34th Ave., Oakland, CA 94601, fax (510) 261-1006

LENTEN DESERT EXPERIENCE 1997, Our 16th year!

40 Days of Prayer, Fasting and Reflection

in response to the \$40 billion spent on nuclear weapons in the next 10 years

Hermitage in the Desert for 40 Days & 40 Nights

For the Forty days of Lent we will build a temporary hermitage near the Test Site. Simple Lodging, Heating, Meals, Restroom and solar shower facilities will be provided. Spiritual Guidance, Silent Time, Vigiling and Common Prayer will be available. Services will be on Ash Wednesday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday (Nuclear Stations of the Cross) and Easter. Plan to spend some retreat time with us. Our next newsletter will have more details.



DESERT VOICES

Franciscan Friars of California
NEVADA DESERT EXPERIENCE
P. O. BOX 4487
LAS VEGAS, NV 89127-0487

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AUGUST DESERT WITNESS 1996

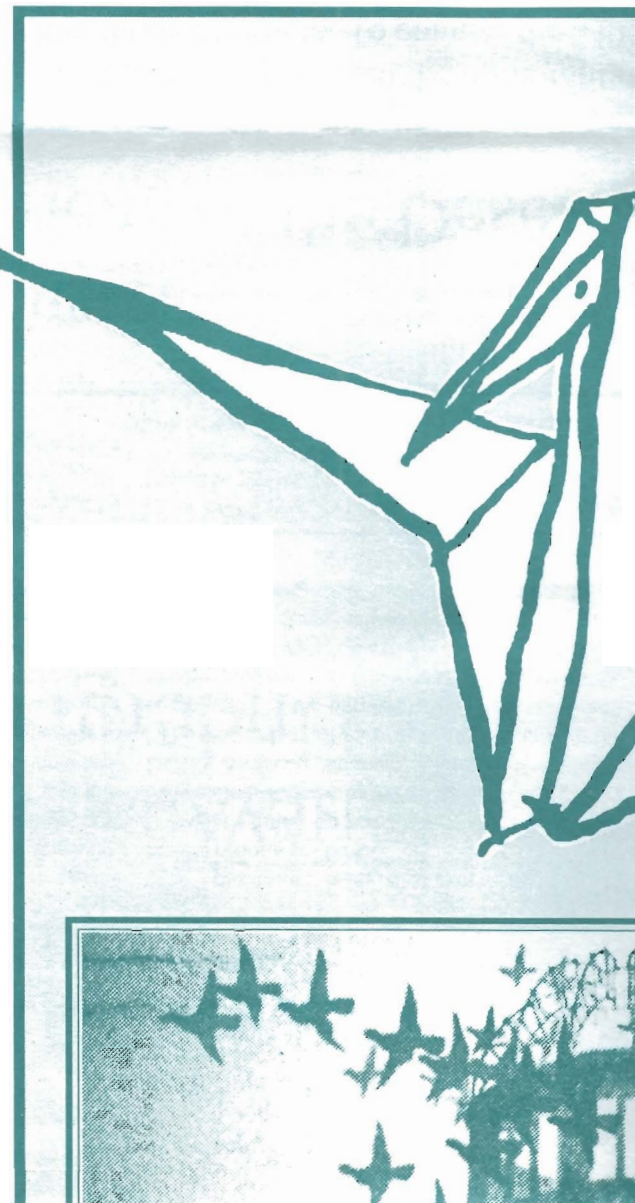
At the base of a monument erected to Sadako Sasaki is written:

*This is our Cry,
To Establish Peace*

Sadako Sasaki was two years old when the atomic bomb dropped about two kilometers from her home. She was neither burned nor injured.

*"like Sadako, we dare
to use our creative
power to inspire and
bring about
nonviolent
transformation."*

at the time, but ten years later she became ill with leukemia. After receiving a paper crane in the mail from a friend, Sadako was inspired



August 9-11, UNLV Campus, Las Vegas & Nevada Test Site

This is our Prayer, Peace in Our World!



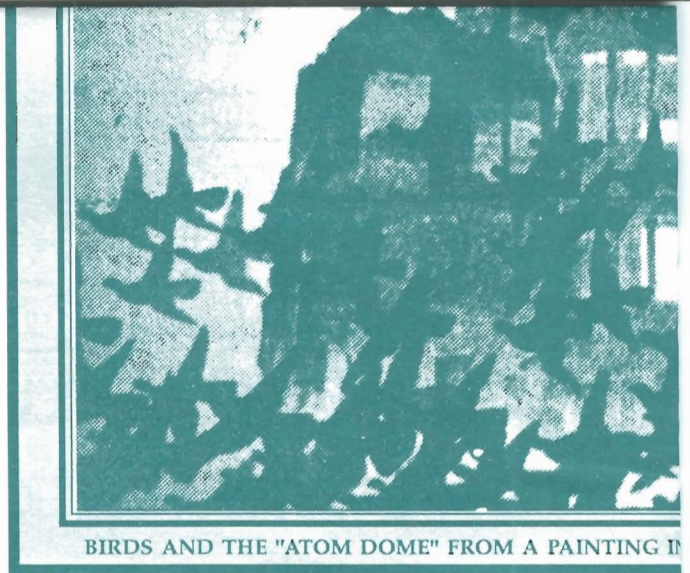
little girl's prayer has inspired many to hope and act for peace in the world.

In honor of Sadako Sasaki together with all the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we gather this August to explore the spiritual power of simple creative gestures and their significance in our efforts to bring about nonviolent social change and a world without nuclear weapons.

We at Nevada Desert Experience believe that the heart of all faith-based nonviolent action is built on the belief that all life is sacred. Yet, we experience so many forces that try to destroy, diminish and deny this sacredness. This August, through the use of different creative forums, NDE invites you to encour-

to make a thousand paper cranes. She believed if she could make one thousand cranes that she would become well again. By the time she died she had folded 964 of them. They all hung beautifully above her bed.

For Sadako this simple creative gesture of folding paper into a symbolic bird was a prayer. Indeed this



BIRDS AND THE "ATOM DOME" FROM A PAINTING BY

FRIDAY, August 9:

4-7 p.m.: Registration and Dinner

7 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.: Opening Ceremony and An Imaginary Journey presented by Wendy Oser (Slides, Words & Music)

SATURDAY, August 10:

7:30 - 8:30 a.m.: Breakfast

8:30 - 9 a.m.: Gathering & Morning Prayer

9 - 10:30 a.m.: Workshop A

10:30 - 11: Break

11 - 12:30 p.m.: Workshop B

12:30 - 1:30 p.m.: Lunch

1:30 - 3 p.m.: Workshop C and Nonviolence Training

3 - 3:30 p.m.: Break

3:30 - 5 p.m.: Group Session, Scenario for Civil Disobedience Sunday

5 - 6:30 p.m.: Dinner

6:30 - 7:30 p.m.: Closing the Circle: Art Event for Peace

8:00 p.m. - ? : Concert: Jerry Leggett and the Hennacy House Band

SUNDAY, August 11

8:00 a.m.: Worship Service at Mercury Gate entrance of the Nevada Test Site, followed by Civil Disobedience Action (optional).

Departure from UNLV should be around noon

WORKSHOPS:

Inner Healing, Global Healing. Wendy Zolla is an Art Therapist who has been a Catholic Worker for ten years. She will help participants explore through drawing the nature of personal and global trauma and their relationship to nonviolent transformation.

Hard Scripture and Argument in Colored Paper. Rabbi Margaret Holub has been rabbi to a rural alternative shtetl, Mendocino Coast Jewish Community, for the past seven years. In this workshop she invites participants to reflect on Scripture which seems to encourage war and domination. Through a creative process participants will explore feelings of conflict with these Scriptures and how meeting these conflicts guide us in faith based nonviolence.

Painting Altars; Reclaiming the Sacred. Sally Hindman is a Quaker, artist and Director of the Berkeley Ecumenical Chaplaincy to the Homeless. In this workshop participants are invited to express what is sacred in their lives through a process of painting images of altars. No special painting ability/experience necessary.

Making Peace with Ourselves Through Poetry. Gerry Grace is an artist, poet and arts educator. She teaches poetry-writing to both adults and youth and for the past eight years has taught with California poets in the schools.

Ultimately the Nevada Test Site is about the absence of peace of heart in our contemporary world. Using poetry as a medium participants will address the obstacles to their personal peace of heart. No special writing ability/experience

necessary.

Mandala, Meditations, and Inner Unity. Gerry Hair and Maureen Gatt are married and live together with their daughter in Davis, California. They lead workshops on a variety of themes and provide private spiritual direction. In this workshop, participants will have an opportunity to make their own mandala. Participants will also explore the power and significance of the mandala and its ability to guide us toward inner and outer unity.

Crafts and Creative Ways to Do Tax Resistance. Chris Montesano has been a Catholic Worker for 27 years. He worked with Dorothy Day in the sixties. He helped found Martin De Porres House of Hospitality and the Catholic Worker Farm in Sheep Ranch, California. He also helped start The Sheep Ranch's Land Trust, Earth Abides and the farms' candle craft. In this workshop Chris will share his experience of community and alternative ways of structuring community and craft so as not to pay taxes. Discussion will be combined with the making of glass vigil candles.

OTHER EVENTS

Everyone is invited to participate in the Art Event: **Closing the Circle; Art Event for Peace.** Kaz Tanahashi, a painter and environmental worker, conceived the Circle of All Nations, created for the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations in San Francisco in 1995. He is a founding member of Plutonium Free Future and coordinator of Ten Millennium Future, both based in Berkeley. Mario Uribe, a multi-media artist has created a series of artworks for peace. As director of the American School of Japanese Arts, based in Santa Rosa, California, he has directed the creation of many public circles in collaboration with Tanahashi.

An Evening with Good Folk. Jerry Leggett is a passionate and creative artist who combines his musical talents and lifelong social activism to truly make a difference in the world. Since the early 70's he has been performing for interfaith audiences throughout the United States and around the world, most often sharing his message at conferences, workshops, and peace and justice-related events. He recently co-founded and is a touring artist with the Better World Artist and Activists Guild (BWAAG). Hennacy House Band are members of the Los Angeles Catholic Worker, a lay community of volunteers following the radical gospel message of living simply, servanthood and resistance. Their music is a mix of Celtic and American traditional folk.

An Imaginary Journey, Guardianship 2196 A.D.: by Wendy Oser and The Nuclear Guardianship Project. This Slide, Word & Music presentation has been shown throughout the world. "deeply moving and encouraging".

NEVADA DESERT EXPERIENCE, P. O. Box 4487, Las Vegas, NV 8



A JAPANESE MUSEUM (PHOTO BY JOSEPH GERSON)

ter and give expression to the truth of this sacredness. While we continue to say no to the production and testing of all nuclear weapons, we also want to say yes to the life that is within and among us and like Sadako we dare to use our creative power to inspire and bring about nonviolent transformation.

Housing: NDE has secured 48 double occupancy rooms on the UNLV campus. The rates for these rooms are less expensive than most hotels in the area. Make your reservations early - space is limited.

Should you choose to stay in a nearby hotel, call City Wide Reservations at 1-800-733-6644. Ask for space near the UNLV campus.

Food: Meals will be served during the program by the UNLV Dining Service. They offer a wide selection of food including an extensive salad bar and other items for those who choose a vegetarian lifestyle. NDE will provide sack brunches on Sunday.

Transportation: NDE will not be able to provide transportation to and from the airport, cab fare is about \$8. (Ask the driver to drop you off at the Eugene Warner Residential Life at 4750 Gym Rd. off of Tropicana). If you are planning your return flight on Sunday, the program will conclude at the Test site by noon. If you drive to the event, the UNLV

campus is about 2-3 miles east of the 15 freeway on Tropicana Blvd.

Weather: August temperatures can reach 115 degrees. Although most of the program will take place in a cool air-conditioned environment, some events will take place outside, namely the Nevada Test Site action. It is necessary to guard against sunstroke and heat exhaustion. Please wear light, loose fitting clothing. Bring plenty of sunscreen, a hat and a water bottle.

Radiation concerns: Discussion about radiation exposure at the Nevada Test Site is ongoing, but it is generally agreed that unless there has been a recent (within 72 hours) detonation of an underground nuclear weapon, the danger to your health is minute. The U.S. has maintained a moratorium on underground tests since October 1992, but has an underground nuclear test scheduled for this June. Small children and pregnant women are not advised to go to the Test Site. Further information will be available.

Please clip and mail to Nevada Desert Experience, P. O. Box 4487, Las Vegas, NV 89127

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone(s) _____

\$_____ Enclosed is my registration payment of \$40 (\$30 if before July 15).

\$_____ Enclosed is \$19 for Friday night dinner and housing.

\$_____ Enclosed is \$28 for Saturday breakfast, lunch and dinner and Saturday night housing.

\$_____ Total Enclosed (Make check payable to Nevada Desert Experience).

My roommate will be _____.

___ Please assign me a roommate Sex: M F (circle your sex for roommate assignment)

___ I need transportation to the Test Site on Sunday

___ I can take _____ people in my vehicle to the Test Site on Sunday

Please choose 3 of the 6 workshops:

___ Inner Healing, Global Healing with Wendy Zolla

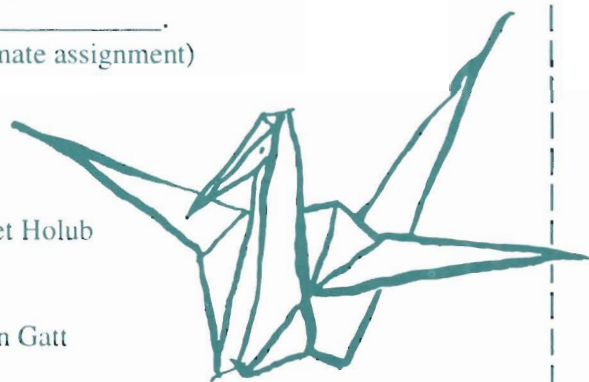
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___ Painting Altars; Reclaiming the Sacred with Sally Hindman

___ Making Peace with Ourselves through Poetry with Gerry Grace

___ Mandala, Meditations and Inner Unity with Gerry Hair and Maureen Gatt

___ Crafts and Creative Tax Resistance with Chris Montesano



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