

# Newsletter



## Alaska Peace Center

Issue 15

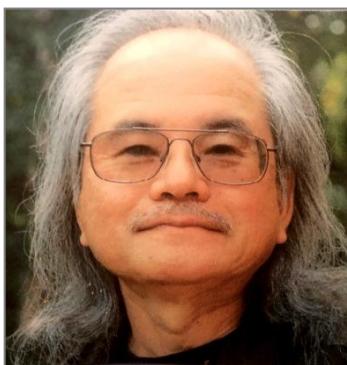
*Respectfully acknowledging that we are on  
un surrendered territory of the first peoples of this land, currently known as Alaska*

March 2021

### Paul Tengan, a Friend of Peace

Phil Osborn and Suzanne Rich Osborn

Interested in a good discussion, some political or philosophical inquiry, with alchemy mixed in for good measure? Paul Tengan was always game and well informed.



Always polite, yet determined to illuminate any political, spiritual, reflective or psychological conversation, Paul died of an apparent heart attack and was found at home January 8, 2021. He will be sorely missed. Paul was a regular at UUFF, sang in the Peace Choir, spent

quality time at the senior center and cultivated numerous friends there. Paul taught three Osher Lifelong Learning classes and attended many courses at UAF.

Paul was born in Honolulu, September 29, 1945. He had 7 siblings and came north to Fairbanks in the early 1980s. Paul spent some time as a tour guide around our great state, was a taxi driver and could be counted on to break out his trusty motorcycle at the earliest convenience. Paul could always be seen sporting a bemused smile which he shared with all in proximity, and was a regular at potlucks, symphony concerts and political protest rallies

Paul was an avid peace pursuer, and could be found opining at Borough Assembly meetings, explaining why he was opposed to any development stealing money from programs to assist people and instead giving it to our bloated military machine. He supported the Alaska Peace Center and attended many of their events.

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### Ringing Bells for Armistice Day!

Alan Batten

Alaska Peace Center and North Star Veterans For Peace rang in Armistice Day with Bells for Peace with an outdoor, socially-distanced event on November 11, 2020. We have been Ringing In Peace on Armistice Day every year since 2006, outdoors, whatever the weather.

Bell-ringing has been a traditional way of celebrating Armistice Day ever since the end of World War One (known at the time as "The Great War") 102 years ago. It signifies the relief and joy felt around the world when the armistice was signed on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918. Bells were rung to celebrate peace and the end of four years of war that killed or wounded more than 30 million people. In the wake of so much carnage, it was then clear to millions of people that wars were not about valor or romantic ideals, but about empire, which benefits a few at the expense of many. A tradition of observing the anniversary of the armistice by ringing bells to honor veterans and promote peace spread throughout the world.

Armistice Day became a legal holiday nationwide by an act of Congress in 1938, dedicated to the cause of world peace. In 1954 President Eisenhower changed Armistice

(Continued on page 2)





## Fairbanks Peace Choir Report from 2020

In March 2020 the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship shut down its building to all public gatherings due to the Covid 19 virus. This included the Fairbanks Peace Choir rehearsals, including the usual twice a year public concert. Currently UUFF is tentatively closed through May 2021. Our usual 35 member choir may be open to starting up in September 2021, although this is questionable.

Our over 40 different singing engagements in the wider Fairbanks community have affected the general public as well, such as singing in the city jail, the Winter Fine Arts Festival, Pioneer Home, two Northern Environmental Center fund raisers, the Boys and Girls Home, memorials and many more places. The Peace Choir has been singing together since 2005. Stay tuned. We'll see what the future has in store. Keep your fingers crossed!

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## Fairbanks Open Radio KWRK-LP 90.9 FM [kwrk.org](http://kwrk.org)

In February, 2021, our all-volunteer local radio station celebrated 5 years of bringing independent, non-commercial, listener-supported radio to Interior Alaska, educating, entertaining, and mobilizing our community, including traditionally underrepresented perspectives. Despite the pandemic, most locally produced shows have continued, including the Alaska Peace Center Community News and Opportunities for Action on Sundays at 8-9 am and 6-7pm.

A new show is featured on Fridays 4-5pm: **Third Eye Radio** - A live, locally-produced spiritual and political awakening, including but not limited to, critical dissection of US foreign policy and political partisanship, interviews, and good tunes. Passionate, controversial, random, and humorous, join me in spreading peace, love and dissent. Hosted by Melissa.



**Alternatives to Violence**  
Working toward a violence free community

## Project Update

AVP Alaska has not been active during the Pandemic, over the last year. Before that time, we had introduced AVP in two prisons and in various communities throughout Alaska for about the last 10 years, reviving a group that was very active in the 1990's in Alaska.

After a year's respite, we are back in motion. We are planning to do a Basic AVP workshop on Zoom in April. Some other AVP groups in the U.S. have figured out creative ways to adapt to having a successful remote workshop. Over the next two months, facilitators in Alaska are meeting to decide how to best present the material over Zoom and we are very excited to offer a workshop sometime this spring.

As well, we were asked by Wildwood prison in Kenai to put together a bi-weekly newsletter for inmates that have done at least a Basic AVP class, to keep emphasizing the four lifestyle choices for an alternative to violence life: affirmation, cooperation, communication skills, and conflict resolution. We have some inmate facilitators at Wildwood too, including one inmate/facilitator who just got out recently and wants to continue to organize and facilitate AVP workshops!

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## Ringing Bells (continued from page 1)

Day to Veterans Day by presidential proclamation, admonishing us to "reconsecrate ourselves to the task of promoting an enduring peace so that their efforts shall not have been in vain."

However, in contrast to Eisenhower's intention, rebranding Armistice Day as Veterans Day has led to a change from celebrating peace to celebrating the military and glorifying war. Armistice Day has been flipped from a day for peace into a day for displays of militarism.

The Alaska Peace Center, along with Veterans For Peace nationally and locally, celebrates the original intent of November 11th – as a day for peace. Peace, not war, is the best way to honor the sacrifices of veterans. We want generations after us to never know the destruction war has wrought on people and the earth.

## Stepping Stone Dedicated to Former Board Member Chris White

Alan Batten

On a sunny afternoon in late September we honored Chris White in a small ceremony placing a stepping stone with his name into the Memorial Walkway at the Laborers Hall. Chris was a valued member of our board for several years.

He was a tireless advocate for working people and worked hard for progressive causes throughout his entire life. He was very active with Fairbanks Open Radio (KWRK FM LP 90.9) and the Industrial Workers of the World.

He was a strong proponent for Occupy Fairbanks, even camping out for many days in temperatures that dropped into the negative 40s. He was a long-time member of Laborers Local 942 in Fairbanks and a strong influence on its policy decisions.



He worked hard getting signatures for the 2014 ballot measure to repeal SB21 (the oil tax giveaway bill that we are still struggling against) and deserves substantial credit for the measure passing in Fairbanks, though it failed statewide.

Although it bears no marker there is also a young birch tree nearby in the Laborers Hall Park that was planted in memory of Chris. Chris passed away in 2016. We still miss his unflagging energy and enthusiasm.

Commemorative text reads:  
"IN MEMORY OF BROTHER CHRIS WHITE  
12.17.1944 – 11.14.2016"



### Paul Tengan (continued from page 1)

In a three page article, Paul wrote, "In the years 1963-1977, I lived in Berkeley, Los Angeles and San Francisco. Then these cities were foci of significant cultural, social and political events that reverberated across the country over the following decades... In 1970... I visited Japan and China. There I had a life transforming experience... I grew up in Hawaii...it had once been a small independent kingdom. Like so many others throughout history it was absorbed by a larger nation with empire building ambitions.

"Like Alaska, Hawaii's population and economy boomed following World War II. While we prospered, across the planet other peoples and nations suffered devastating war

and destruction... Wars boost some economies. They destroy others. The fates of tens of millions, hinge on the actions of just a handful of industrial and political leaders...We all need to think now, of not just American, but global citizenship. As citizens of the leading military and economic power, Americans carry the heaviest responsibility.

"Eight, twelve or twenty years hence, will we collectively hang our heads in shame? Or [hold them] up with pride?"

Paul's gentle, compassionate public persona lives on in our hearts.



# Get The War Racket Out Of Fairbanks

Rob Mulford

On Oct. 3rd and 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019, the Fairbanks North Star Borough and an organization calling itself the Association of Defense Communities held a joint conference along with representatives from the uniformed services, local politicians, bankers and businessmen at the Fairbanks, Westmark Hotel, titled the Alaska Defense Forum.

Touting the meeting as providing "state and local leaders with strategies they can use to build strong military-community partnerships and rally new defense community champions at the state and local level," a Borough video advertisement opened quoting General Billy Mitchell saying, "I believe that in the future, whoever holds Alaska will hold the world."

Being viscerally affected by the recent murder of over thirty pine nut farm workers via a U.S. drone strike, I could not allow this attempt to further militarize our local community and its economy happen without protest. I decided to perform a little street theater at the entrance of the hotel. Not blocking the entrance or standing directly in front of the doors, I stood wearing a sandwich board reading, "GET THE WAR RACKET OUT OF FAIRBANKS" and

"WARFIGHTER WANT OUT? CALL 877-447-4487 (the GI Rights Hotline)." I also carried a Veterans For Peace flag, on which I attached a small but fairly high quality amplified speaker and an MP3 player, on which I had loaded Buffy Sainte-Marie's "The War Racket." As folks were entering the hotel I marched (danced) back and forth to Buffy's awesome tune.

Of course, I was arrested and charged with trespass. Opting to defend myself before a jury, I based my defense on my opposition to the racket that has become euphemized as national security. Although I did not officially use it as evidentiary to my defense, I included, on all of my legal documents, the following statement:

I, ROBERT STEVEN MULFORD, acknowledge that the land I occupy, known as Fairbanks, Alaska, is the un-surrendered traditional territory of the lower Tanana Dene Peoples and the Dena'ina Peoples.

I'd like to believe my case's summary dismissal adds some context to the legal term, trespass.

## News from Juneau Veterans For Peace

In recent years, Alaska Peace Center has co-sponsored the [Alaska's Youth Congress For the Global Elimination of Nuclear Weapons](#), a project developed by [Juneau Chapter of Veterans For Peace](#). However, since April 2020, it has been delayed due to the pandemic. Juneau's VFP hopes to carry it out in 2022, and in the meantime, put on a webinar series (check out the covid-19 drop-down at their [akhopecongress.org](http://akhopecongress.org) website).

Also, they will soon launch **Filmmaking for Activism: Youth Media Collab for a Nuclear Weapons-Free Arctic**, a short-film creation project offered free to high school-age students across Alaska. "The project has gathered a top-flight group of Alaskan presenters covering fields of filmmaking, graphic design, broadcasting, art and art history, and anti-nuclear activism to help forge a cadre of young moviemakers..."

Check out [akhopecongress.org](http://akhopecongress.org) and [www.loc.gov/item/mbrs01185386](http://www.loc.gov/item/mbrs01185386) for a short film that is part of this campaign.

## KNOW JUSTICE

## KNOW PEACE



Alaska Peace Center booth at the Tanana Valley State Fair

# The Federal Death Penalty

Alison Carter

In honor of Black History Month, the Alaska Peace Center, the Greater Fairbanks Branch of NAACP, and Who Decides, Inc. sponsored an online screening of the award-winning documentary "Free Men." It tells the inspiring story of



Kenneth Reams

Kenneth Reams, who has spent his entire adult life in solitary confinement on death row in Arkansas despite having never killed anyone. The movie personalizes capital punishment and exposes how disproportionately the death penalty is applied against people of color when the victim is white.

Although Alaskans are not psychologically, emotionally, and spiritually burdened with the reality of executing our own citizens under Alaska law, we could be forced to do so in a federal case. And every federal execution is carried out in our name as U.S. citizens.

I recently wrote to our Congressman asking him to support HR97 that would repeal the federal death penalty by simply removing the word "death" from federal sentencing laws. The Congressman thanked me for sharing my perspective and said, "I am a supporter of the death penalty and believe that any sentencing protest must be conducted on a case by case basis. The death penalty is a fitting punishment for those who have committed heinous crimes. It is also important, however, that we ensure that we do not put innocent people to death. The U.S. Constitution defines the circumstances under which the death penalty may be considered a sentencing option. The Eighth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution states that cruel and unusual punishments shall not be inflicted. On a per crime, case by case basis, a determination must be made whether this sentence would violate the citizen's constitutional rights."



U.S. Supreme Court  
Justice Thurgood  
Marshall

Pencil drawing by  
Kenneth Reams 2021

His response perfectly summarizes the issues that make the death penalty arbitrary and capricious. (Read the landmark case, *Furman v. Georgia*, 408 U.S. 238 (1972) for a full discussion.) A case by case basis is inherently arbitrary because each judge, juror, prosecutor, defense attorney and witness is biased and fallible. What is a heinous crime? How do we ensure we are not putting innocent people to death? When is a death sentence itself or an execution method cruel and unusual? These questions are litigated over and over in individual cases in the individual states and continually appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Political climate dramatically influences the answers to these questions at any given time. But, regardless of where the political scale sits, state killings will never teach others not to kill, and the decisions will be made by imperfect people.

We just witnessed a President of the United States using the federal death penalty as a re-election strategy. He carried out thirteen federal executions in 2020 through January 2021. That is more than took place in the 56 preceding years combined and more than any president in 125 years. An executive order by the current President will only pause the executions and be reversed by a future president. The only way to prevent such an abuse in the future is to remove the word "death" from federal sentencing laws.

The nation is experiencing a heightened awareness of just how racially biased our society is. Now is the time that an important change like abolishing the federal death penalty could happen.



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.  
Pencil drawing by Kenneth Reams 2021

# Alaska Peace Center activities report 2018-2021

*Thanks to All Advocates of Peace, Justice, and Sustainability!*

*With your support the Alaska Peace Center has been able to carry out the following efforts to educate & advocate since our last mailed APC Newsletter, January 2018*

## Weekly

- Since Feb 2017, 4 years of “Alaska Peace Center’s Community News and Opportunities for Action.” Broadcast on KWRK-LP 90.9 FM and kwrk.org Sundays 8-9am and 6-7pm. Also sent to the APC [email-list](#) and posted to our web site ([www.alaskapeace.org](http://www.alaskapeace.org)) and Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/Alaska-Peace-Center-619715171424944](https://www.facebook.com/Alaska-Peace-Center-619715171424944)). Reporting on events and issues of peace, justice, and sustainability affecting us and future generations in Alaska, and information on how, when and where to take action on those issues. The show also features commentary and music that educates about peace, justice, and/or sustainability.

## Ongoing

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– <b>Monitoring</b> military expansion in Alaska, (and the world): <b><u>We Made a Difference!</u></b> JLUS, the military Accident Potential Zone, threatening increased military encroachments in Fairbanks North Star Borough, was halted after just one of seven proposed borough ordinances. APC facilitated public input to municipal, state, and national elected officials and agencies.</li><li>– <b>Alternatives to Violence Project/Hands of Peace</b>, workshop scholarships</li><li>– <b>Arbor Day Tree Plantings</b> at Veterans Memorial Park and the Laborers Hall</li><li>– <b>Alaska Peace Center booth at the Tanana Valley State Fair</b>, providing public outreach</li><li>– <b>Peace message on Borough buses</b> (and on commercial radio for a couple of weeks) “3% of U.S. military spending could end starvation on earth”</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– <b>Annual Peace Feasts</b>, with free barbecue and plentiful food, <b>Celebrating Peacemakers</b> in our community, people whose efforts supporting peace, justice, and/or sustainability make a difference in the lives of others including Mother Earth; free, with open community invitation. <b>Note: The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Peace Feast</b> planned for May 30, 2020, is rescheduled for <b>May 22, 2021</b>, due to the pandemic.</li><li>– <b>Community Potlucks/Presentations</b> (on forced hiatus during the pandemic)</li><li>– <b>Annual Armistice Day Ringing In Peace</b></li><li>– <b>Collaborating with the North Star Branch of Veterans For Peace</b>, KWRK-LP 90.9FM independent local low-power radio, and various groups in our community, including efforts to enhance deeper understanding of issues of peace, justice, and/or sustainability.</li></ul>
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## Other Alaska Peace Center Events, Presentations, Participation

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– “<b>Free Men</b>” documentary, online screening and discussion, Feb 2020</li><li>– “<b>In Respect for those who sacrifice</b>” letter in Fairbanks Daily News-Miner 9-8-20</li><li>– <b>Silent vigil</b> in remembrance of the first strike use of nuclear weapons against <b>Hiroshima, Japan</b> 8-6-20</li><li>– <b>Earth Week 50</b> (2020) co-sponsor</li><li>– <b>Paving Stone and Tree</b>, honoring late APC board member Chris White</li><li>– <b>Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) Advocacy Team</b>, advocacy training co-sponsor</li><li>– “<b>Point Hope - Alaska’s Youth Congress For the Global Elimination of Nuclear Weapons</b>” co-sponsor, <a href="http://www.akhopecongress.org">www.akhopecongress.org</a> - delayed due to pandemic</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– 6<sup>th</sup> &amp; 7<sup>th</sup> <b>Annual Peace Feasts</b></li><li>– <b>NAACP Freedom Fund</b>, support via an ad about the program Nov 2019</li><li>– <b>Mr. Maki, Hiroshima Survivor</b>, live video-conference</li><li>– <b>Reclaim Armistice Day</b>, 100th anniversary, co-sponsored with Fairbanks Peace Choir, VFP, and WorldBeyondWar</li><li>– <b>Veterans For Peace (VFP) Convention</b> report and discussion</li><li>– <b>1960 San Francisco to Moscow Walk for Peace</b>, presentation by Suzanne Rich Osborn, co-sponsored with Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (UUFF)</li><li>– <b>A Conversation from Death Row</b>, a community presentation, with proceeds benefitting “Who Decides, Inc.”</li></ul>
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## Alaska Peace Center board member elections April 1, 2021

**New board members needed!**

*Some of the Alaska Peace Center's board members are terming out!*

Our by-laws state that we can serve on the board for five consecutive two-year terms. We gladly anticipate fresh board energy, possibly moving the organization in new directions! Please contact [apcboard@alaskapeace.org](mailto:apcboard@alaskapeace.org) if you are able to help steer us by serving on our board of directors.

As one non-board member recently encouraged:

*"APC is the only group getting out there with the message [of Peace and Justice]. DON'T EVER STOP!"*

**\*\*\*\*\* We Need You! \*\*\*\*\***

## WAR IS EXPENSIVE – PEACE IS PRICELESS

### Other Alaska Peace Center Events, Presentations, Participation (continued from Page 6)

- **The Doctrine of Discovery**, potluck, movie and discussion, co-sponsored with Native Movement and the University Community Presbyterian Church (UCPC)
- **Renewable Energy Fair**, booth Aug, 2018, 2019
- **Alaska Solar Tour**, and other events, tabling
- **Giants: the Global Power Elite**, a Peter Phillips Lecture via YouTube
- **"Winter on Fire: Ukraine's Fight for Freedom,"** potluck, movie & discussion with UCPC

- **Drones Quilt Project**, display at public library
- **Peace Building Efforts** with focus on Israel & Palestine, by Michael Merryman-Lotze of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), and Theo Sittler of the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL), co-sponsored by Chena Ridge Friends Meeting (Quakers)
- **Fairbanks Diversity Council**, visit, questions and answers
- **Fairbanks Youth Court & Restorative Justice**, potluck visit and conversation

### Informational messaging and promotion for groups that support peace, justice and/or sustainability:

Alaska Center, Alaskans FOR Wildlife, Alternatives to Violence Project/Hands of Peace, Defend the Sacred Alaska, Fairbanks Climate Action Coalition, Fox Spring, "FreeThePeople," GI Rights and Counter-Recruitment, International Friendship Day, Kids for Environmental Action, KWRK-LP radio, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Native Movement, Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women & Girls, Our Children's Trust, Raven for Broadband, Veterans For Peace, Who Decides Inc.



Prayers and Bells for Peace



APC Booth at the Renewable Energy Fair

## New Message to be Displayed on Fairbanks Borough Bus

Heather Koponen

You have probably seen the message "3% of U.S. military spending could end starvation on earth" on the back of bus #75 and the side of bus #71 over the past two years. Now that the [UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons](#) (TPNW) has taken effect, the Alaska Peace Center is putting out a new message to support it.

Nine known nuclear nations currently have almost 13,500 nuclear weapons, many times more than enough to annihilate all life on earth. The U.S. government houses nuclear weapons in Germany, Belgium, Netherlands, Italy, and Turkey, over the objections of the people of those countries, and arguably illegally under the TPNW. And Alaskans passed a Nuclear Weapons Freeze Initiative in 1986 that is still in effect [ak.ewaws.us/as/44.99.120 & /44.99.125](#)

### What can you do to support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons?

- Don't Bank on the Bomb [dontbankonthebomb.com](#) . There is **Take Action For Divestment** information and guide at this site, including [Engage the Public](#), [Engage the Media](#), [Engage the Government](#), [Engage Financial Institutions](#) - more and more financial institutions are saying no to nuclear weapons.
- To Divest from the War Machine, see [codepink.org/divest from the war machine](#)
- Tell Congress to invest in people and Earth, not weapons.
- And don't vote for politicians who take contributions from weapons manufacturers.



Choose Life

Support

The Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty

WorldBeyondWar.org

AlaskaPeace.org

-- **JOIN THE MOVEMENT:** International Campaign Against Nuclear weapons, ICAN, at [www.icanw.org/join](#). And join us at [cities.icanw.org/appealtext](#) to urge our city and University to ensure local funds don't support weapons companies, and to commit to the ICAN Cities Appeal supporting the TPNW. Anchorage is one of 38 cities and three states that have signed on.

-- **Help spread the message** by helping the Alaska Peace Center pay for the new bus ad: \$30/week or \$120 for a month, or ... \$360 for 3 months...

### WE WILL SAY "BLACK LIVES MATTER" UNTIL ALL LIVES ARE VALUED EQUALLY

The Alaska Peace Center is committed to nonviolent conflict resolution and to working for peace within ourselves, our communities and our world. APC opened in 2005. It is a nonprofit organization with 501(c)(3) status.

Board members and officers:

Heather Koponen, Carrie Farr, Alan Batten,  
Rob Mulford, Karl Franke, Maia Genaux



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