



NEVADA DESERT
EXPERIENCE



PACE E BENE
NONVIOLENCE
SERVICE

June 20, 2012

Dear Friend:

Summer desert greetings and blessings of peace from *The Interfaith Council of Southern Nevada, Pace e Bene Nonviolence Service* and *Nevada Desert Experience*.

Vibrant movements for dignity and social justice are emerging in faith communities throughout the world. We are inviting you to support and attend ***The Ediger Memorial Interfaith Celebration of Active Nonviolence*** during which these inspiring efforts will be brought to light. The celebration will be held September 23, 2012 in Las Vegas from 3 to 8:30 pm. Dinner will be provided courtesy of our hosts, the Islamic Society of Nevada, and childcare will be available. RSVPs are appreciated to help us plan accordingly.

Peter Ediger was a poet and peacemaker who died on February 17. He was the local coordinator of *Pace e Bene Nonviolence Service*, and he was a former Mennonite minister and Coordinator of *Nevada Desert Experience*. "*Jesus Says Love Your Enemies, What Does Your Church Say,*" was a recent Ediger inspiration which led him to visit many churches in the Las Vegas valley in the months before his death, standing prominently with a large sign bearing this question and engaging people in conversation before joining them for worship. **Because of his demeanor, Peter was able to pose this challenging question with sincerity and humility. Peter had an exceptional gift for sparking conversations and eliciting deep exchanges on lots of topics and in difficult terrain.** The diverse responses Peter received illuminated his vision of an inter-faith, community celebration of **Active Nonviolence** which means a **practice that doesn't hate or try to annihilate "enemies" through war or violence, but also doesn't ignore or retreat into passive acceptance of injustice.**

Please, will you support our continuation of Ediger's work to lift up "Faith, Hope and Love as alternatives to Cynicism, Despair and Fear" with a kind donation? We are raising funds now to make this a successful community event that will attract a broad audience of inter-faith participants.

The celebration honors the spirit of active nonviolence with presenters who are life-long peace workers, authors and scholars. **Vincent Harding** is chairperson of the *Veterans of Hope Project: A Center for the Study of Religion and Democratic Renewal*. He was the academic adviser for Public Broadcasting's famous *Eyes on the Prize* documentary about the civil rights movement, was friends with Martin Luther King, Jr. and is credited with drafting King's famous speech, "Why I Oppose the War in Vietnam." **Kathy Kelly** is founder of *Voices for Creative Nonviolence*, based in Chicago. Members of *Voices* led over 70 delegations to Iraq to challenge the economic sanctions and were present in Baghdad in resistance to the 2003 U.S. military invasion. Since 2009, *Voices* has led five delegations to Afghanistan and two to Pakistan to listen to and learn from nonviolent grassroots movements and to raise awareness about the impacts of U.S. militarism in the region. Facilitating an exercise to help participants discern personal

attitudes towards violent and nonviolent actions will be **Mary Litell OSF**. Mary is a trainer with *Pace e Bene Nonviolence Service* and also with *Capacitar International* which helps trauma-stricken refugees learn practical coping techniques. Joining the program for the evening panel, ***Nonviolence in Action***, will be **Rae Abileah**, a co-director of *CODEPINK Women for Peace* and a founding member of *Young, Jewish and Proud*. A Capella music by members of the **St. James the Apostle Catholic Church** choirs will stir our souls.

In our places of worship we pray for peace. We pray for our loved ones who go off to war. We must also act for peace by practicing nonviolence and celebrating nonviolent liberation struggles until these little-sung successes transform our violent compulsions into compassionate impulses. How better to help our family members return to us unscathed by the hate and brutality war.

We hope you will take a moment to reflect upon the *Ediger Memorial Interfaith Celebration of Active Nonviolence*. **Please make a donation and plan to join us on September 23**. Our vision of a world full of community and love instead of violence and war is closer then we ever imagined possible. For the sake of Mother Earth and all Her people, we must not despair. **Come; celebrate the active making of peace!**

Make donations payable to Nevada Desert Experience, and put “Ediger NV Celeb” on the memo line. Direct inquiries to Jim Haber, Coordinator, Nevada Desert Experience, 1420 W. Bartlett Avenue, Las Vegas, NV 89106. Telephone: 702-646-4814 E-mail: <jim@NevadaDesertExperience.org>.

Shalom, Salaam, Paz, Peace,

The Ediger Memorial Interfaith Celebration of Active Nonviolence Organizing Committee

Aslam Abdullah, *Imam, Islamic Society of Nevada and Board Member IFCSN*
Mary Lou Anderson, *Council Member, Nevada Desert Experience and Board Member IFCSN*
Baba Anal, *Board Member, Interfaith Council of Southern Nevada (IFCSN)*
Karen Boyett, *Executive Director, Interfaith Council of Southern Nevada (IFCSN)*
Jo Ann Buckner, *Board Member, Interfaith Council of Southern Nevada (IFCSN)*
Jim Haber, *Committee Chairperson and Coordinator, Nevada Desert Experience*
Ruthie Howard, *Program Manager, Interfaith Council of Southern Nevada (IFCSN)*



Peter Ediger (1926 to 2012)
Poet and Peacemaker